

XXXII.—*An Account of a Roman Road in Northumberland, in a Letter from JOHN SMART, Esq. of Trehitt, to the Secretaries.*

*Trehitt House, 23d Dec., 1826.*

GENTLEMEN,

FAVOURABLE circumstances have enabled me to trace the line of a Roman road, which made a communication between the two branches of Watling Street that pass through Northumberland. It commences at Rochester, in Redesdale (the Bremenium of Antoninus), it passes by the Dudlees, Braushaw, and Yardhope to Holystone, where St. Paulinus, as recorded by the "Venerable Bede," converted several thousand Pagans to Christianity, and baptised them on his journey to the "royal residence" of the Saxon monarch, king Edwin, at (Maelmin) Millfield, the palace at Ad Gebrin having gone to decay. At this place St. Paulinus continued for some time, converting his subjects and baptizing them in the river Glen. The road then passes the river Coquet, near to the village of Sharperton, a little to the eastward of which, on an eminence called Chester-hill, is an encampment, nearly square, occupying about two acres, and equidistant between the two branches. It then passes through the grounds of the villages of Burradon and the Trehitts. When taken up, in front of my house, I measured the breadth at fourteen feet. After passing through some fields at Lorbotle, it has been carried along the "Street Way," in Mr. Clavering's estate at Callaley. Immediately near is a high conical hill, with a triple circular entrenchment; the smallest circle is cut out of the solid rock, to the depth of eight or ten feet in some places; but as it is destitute of water, it can only have been a place of refuge to the inhabitants on any sudden invasion of the enemy. It is probably a work of the Britons. The road

then passes through a part of Lord Ravensworth's estate to Barton, and it joins the eastern branch of Watling-street before it crosses the river Alne, to the north of which is Crawley Tower, built upon the east angle of a Roman station, on an eminence near the road which I consider to be the "Alauna Amnis" of Richard of Cirencester. There is great probability of the road being continued from Barton by Alnwick down to the port of Alnmouth, as during the period of the lower empire, great quantities of grain were shipped from Britain, to supply the Roman armies and garrisons on the Rhine. Having had an opportunity of seeing some improvements at West Glanton, in a field called Deer-street, where men were employed in taking up a part of an old road, with about six inches of soil upon it, consisting of large flat stones laid horizontally, on the outside twelve feet wide, it appears that a branch had been made from the former road, crossed the Alne west of Whittingham church, passed through Deer-street to the Breamish bridges, where it joined the Roman road.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN SMART.