

FIG. 1. BRONZE FLAT AXE, NEAR HEXHAM, *c.* 1843 ($\frac{1}{2}+$).

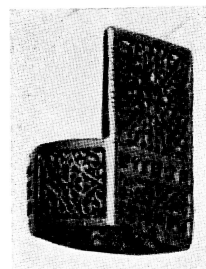


FIG. 2. OPENWORK GOLD RING, HERSTAL
(PROV. LIÈGE) (NEARLY $\frac{1}{2}$).

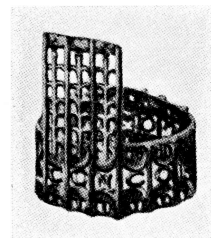


FIG. 3. OPENWORK GOLD RING, TIRLEMONT
(PROV. BRABANT) (NEARLY $\frac{1}{2}$).

VII.—MUSEUM NOTES.

By J. D. COWEN, M.A., F.S.A.

I. A LOST FLAT AXE OF THE BRONZE AGE.

In volume III of John Bell's set of manuscript note-books relating to the history and growth of this Society there is an interesting record of a flat bronze axe-head found near Hexham, and now lost, which is not otherwise known. Under date 3 Jan. 1843 he notes "A Beautiful Celt which had been found in the Neighbourhood of Hexham was exhibited at the Meeting of the Society." On an adjoining page there is pasted an admirable coloured drawing (pl. v, fig. 1) of the object in question entitled "Drawing of a Celt exhibited at the January 1843 Meeting of the Antiquarian Society by Wm. King the Curator of the Natural History Museum." As will be seen the drawing has the merit of showing not only a full-face view but a profile also, and (still more remarkable for the time at which it was done) a transverse section, demonstrating quite clearly all details of its appearance. It was 7·1 inches long by 3·5 inches wide at the edge.

When Mr. B. R. S. Megaw was collecting materials for his paper "British Decorated Axes and their Diffusion during the Earlier Part of the Bronze Age,"¹ he referred to this Society for details of local examples and was informed of the above, which was (with permission) duly published in his list.² He and his co-author have not, however, attempted to classify the axe under their scheme, presumably because the original is not available for examination.

¹ PPS, 1938, pp. 272-307.

² *Loc. cit.*, no. 67 and fig. 14c.

It seems, however, clear that it belongs to their type 1 (flat axes without definite flanges or stop-ridge), ornamented on the sides with a variety, it would seem, of their "lozenge pattern" (class a). Finally the fundamental arrangement of the vertical herring-bone ornamentation on the face falls within their group 2, consisting of simple allover patterns in which one motif only is employed.

Although it may be thought sufficient that this axe-head has already been noticed and illustrated in the transactions of one of the national societies, it does seem desirable that it should also be placed on record in the publications of the locality from which it derives, and where the only evidence for its existence is preserved.

2. TWO EARLY DRAWINGS OF PREHISTORIC OBJECTS.

In a folio album in the Society's library compiled by John Bell, and entitled *Drawings*, are two water-colours which seem worth rescuing from their present obscurity.

They are pasted side by side on folio 1 of the album, are done on the same kind of paper, and inscribed in pencil in the same handwriting, so that it is clear they came from the same source, and were presented together, though I know of no record of this.

One shows a small piece of pottery, in fact an incense cup; the other shows two socketed bronze axes. All are of the Bronze Age, and none can be traced to-day.

The drawing of the incense cup (pl. VI, fig. 1) is inscribed: "Urn found in a sepulchral Mound called the Marley Knowe, with remains of others, charred (*sic*) Wood and Bones at Coupland Castle 1830—same size as the Original."

Allowing for fore-shortening the piece appears to have been about $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches high. It is not clear whether the words "at Coupland Castle 1830" are intended merely to amplify the description of the locality—the castle is little more than half a mile from Marleyknowe—and to give the

date of discovery, or whether they mean that the urn was preserved at Coupland in 1830, thus implying the date of the drawing. On the phrasing used the latter seems the more likely, the date of discovery—which is given on the second drawing—being omitted because unknown. There is, however, no other mention of the urn being preserved at Coupland; this is, indeed, the sole record of its existence.

MacLauchlan in his *Additional Notes* (1867, p. 26) records that an urn was taken from one of three cists in the farmyard at Marleyknowe, near Milfield, but destroyed. The wording, however, of the inscription on our drawing makes it seem hardly likely that the two finds are the same, and I think they should be regarded as distinct. No doubt the "remains of others" referred to were those of one or more cinerary urns such as one would expect to find in association.

The type is uncommon, the most unusual feature being the ornamentation which consists of punctured dots—round the neck, inside the lip, and most surprisingly round the bottom, or foot. No useful parallel is figured by Abercromby, but one other strikingly similar pot is known, and it too comes from Northumberland. In the Alnwick Castle Museum is preserved just such another incense cup.¹ It is no. 2 in the Alnwick collection, and was found in 1852 in a cairn on the farm of Reyheugh in the Lucker Bailiwick, along with another larger vessel, presumably a cinerary urn, since destroyed. It is $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches high, and "the only ornamentation employed is a series of punctured dots ranged in four circles around the vessel; one on the inside of the lip, two on the shoulder, and another at the bottom." It should be observed that the illustration in the Catalogue does not show the fourth and most distinctive circle of dots, that round the bottom, but the letter-press establishes the point. A glance at this plate will show the great resemblance between these two little urns.

The punctured dot technique arranged in separate circles,

¹ *Catalogue*, pp. 7-8 and pl. ix.

as here, is far from common and seems to be a northern characteristic; examples occur sporadically from Yorkshire into Scotland. In the great range covered by the illustrations in Abercromby's *Bronze Age Pottery* there is, as already stated, no strictly comparable example. The nearest, however, is a cinerary urn, of "enlarged food vessel" type, again from Northumberland. It was found by Greenwell in a cairn at Catcherside in the parish of Kirkwhelpington.² Here there are two distinctive lines of dots on the neck, and two below the shoulder, but there the resemblance ceases, as there are none at the foot, and the decoration inside the lip is carried out in the twisted-cord technique.

It looks as though we have here one or two clues towards the recognition of a local style of potting in the late Bronze Age, but it is not proposed to follow this aspect of the subject further at the present time. It is hardly to be expected that such a fragile thing should have survived in private hands since 1830, but it would be a source of the greatest satisfaction if the original could be traced.

The drawing of the axe-heads (pl. VI, fig. 2) is inscribed "Found at Humbleton Hill the property of Mattw Culley Esq—in 1816—same size as the originals." It shows two socketed bronze axes of which one has a fairly heavy moulding at the mouth. The other has no moulding at all and appears to end abruptly. It might be questioned whether a moulding of some sort at the mouth had not been broken away, but the drawing gives no indication of this, and the position of the loop, well down the body of the axe, speaks rather to the contrary. Both have broad cutting edges distinctly hooked at each end in the Irish fashion, though it is not suggested that they are actually Irish imports. It is not clear from the drawing whether the larger of the two had ribs on either face; the smaller seems to have been plain.

These must certainly be the "two fine bronze socketed celts, one 4" long, the other 3"," seen by members of this

² *British Barrows*, no. ccxi; BAP, II, no. 494.

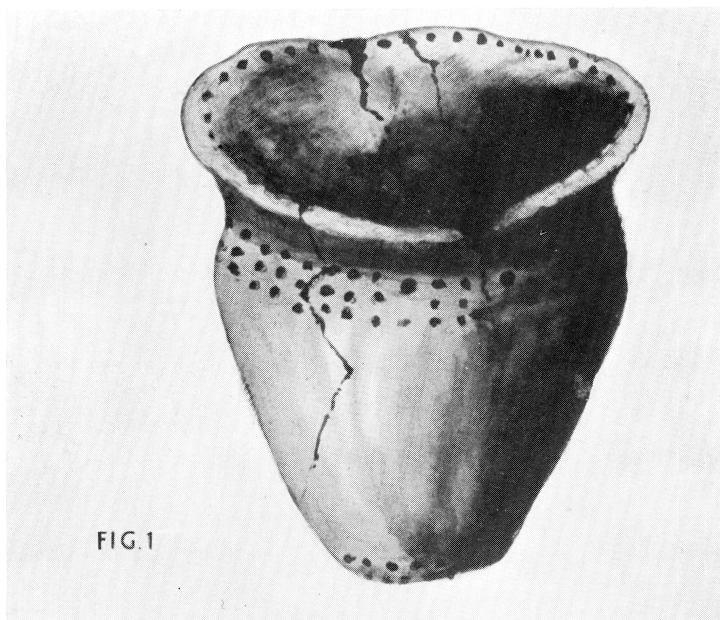


FIG. 1

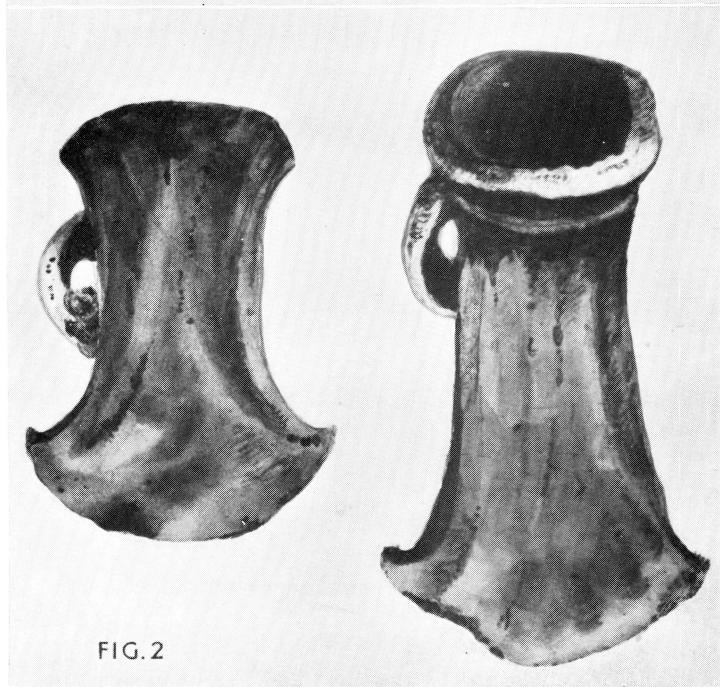


FIG. 2

FIG. 1. INCENSE CUP FOUND AT MARLEYKNOWE, NEAR COUPLAND.
FIG. 2. SOCKETED AXES FOUND AT HUMBLETON HILL, NEAR WOOLER.
(c. $\frac{3}{4}$.)

Society in the possession of Mr. Culley on the occasion of a visit to Coupland Castle on 21st June, 1888. They were then described simply as having been "found in the neighbourhood."³ This was the only information available when volume XIV of the County History was being written, and that is how they have been listed.⁴ The discovery of our drawing gives the true find-spot, from which it is clear that they come from south of the River Glen, and farther to the east than shown on map A in the County History (square H 6 rather than G 5).

It is much to be regretted that enquiries both in the late Mr. Weidner's day, and of the present owner of Coupland, our member Sir Walter Aitchison, have been unsuccessful in tracing the present whereabouts of these two interesting axes.

3. PREHISTORIC BRONZES FROM MISS WALKER'S COLLECTION.

The late Miss Walker of Orchard House, Hexham, had a small collection of prehistoric bronzes whose chief interest arose from their local origin. These she had inherited from her father, Mr. Wylam Walker, who was a contractor for the construction of some sections of the Newcastle to Carlisle railway. The bronzes were known to students of the subject, and had been drawn for, and duly incorporated in, the British Association Index of Bronze Implements now lodged at the British Museum. When I paid her a visit about 1932, Miss Walker allowed fullest inspection of her treasures, but she would on no account entertain the notion of parting with them. She was, even then, of a considerable age and very nearly blind, but was still living in 1939. On more than one occasion, whilst serving overseas, I speculated on the fate of her bronzes, for it seemed improbable that we should both survive the war, and I knew of no one else likely to rescue them in the event of the death of either.

³ PSAN, 2, III, 352.

⁴ NCH, XIV, 60, nos. 3-4.

In the summer of 1946 I learnt, by chance, that Miss Walker *had* survived the war, and had only recently died. Even so, however, it seemed too late, as the contents of her house had been sold six weeks before. The auctioneer who had himself compiled the catalogue for her sale proved most willing and helpful. He was, however, quite emphatic that the prehistoric bronzes had not been included in the sale. But if they had not been in the sale, then they might still be at the house; or possibly not actually in the house, but thrown out as rubbish into the grounds. Indeed, seeing that the house was now standing empty after the sale, the latter was the more likely alternative. A prolonged search in the garden amongst the ashes and around the edges of old bonfires was (and, I think, justly) rewarded by the sight of a bronze axe-head amongst scraps of domestic flotsam and jetsam which had not even been charred. An excited scramble among the weeds with which everything was already overgrown yielded every one of the bronzes in exactly the same condition as that in which I had seen them fourteen years before. They consist of six pieces, all weapons or fragments of weapons. Of these, four are from the Farnley Grange hoard, and the other two were found together near Haydon Bridge.¹

FRAGMENTS FROM THE FARNLEY GRANGE HOARD.

This hoard was authoritatively published by the late Parker Brewis in volume x of the County History, pp. 5-6. Miss Walker's fragments (pl. VII, figs. 1 and 2) are listed on page 6 as numbers 15 to 18. Numbers 15 and 16 were correctly described by Brewis as two fragments, which actually join, of a spear-head with protected loops,² and there is nothing to add to his description.

In regard, however, to numbers 17 and 18 there are several points which Brewis failed to observe. In the first place, the point of a spear-head (no. 17) has a most distinc-

¹ They are now in the Black Gate Museum.

² Greenwell and Brewis, *Archæologia*, LXI, class IVB.

tive section not exactly paralleled in Greenwell and Brewis's paper, but most like their fig. 18. The formation of the point, however, shows that our spear cannot have been of class III (as their fig. 18), but must have been a ribbed spear-head of class IIIA, and like their fig. 23. That is to say it was the point of a ribbed spear-head with basal loops.

The last fragment (no. 18) is, as Brewis recognized, part of the mid-rib portion of a spear-head, and has the beginnings of the wings on either side. These have, however, been broken off close to the tubular mid-rib and, at first sight, the determination of their type seems impossible. Closer examination, however, shows that the blade cannot have been of such extremely thin metal throughout, and that what we have left is the stump of a thin web between the mid-rib and ribs running in the wings. This observation makes Brewis's suggestion that it belongs "probably to an early leaf-shape" out of the question. It is clearly part of a spear-head of precisely similar type to no. 17.

Having determined this much, the next step is to consider whether they may not, in fact, be fragments of one and the same spear-head, and this they certainly are. The casting is faulty inasmuch as the cavity inside the mid-rib is not truly centred within the metal, but is misplaced to one side. The weapon is therefore particularly liable to fracture on that side (and indeed has so broken), while the metal at the opposite side is extra thick. These features are exactly repeated in both fragments. They do not touch, but must have formed part of a spear-head of considerable size. In further confirmation of this conclusion it may be added that the patina of both is identical (and slightly different from that on the other two fragments), and that both portions still retain pieces of the wood of the shaft.

To sum up, the Walker fragments constitute pieces of two, not three, spears; and one of these is of a type not hitherto noticed as being present in the Farnley hoard.

TWO AXES FROM HAYDON BRIDGE.

The remaining two pieces, though not so well known, are hardly less interesting (pl. VII, figs. 3, 4). They are recorded as having been found a short distance west of Haydon Bridge during the cutting of the North Eastern Railway in 1835-6, and were exhibited to the Society on the 26th Oct. 1892.³ They consist of a palstave, and a socketed axe, both complete, but now of somewhat rough appearance. The palstave, which is looped, is a common enough variety—not unlike Evans, fig. 76, but coarser—and needs no further comment. The socketed axe has a somewhat late and degenerate appearance particularly at the cutting edge. It would be an entirely undistinguished piece were it not that round the mouth it carries a clearly marked band of cable-moulding.

This is a most unusual type, and I know of no other English example. The only illustration I am able to quote is Evans, fig. 172, from Athboy, co. Meath, which is indeed quite a close parallel. This axe-head, formerly in the Greenwell Collection, is now in the British Museum, and Evans mentions that others are in the Museum of the Royal Irish Academy. The cable effect is produced by moulding direct upon a twisted withy-band (as in our example), or very coarse cord (Athboy). A refinement of this method may be seen in the Sale Catalogue of the Day Collection,⁴ pl. x, no. 245, from Lough Erne, where the coarse cable of the examples just quoted is replaced by four turns of a much finer cord, again moulded direct. Apart from the decoration, the general appearance of this axe, with its soft, rounded, and somewhat "slack" lines, is remarkably like that of the piece from Miss Walker's collection. This stage seems in turn to be superseded by the "imitation cord-technique" described by Evans.⁵ Thus both the type itself and those related to it seem to be exclusively of Irish

³ PSAN, 2, v, 228.

⁴ Sotheby, Wilkinson and Hodge, 19-22 May, 1913.

⁵ p. 141, and fig. 176, "North of Ireland"; see also Wilde, *Cat. R.I.A.*, fig. 276, "Ireland."



FIGS. 1 AND 2. FRAGMENTS OF SPEARHEADS FROM FARNLEY GRANGE, *c.* 1834.

FIGS. 3 AND 4. AXEHEADS FOUND NEAR HAYDON BRIDGE, 1835-36.

FIG. 5. SOCKETED AXE, MART FIELD, BELFORD, 1944.

FIG. 6. SOCKETED AXE, BROOMWOOD CAMP, EDLINGHAM, 1885.

(ALL *c.* $\frac{3}{4}$.)

origin. Pending further information, therefore (and it has not been possible to consult the Card Index in the British Museum), it can only be concluded that this axe-head from Haydon Bridge is a direct import from Ireland, and that it was on its way into Northumberland through the Tyne Gap.

Though earlier in type and appearance the palstave must be regarded as roughly contemporary with the socketed axe, and both must date from the latest phase of the Bronze Age in this part of the country.

4. A BRONZE AXE-HEAD FROM BELFORD.

On 30 Jan. 1946 the Belford & District Farmers' Auction Mart Ltd. gave to the Society a bronze socketed axe-head found close to Belford Station, when digging the foundations of a grain dryer at the Mart Field, in 1944.¹ When received it was covered with a soft green patina, but showed traces of bronze disease, and Mr. Bulmer at once treated it chemically. It proved to be heavily attacked all over the surface below the patina, but this has now been overcome leaving the implement perfectly clean, and of a fine golden bronze colour.

The axe merits closer attention than it was possible to give it at the time. It is $3\frac{1}{4}$ " long, and $1\frac{7}{8}$ " wide at the cutting edge. It is sub-rectangular in section, and the faces are plain, sweeping up to the mouth with no sign of that terminal moulding which is almost universal in the British socketed axe. Around the neck, however, between the loop and the mouth, runs a raised band consisting of a broad central beading flanked by two narrow ones. The whole is extremely neatly carried out in sharp relief (pl. VII, fig. 5).

It has proved impossible to trace any useful parallel from England or Scotland, and, like the Haydon Bridge axe, it seems that this too must be an import from Ireland. The general conformation at the mouth—the plain sweep

¹ PSAN, 4, x, 280.

of the profile up to the very lip, the omission of a moulded termination, and the substitution of a system of beadings round the neck to give finish to an otherwise perfectly plain piece—all these are thoroughly un-English features in a socketed axe; they are, on the other hand, absolutely characteristic of a large range of Irish ones. Numerous examples could be cited in support, but there is no need, as the truth of this statement can be seen at a glance in any of the standard works.

Really close parallels may, however, be seen in Evans, *Bronze Implements*,² and the *Sale Catalogue of the Day Collection*.³ Of these the former is closer to ours in the general shape of the body, the latter in the arrangement and proportions of the beadings. There can be no doubt that all three axes belong very close together. The taste for broad beadings flanked at each side by narrower, sharper ones may be seen in the *British Museum Guide, Bronze Age*,⁴ and in Wilde, *Cat. R.I.A.*⁵ While finally the fashion of ornamenting the socket with a raised band well clear of the mouth may be seen in its simplest form in Wilde,⁶ and in the *Day Catalogue*.⁷ Although in these last examples the raised band is quite plain, its position and proportions are directly comparable with the raised band of decoration on ours, and we are clearly dealing with two aspects of the same phenomenon.

The whole of the comparable material, therefore, comes from Ireland, and two more examples of the same general character from Wales can only be due to influence from the same direction. In the Guilsfield (Montgomery) hoard one at least of the socketed axes has around the neck two narrow beadings.⁸ The shape and proportions of this axe give it in any case a very Irish appearance, and it too may

² Fig. 169, from Belfast.

³ Pl. x, no. 241, from Ballinasloe, co. Galway.

⁴ Fig. 107, from Dungiven, co. Derry.

⁵ Fig. 277, "Ireland."

⁶ Fig. 279, "Ireland."

⁷ Pl. ix, no. 238, from Lisburn.

⁸ Wheeler, *Prehistoric and Roman Wales*, fig. 54, 3.

well be of Irish make. Finally an isolated find from Beaumaris (Anglesey) has an interesting form of decoration which appears to be unique.⁹ Here the raised band, or combination of beadings, around the neck, is replaced by a double twisted-cord—or simple plait—in relief. It is clear that the mould has been formed directly upon an actual plaited cord passed around the neck of the model. And this agrees with the appearance of the decoration on our Belford axe, which looks as if it had been produced by precisely the same means. Wherever the Beaumaris axe may have been made, the accessibility of Anglesey to influences from Ireland is too evident to call for further emphasis.¹⁰

The recognition of two Irish socketed axes in Northumberland, striking though it may be, need cause no difficulty. There is already good evidence of contacts with Ireland during more than one phase of the local Bronze Age. To go no further than our own collections, there is, on the two food vessels from Colwell (BAP, 125) and Jesmond (BAP, 227), that false-relief technique of which it seems likely that Ireland was the home.¹¹ The round bottom of the Colwell vessel may also point in the same direction. While in addition we have the two hollow gold penannulars from Cooper's Hill, Alnwick,¹² which are Irish not only in material but in form and decoration also.

4A. BRONZE AXE-HEAD FROM BROOMWOOD CAMP, EDLINGHAM.

The acquisition of the above axe-head, through the generosity of Miss Bolam of Alston (*not* Allendale), was recorded in *Proceedings*.¹ To complete the pictorial record of recent additions to the bronze implements in our collection it is included on pl. VII, fig. 6.

⁹ *Ibid.*, fig. 55, 6.

¹⁰ For Irish and Irish-influenced axes in Scotland see PSAS, LXXII (1938), 155-7, figs. 2, 3.

¹¹ Clark, PPS, 1935, 83 and map, fig. 10.

¹² AA, 4, XVI, 101.

¹ PSAN, 4, X (1944), 204.

5. A BRONZE SOCKETED AXE FROM CHEVIOT.

On the 11 Nov. 1877 the late Robert Blair obtained from Thomas Anderson, one of the Usway Ford shepherds, a bronze socketed axe, a whetstone, and (attached to the latter) the remains of some iron implement, all of which the shepherd had found together in the peat on Caldaw Hope, near Comb Fell, in the Cheviots. The discovery was well published by James Hardy¹ with drawings of all the objects. And in due course the whole find, with the rest of the Blair collection, became the property of this Society.

The axe-head (pl. VIII, fig. 1), which alone we are considering here, is $3\frac{3}{4}$ " in length, rectangular in section, long and comparatively narrow. It is extremely corroded, and over the greater part of the surface the soft outer crust of patina has crumbled or has been chipped away; this applies in particular to the whole of one face, but indeed very little of the original surface remains on the other. In addition at the mouth a large piece of the socket has been broken clean away. The original shape and details of the design are accordingly very difficult to recover; but it can at least be discerned that one face at all events has been decorated with two pairs of thin lines running 2" down over the body parallel to the sides, and that in the centre between them is a plain flat space without decoration at all. This in itself is an unusual arrangement.

In form and general appearance it is quite unlike the normal run of axes from this area and, what is more, I have never felt that any of those illustrated in the standard works offer a really convincing parallel.

In the circumstances it may be wondered whether it is worth searching for a parallel at all. Perhaps it is not, and our axe after all may be too far gone. For that reason I do not press what follows, but the resemblance to which I am about to draw attention seems worth publishing if only as a matter of record.

¹ *Hist. B.N.C.*, 1885/6, pp. 291-2; see also *NCH*, xiv, 30 and 60-1.



1.

2.

3.

4.

FIG. 1. CHEVIOT, 1877; BLACK GATE MUSEUM, NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE.
FIGS. 2-4. HOOGSTRAETEN (PROV. ANTWERP), 1845; CINQUANTENAIRE MUSEUM, BRUSSELS.
(c. $\frac{3}{8}$.)

When visiting the Cinquantenaire Museum in Brussels before the war I was much struck by the appearance of a founder's hoard preserved there. It had consisted of 20 socketed axes, of which only 13, including fragments, were recovered; it was found by chance in 1845 on the line of an old road, then being brought back into use, in the commune of Hoogstraeten, province of Antwerp.²

The find is of no great intrinsic interest, and it caught the eye solely because of the remarkable resemblance, which struck me instantly, between several of its components and our Cheviot axe. The museum authorities were good enough to supply a photograph of a selection of the most representative pieces, and this I reproduce with acknowledgments of their kindness (pl. VIII, figs. 2-4).

The photographs may be left to speak for themselves. Of the very close resemblance between the least well-preserved of the Belgian axes (fig. 2), and our own (fig. 1), *in their present state* there is no disputing. It is perhaps a question whether it is worth pointing out. But when one day the socketed axes of this country come at last to be properly examined the Hoogstraeten hoard should not be overlooked.

6. THE CORBRIDGE GOLD RING : A FOOTNOTE.

In 1936 I read to this Society a paper on "An inscribed openwork gold ring from Corstopitum."¹ In that paper there is noted² an example of the same class from Tirllemont, mentioned by Dalton, and it was suggested that this might be the same as one I had seen in the Cinquantenaire Museum at Brussels, but of which I then had no further particulars.

The publication in 1937 of vol. III (Roman Period) of Baron de Loë's fine Catalogue, *Belgique Ancienne*, enables this matter to be taken a stage further. Not that it would be worth reopening the subject, and writing a footnote to a footnote, were it not that the new line of investigation opens

² De Loë, *Catalogue*, II, pp. 14-15, with refs.

¹ AA, 4, XIII, 310-19.

² p. 314, n. 10a.

up quite different possibilities in the dating of this kind of jewellery.

In brief de Loë³ illustrates two such openwork gold rings as ours. The first,⁴ an isolated find from Herstal (prov. Liège), is actually in the museum. It is a splendid example (pl. v, fig. 2) with the projecting square element like the Franks ring in the British Museum referred to in my paper (p. 313). Like ours it is divided horizontally into three registers, but in this case the inscription is in two lines in the outer registers divided by a band of decoration in the centre. It is inscribed in Latin—on the bezel :

VTERE

FELIX

and round the hoop :

GELASI VIVAS ET

AMERIS A NOBIS

But for the use of the word *Vivas* there is nothing to suggest a Christian influence in the ordinary pagan flavour of the remainder. Nor does the design of the openwork at all resemble in detail that of the Corbridge ring. In any case as an isolated find it does not usefully advance our knowledge.

The second ring is that from Tirmont (Brabant) mentioned above. It is represented only by a photograph⁵ of which the original is stated to be in the cabinet of Baron Edmond de Rothschild in Paris. It also has a square projection, but the design of the hoop is very close to ours (pl. v, fig. 3). It is divided vertically into fourteen concave facets marked by perpendicular bars, and horizontally into three registers of which the central one is filled with openwork letters reading :

CONCORDI COMMVN.

³ *Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire à Bruxelles; Belgique Ancienne, Catalogue Descriptif et Raisonné, t. III: La Période Romaine* par le Baron de Loë, Bruxelles, 1937.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 122, with references, and fig. 52.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 93-4, with full bibliography, and fig. 31.

Immediately above and below these letters, and directly touching them (without the intervention of a horizontal bar or diamond-shaped links) is a series of *peltae* facing outwards, and indistinguishable from those on the Corbridge ring. The resemblance is striking, and both rings must come from the same workshop.

The great interest, however, for us of the Tirlemont ring is that it comes from a datable excavation. It was part of the rich tomb-furniture of one of the Tombes de Grimde excavated by the Société d'Archéologie de Bruxelles in 1892. The Tombes de Grimde form one of the best known among several groups of prominent barrows containing a rich array of Roman grave-goods. Burials of this type are confined to the Hesbaye district in Belgium, with a few examples in this country scattered along the Thames estuary.⁶ All seem to fall within the first century and a half of our era. Those at Tirlemont are dated by Belgian authorities to the end of the first or the beginning of the second century A.D. Without going into details a glance at the contents shows that the reasons for this dating must be well founded. It will suffice to mention a cameo of a head believed to be that of Octavian (de Loë, fig. 32), also stated to be in Paris.⁷ Our own Lexden tumulus is certainly of the first century A.D.

Such a date for the ring is quite incompatible with the fourth century dating proposed in my former paper, and based on views hitherto generally accepted in this country. It is not proposed to offer a solution here, but simply to draw attention to this new evidence. If, however, the Tirlemont burial be accepted as a closed find (and it was properly excavated), no "solution" is necessary. However surprising it may seem, this whole class of rings—design, technique, and all—*must* be at least two hundred years older than had

⁶ e.g. Bartlow Hills and Lexden, both in Essex.

⁷ How the two most valuable and attractive pieces from this excavation, conducted by a reputable society, could have found their way into private hands in another country is not apparent. But I have not further examined the literature.

been thought possible, and in the phrasing of their inscriptions there can hardly be any question of Christian formulæ.

7. THE CARVORAN SPEAR-HEAD AGAIN.

In 1940 Dr. I. A. Richmond said once and for all, what had long needed saying, that the barbaric spear-head from Carvoran has nothing whatever to do with the Anglo-Saxon invasion of this country (see plate IX, fig. 1).¹ But having taken the weapon out of the hands of the Anglo-Saxons he gave it to the Franks. This may be history; it is not archæology. We console ourselves with the thought that it is Agathias, and not Dr. Richmond, who is to blame.

In fact this very rare and beautifully preserved spear-head—one of the treasures of the Black Gate—is generically Teutonic, and specifically not Frankish. The barbed spear or javelin is a characteristic weapon of the Germanic peoples. The Celts did not use such things.² It makes a first appearance in the late La Tène period, in rudimentary form and restricted numbers, among the Burgundians of Eastern Germany (West Prussia, Posen, and Galicia).³ In the Roman period the type was adopted by the West Germans also, and became fairly common on the Elbe; meanwhile it continued to exist in its Burgundian home, though finds are rare, and it appeared also on the adjacent territory of the Vandals (e.g. Silesia).⁴ The barbs have now developed, and though at first the shank is short,⁵ as in the pre-Roman period, it soon begins to lengthen and to show the elongated neck of solid metal which is so marked a feature of the Carvoran spear-head, and which was probably copied from the Roman *p̄zum*.⁶ In the later Roman

¹ PSAN, 4, ix, 136-8, and pl. v.

² See for example Vouga, *La Tène*, pls. ix to xiv, illustrating 70 spear-heads, not one of them barbed.

³ M. Jahn, *Die Bewaffnung der Germanen in der älteren Eisenzeit*, pp. 57-8 and fig. 72.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 87-8.

⁵ *Ibid.*, fig. 95.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 88-9, figs. 96 and 97—the latter 15 inches long.

period the type must have been well established among the Teutonic tribes, and we meet it abundantly in the great Danish moor-finds. Unfortunately (from a chronological point of view) no spear-heads were preserved in the Thorsbjerg find, deposited c. A.D. 350; but at Nydam, deposited c. A.D. 400, it was common. Engelhart⁷ illustrates a dozen or so examples, some of striking resemblance indeed to our Carvoran piece.⁸

The whole history of the type can thus be traced before the end of the fourth century, always on Teutonic soil, and associated with more than one of the Teutonic peoples, but never as it happens with the Franks, in whose territory, the Rhineland and Low Countries, I do not believe it is ever found.⁹ The Franks had, however, their own variety of this weapon, and surely Baldwin Brown was right when he claimed the Harmignies piece as the type-example of the true *angon*.¹⁰ Here is a form common in all the Frankish cemeteries in Belgium, and occurring also on the Rhine. Whatever we may call it this is a weapon of the Franks *par excellence*, and as we should expect from the long contact of this people with the Romans it shows a far closer resemblance to the *pilum* than does the other weapon developed far to the east of the Teutoburger Wald. "Notfried's Irregulars" indeed gain point!¹¹

With the further evidence now before us it is confirmed

⁷ *Denmark in the Early Iron Age*, Nydam, pl. xi, figs. 22-32 and 37-8.

⁸ See especially figs. 25 and 27, and (for the head only) fig. 32.

⁹ This is confirmed by notes taken in museums abroad which, though incomplete for the Rhineland, cover fully Holland, Belgium and Northern France. I have, on the other hand, noted the type at Oslo—one classified as pre-Roman Iron Age; and Bergen—two assigned to the Roman period, and others (less like ours) to the Migration period. It appears in Sweden also; *Fornvännen* 27 (1932), p. 159, fig. 74, from Skuttunge Kyrka, Uppland.

¹⁰ *Arts in Early England*, III, 240, pl. xxxii, 12.

¹¹ It has not, I believe, previously been observed that our Society possesses a second example of this rare type of Teutonic armament. It is in the Blair collection from the Roman site at South Shields, and is in poor condition. It is a smaller piece, much corroded, and now lacks both the point and all but the stumps of the barbs. In type and construction, however, it is identical with the Carvoran spear. Other examples may exist in this country, but I am not aware of any such.

that this weapon is "barbaric," and that it is of the Roman period. It has also, on the other hand, been shown that the type is not Frankish but a common property of the Teutonic peoples (*except* the Franks). Whether or not we call it an *angon* is a matter of choice. Different as they are, Agathias' description applies equally well to the Carvoran and Harmignies types. If we take him literally, and perhaps it is best to do so, we shall confine the term to the weapon of the Franks. If, on the other hand, we remind ourselves that he was a Byzantine describing at large under the name of Franks the mixed Teutonic invaders of Italy; that his description of the weapon fits equally more than one variety of the Teutonic spear-head; and that the word itself by derivation applies equally to both (and may have been so applied by the respective peoples who used them), then we may feel inclined to accept a wider meaning. But I hope not, for Agathias lived in the sixth century and wrote of sixth century affairs. His term has by now an established flavour of the period of the Teutonic Migrations. It implies the wrong setting for an object we know to belong to an earlier period, and may indeed once more in the future, as it has already in the past, mislead. For that reason, if for no other, I trust it may now be dropped.

8. A SPEAR-HEAD FROM FESTINIOG, NORTH WALES.

The recent discovery of a few very early labels from the Society's museum has not only given us the provenance of the only Viking sword in our collection,¹ but has also cleared up another little question of long standing. On the 5th May, 1824, Sir Thomas Pate Hanken gave to the Society an object described as "A Spear Head, found in the year 1817, in a peat bog, near Festiniog, in North Wales, about three miles from where the tide comes up from the sea."² The question was to which of two objects in the Museum this record refers (pl. ix, fig. 2).

¹ *Supra*, pp. 55-61.

² AA, I, II, Dons, p. 5.

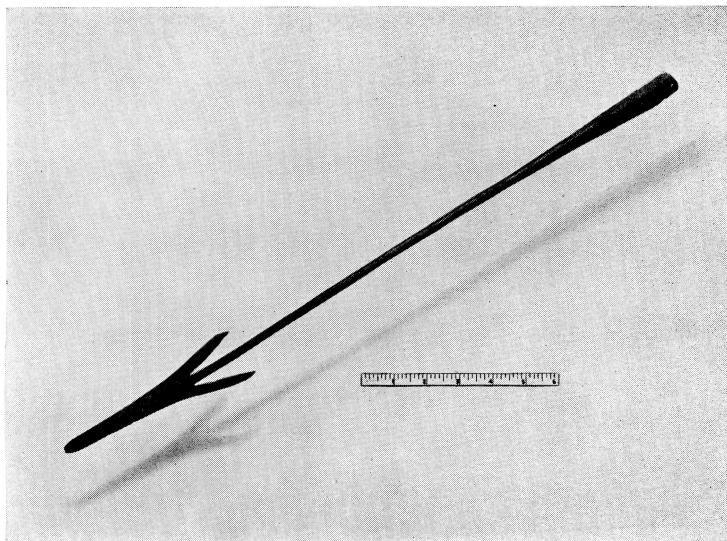


FIG. 1. SPEARHEAD FROM CARVORAN, 1833 ($\frac{1}{6}$).

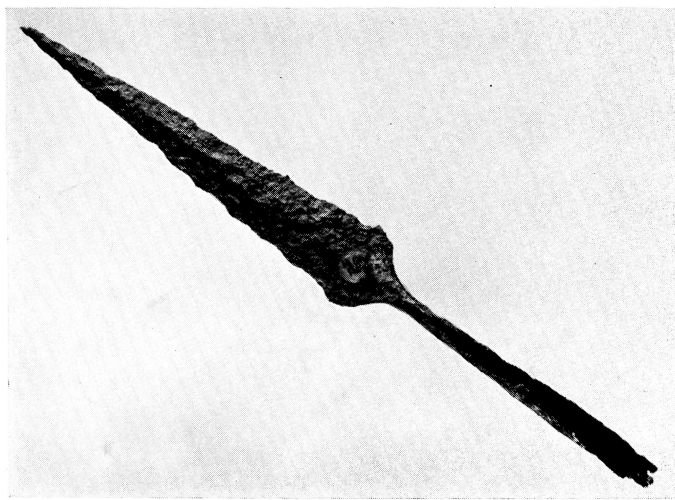


FIG. 2. SPEARHEAD FROM FESTINIOG, NO. WALES, 1817 ($\frac{1}{4}$).

The natural interpretation of such a statement is that the spear-head was of iron, on the basis that, had it been of bronze—the rarer and more attractive material—the fact would surely have been stated. Nevertheless, there is in our collection a bronze dagger which formerly carried a label of the 1852 series reading “7 Festiniog, N. Wales, 1824.” So firm an attribution so far back in the Society’s history seemed conclusive. No difficulty was felt over the description of a bronze dagger as a spear-head, since confusion between these two classes of object was quite usual in the first half of last century.

On the other hand, grave doubts had arisen on the authenticity of this provenance. These were based chiefly on the fact that a certain iron spear-head in the collection carries one of the circular Old Series labels numbered 116. Now the Old Series system of numbering as applied to the early Donation Lists attributes the number 116 precisely to the above quoted entry of the Festiniog spear-head. If this was a coincidence it was a remarkable one. But as the system breaks down in any case on other grounds shortly after this point it was felt impossible to press it here, and it was assumed that it must have already broken down just before number 116. The identification, therefore, involving as it did the rejection of the 1852 label on the bronze dagger, was not made. And with reason, since up to the summer of 1947 no case had been established in which it could be shown that any of the 1852 labels was not strictly accurate. The identification of the bronze dagger with the Festiniog find has accordingly continued throughout; it was accepted by Parker Brewis when compiling his MS. Catalogue of our prehistoric bronzes in 1918, and by myself when working over the same material again in greater detail in 1929-30. Nevertheless the doubt remained.

Among the labels which have recently been discovered in this Society’s Letter Book VI is the original label which accompanied Sir Thomas Pate Hanken’s gift. The wording is practically identical with that in the Donations List,

and to that extent does not advance our knowledge; but in addition there has been added in the margin the number 116! No better proof could be asked for than this. The iron spear-head still labelled 116 is the spear-head from Festiniog, and the 1852 label on the bronze dagger *must* be wrong. The latter cannot otherwise be identified in our Donation Lists, and henceforward recedes into the category of "Locality Unknown." The mistake can only be due to an early confusion of labels in the museum cases. If its provenance is ever to be recovered, which is doubtful, it will have to be by other means.

Furthermore the new identification enables the application to the Donation Lists of the Old Series numbering to be extended down to no. 123 (presented 6th Dec. 1826), and thus to cover the first fourteen years of the Society's existence.

The spear-head itself is curious. The long split socket and the shape of the blade have caused it hitherto to be tentatively classified as Anglo-Saxon. But the split in the socket is probably due to corrosion, and the new provenance now makes an Anglo-Saxon origin most unlikely. On historical grounds it might well have been left behind by Viking raiders from Ireland or Man. Welcome confirmation comes from Norway. To Professor Johs. Bøe of Bergen I am indebted for the following observation: "The spear-head certainly seems to be Viking, one of the slender forms of the tenth century or thereabouts." Precise parallels from the material preserved in this country are not available, but with that opinion we may, I feel, well rest content.

9. A RARE IRON AXE-HEAD.

On 26 Oct. 1904 Messrs. Balfour & Sons, of Newcastle, exhibited, and later presented, to this Society a small iron axe-head 5 inches long, "found in a mud deposit, 11 feet below the present ground level, at Bawtry in Yorkshire."¹

¹ PSAN, 3, 1, 273 and fig.

Its age was stated to be "uncertain," and the drawing then published, though giving a fair general impression, is not altogether satisfactory. A photograph, therefore, is now submitted (pl. x, fig. 1).

It is singular that the piece should have attracted no attention since, for it is an exceedingly rare object in fine preservation, and whatever its precise date may be, it comes from a period very sparsely represented in the museum cases of this country.

By good fortune it has been preserved in mud, and in consequence a high proportion of the original surface remains intact. It is noticeable that the metal of the actual edge and the adjoining parts is in even better preservation than the rest of the piece. The reason is that, since the forging of iron makes it of greater toughness and density, those parts which naturally call for more careful working are less liable to corrosion.^{1a} The photograph sufficiently illustrates its general shape, and special features—the long spurs at each side of the shaft-hole, both above and below, and all intact (the upper pair have been slightly hammered in to grip the shaft); the fine outward sweep of the blade; the slope of the strongly curved edge; and the lines of simple decoration on the socket. From the spurs and the look of the blade it is certain that we have here to do with a weapon made in the Viking fashion. But nothing else quite like it is known, and we can only reach further conclusions by inference.

It is obviously closely related to the great Viking battle-axe of the eleventh century (Wheeler, type VI; Petersen, type M). The unmistakable sweeping blade, the sloped edge, and the socket-spurs are all common to both. There are, too, indications of that thickening of the metal immediately behind the edge, which enabled the smith to work

^{1a} It is well known that one of the readiest aids to the detection of restorations and inferior work in genuine suits of armour is the greater susceptibility of the former to rust, owing to the very much heavier and more prolonged forging to which all armour of the best quality was submitted.

up a weapon at once light in the blade, yet with sufficient weight at the point where it was needed to give both backing to the edge and balance to the whole. This thickening behind the edge seems to be peculiar to the battle-axe of the Vikings, and to distinguish it from all other axes. That the great battle-axe outlasted the Viking period into the twelfth century is well established,² and it is difficult to pin our weapon down more closely. Yet it is a most distinctive little piece and it ought to be possible to do so. The following considerations seem to favour an earlier rather than a later dating:

(1) Among the series of axes admirably illustrated in the *London Museum Catalogue* of the Medieval Period there is nothing at all comparable. This is, of course, a negative argument, and particularly dangerous as the London Museum axes are not themselves at all securely dated. But taken as a whole they do present a certain uniformity, if only of heaviness and plain construction. And the point is further made that "as a general rule it would seem that the medieval axe is a larger tool than its predecessors and that it normally had a simple socket."³ All that is very different from the axe-head now before us.

(2) The size and proportions of our axe are precisely those of Wheeler's type IV (Petersen K, L), an earlier type dated by Wheeler to the tenth century and held by him to have been wholly or largely superseded by type VI from about the year 1000.⁴ Attention may be drawn particularly to Petersen's type L (his fig. 43) to which, but for the sweeping lines of the blade and delicately formed spurs in our example directly derived from the great battle-axe, it bears a strong general resemblance. This type is dated by Petersen from the middle of the tenth "right down into the eleventh century." It is not suggested that the Bawtry axe

² Petersen, *Vikingsverd*, p. 46; Ward Perkins, *London Museum Catalogues No. 7, Medieval*, p. 63.

³ *Loc. cit.*, p. 56.

⁴ Wheeler, *London Museum Catalogues No. 1, London and the Vikings*, p. 25.

is transitional between types IV and VI; on the contrary it has clearly been influenced by type VI at an advanced stage. But it does seem to be the result of fusion between a lingering tradition of type IV, and type VI at the height of its development.

(3) The ornament on the socket has no exact parallel, but the medieval axes in the London Museum have no such ornament at all. The vertical lines sometimes seen on them just *forward* of the socket are vestigial, and derive from the method of manufacture. The decoration on our axe is also certainly vestigial, but derives from the method of securing the head on the shaft. One or two of the Viking axes in the London Museum have vertical lines at *each side* of the socket like ours;⁵ but the only other axe-head of which I am aware with the crossed lines right across the socket is the celebrated axe from Mammen in Jutland, which, as its elaborate decoration in the Jellinge style shows, is quite certainly tenth century.⁶

On the other hand we are not inclined to move the dating too far back, not at all events before the full development of the great battle-axe. And our piece has not the look of a purely Viking product.

Perhaps, after all, typology has already been pushed far enough. It remains certain that the Bawtry axe-head is of the eleventh or twelfth century; and within these limits the period 1050-1100 seems best to suit such evidence as there is. Any iron object which can even tentatively be assigned to this period is so rare—and a weapon doubly so—that this piece, with its marked characteristics, and in so fine a state of preservation, may be claimed as being of quite unusual interest.

⁵ *Loc. cit.*, fig. 9, 1 of type III, c. 750-850; and fig. II, of type VI, eleventh century.

⁶ Baldwin Brown, *Arts in Early England*, III, pl. xxx, 4.

10. AN EARLY FIND FROM NEAR WALLINGTON.

On 2 April 1823 W. C. Trevelyan of Wallington presented to this Society "An ancient Hammer Head of Iron, and Piece of a Brass Vessel, found in a Cairn on Scarlett Hall Farm, near Wallington, in 1819."¹ That is all that is known of the discovery, which is not elsewhere recorded. But as it happens we can identify with certainty the objects so given by means of the Old Series labels on them (nos. 102 and 103), and the reconstructed earliest catalogue in which nos. 102 and 103 relate to this donation.

The iron hammer-head is well preserved, about 6" long by $3\frac{1}{2}" \times 3\frac{1}{2}"$, and extremely heavy, weighing $10\frac{1}{4}$ lbs. It is rather rhomboidal than square in section (though probably a square section was intended), and both faces are to some extent mushroomed out at the edges by use. The shaft-hole is a narrow ellipse on plan, $2\frac{3}{4}" \times 1\frac{1}{4}"$. It is hardly at all corroded, and the edges are clean and sharp. It is indeed a formidable tool (pl. x, fig. 2).

The "Piece of a Brass Vessel" was already broken in two when received (as the Minute Book shows), but both fragments are available, and in fact they join. They are the merest scraps, the larger only $2\frac{1}{4}"$ long (see plate), but both are from the lip of a vessel of cast bronze with a substantial beading to strengthen it at the rim. The larger piece has a small hole drilled under this rim, no doubt for a handle, and also shows a curious thickening of the metal which looks like a mend, were it not that there is no evidence of such on the smooth inner surface. It may perhaps be due to a join in the mould. In the present condition of the pieces it is unfortunately impossible to make any useful estimate of the diameter of the complete vessel, or of the angle of slope of the neck.

In these few details, it will be seen, there is little enough on which to base a reasoned dating. On the classification of the museum some years ago the hammer-head

¹ AA, I, II, Dons, 3.



FIG. 1. IRON AXE-HEAD, BAWTRY, 1904 ($\frac{2}{3}$).



FIG. 2. IRON SLEDGE-HAMMER AND FRAGMENTS OF BRONZE VESSEL,
SCARLET HALL FARM, WALLINGTON, 1819 ($\frac{5}{8}$).

(with its accompanying fragments) was placed among other heavy iron-work of which the remainder came from unquestioned Roman sites. But this was a discard from weakness, and further reflection has led to other lines of thought.

It is surprising that such simple objects should have been noticed at all and, having been noticed, should have been thought worth preserving as antiquities by country-folk finding them in 1819. The implication is that the circumstances of the discovery had already put the finders on the alert, so that they were *expecting* to come on something before they actually did so. The only circumstance we do know is that the discovery was made "in a Cairn," and this no doubt accounts for the contents being observed. The mention of the cairn leads one, indeed, naturally to suspect a grave. But if that was so, the contents are decidedly odd. We are pushed back at once into pagan times; yet the relics, such as they are, cannot be fitted into pre-medieval archæology.

The sledge-hammer, for it is no less, is not distinctive and might indeed be at home in almost any period between the Romans and the nineteenth century. But its size and weight argue rather for a later than an earlier date, and no such object seems to be recorded from a pre-Norman context. More decisive are the fragments of the bronze vessel. Here the cast-technique, the heavy rim, and thick walls, look like nothing in pre-Conquest archæology, and have all the appearance of the Middle Ages or later. Taking all in all the type of vessel they would best fit would, one feels, be the common tripod cauldron or kail-pot, used throughout medieval times, and at least into the eighteenth century.

On that view our find will not have been a burial, and one can only suppose that the site had been a dwelling-place of sorts, and that the cairn was in fact some collapsed and forgotten steading, maybe comparatively modern. In that event the relics have little archæological interest;

but the association and the circumstances are unusual, and seemed to merit some examination. Meanwhile the Scarlet Hall find has been removed from among the Roman ironwork in the museum, where it was certainly misplaced.