NOTES BY MEMBERS AND OTHERS.

Base of Granite preserved in the Guildhall, London.—There has been much surmise concerning the origin of the base of some large granite column which is preserved in the crypt of the Guildhall, London. Moreover, search has failed to discover any entry in the records of the City Corporation of its acquisition. Our member, Mr. William Charles Edwards, through whom this Note has been obtained, mentions a tradition that it was part of a series of twelve and, raising the difficulty of bringing into the crypt so large a fragment, suggests that it might be occupying its original site and that the crypt was built around it.

That the mass was of Eastern origin is now established by the following Note which has been kindly supplied by Mr. Herbert H. Thomas, M.A., Sc.D., Petrographer to H.M. Geological Survey:—

The base of the column as preserved consists of a square plinth, with truncated corners, which measures 6 feet across and 1 foot in height.

This is surmounted by a two-tier circular moulding 1 foot 6 inches in height and 5 feet 6 inches in greatest diameter. The whole base is carved out of one piece of stone and its estimated weight would be a little over five tons. From analogy to other bases of Roman columns, this particular base carried a column about 40 feet in height, approximately 4 feet in diameter, and weighing between 35 and 40 tons. Such a column, restored on the base in question, has been figured by Mr. Gordon Home in his book on Roman London, (*Roman London*, 1926, p. 201), and he makes the suggestion that it was one of the interior columns of the basilica of Londinium (*op. cit.* p. 190).

The rock of which the base is composed is a strikingly handsome porphyritic granite in which the large pink to red crystals of felspar are so numerous and closely packed as to give the rock a dominant red colour. The matrix in which these somewhat irregularly bounded red crystals are embedded is of a mottled character, and dark greenish-grey, white and greenish tints prevail. The general effect is of red felspar set in a matrix of more sombre hue. In detail the matrix consists of colourless and slightly opalescent quartz, a fair quantity of dark grey to black hornblende and biotite, and a little plagioclase felspar rendered green by epidote and other secondary products.

Microscopic examination reveals the fact that the red felspars are of the variety known as microcline which possesses a highly characteristic microstructure.

Although there appears to be no divergence of opinion as to its Roman workmanship, there is some uncertainty as to the position this column originally occupied and still more so as to the source from which the stone was obtained.

If the column is a British antiquity it is proper that all possible British and neighbouring sources from which the rock might have been obtained should be carefully reviewed. There are a number of British and Northern French granites that bear a superficial resemblance, chiefly in colour and texture, to the rock in question. Undoubtedly it was this superficial resemblance that caused Mr. Gordon Home to suggest that the rock of which the column-base is composed came from Shap in Westmorland (*op. cit.* p. 201), and the object of this Note is to correct that suggestion lest it should become generally accepted.

Shap granite differs from the granite in question in the arrangement and nature of its mineral constituents, and the same is true in the case of other British granites available to the Romans, as well as of the pink granites of the Channel Islands, Normandy, and Brittany; thus, identity in matters of essential detail cannot be established.

The red granite of Assouan, in Egypt, is however a hornblende biotite granite identical in colour, texture, mineral constituents and microscopic structure with that of the column-base, and there is not the slightest doubt that the rock was obtained from this ancient source.

This granite was used largely in Egypt by the Egyptians, as in the pyramid of Cheops, Cleopatra's Needle and other monoliths, and Pompey's Pillar at Alexandria. Later, in Roman times, it was extensively exported to Rome and Roman settlements on the Mediterranean. It is interesting and instructive to remember that there are records of many hundreds of columns of this material having been used in the building of Ancient Rome.

VISIT TO THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.—On Friday, the 12th March, 1926, the Society visited the Houses of Parliament and were conducted round Westminster Hall, the Crypt Chapel of the House of Commons, the Library of the House of Lords, and some of the more commonly known parts of the famous building. The members were first received by Mr. Thomas Wilson, Clerk of the Works of the Palace of Westminster and Deputy Keeper of Westminster Hall, who explained that the Hall was completed in 1099 in which year William Rufus kept his Court for the first time. When the King came with a large retinue to inspect the Hall, someone remarked that it was "larger than it should have been," to which the King replied that it was "only a bedchamber" in comparison with the building he meant to erect. The Hall was the scene of the trial of King Charles I, Warren Hastings, and other famous personages. The roof of the Hall was the most superb example in the world, of an open timber-framed structure. It had been ravaged by the death-watch beetle, but this pest had now been eradicated and the roof repaired by means of steel struts and braces

to a degree of security which would enable it to last for many hundred years.

The members were then conducted to the Crypt Chapel of the House of Commons, which Mr. Wilson described in detail from the time of its building in the thirteenth century until it was saved from the fire of 1834 which destroyed the old Houses of Parliament and decorated as it is seen to-day.

In the Library of the House of Lords, overlooking the Thames, the members were received by Mr. Charles Clay, M.A., F.S.A., the Librarian to the House of Lords, who exhibited the various treasures contained there, including the Treaty of Union between England and Scotland and the death-warrant of King Charles I. This last, it was explained by Mr. Clay, was sent, after the trial, to Colonel Francis Hacker, one of the officers specially charged with the custody of the King and who usually commanded the guard of Halberdiers who escorted his Majesty to and from Westminster Hall. He was one of the officers to whom the warrant for the King's execution was addressed, and he produced the document on the morning of the 30th January, 1649, as giving authority for the execution of his Majesty. In 1661, after the Restoration, Colonel Hacker himself was brought to trial for the part he had taken in encompassing the death of the King, and on being called on for his defence he produced the warrant which had remained in his keeping since 1649. The document did not suffice to save his life and he was sentenced to death and was hanged on the 19th October, 1660. During his trial the warrant lay on the table among other documents, and after Colonel Hacker's death it was deposited with the State documents in the House of Lords where it has since remained. In 1729, one of the Clerks of the House of Lords, noticing that the warrant was getting a little the worse for wear perhaps from frequent handling pasted it down on a piece of board for its better keeping as he imagined. In recent years, however, the warrant was taken to the Record Office and carefully

removed from its wooden support. The wood was found to be worm eaten in several places, but the warrant itself uninjured. It now lies flat, but unmounted, in its glass case in the House of Lords Library, and is described officially as being in good condition.

E.H.R.

ALLHALLOW'S, LOMBARD STREET.—We regret to announce that Mr. L. R. Thomas, who was Verger and Clerk of the church of Allhallow's, Lombard Street, died on the 8th of October, 1926, after a painful illness. Those who knew him will mourn his loss very keenly. Mr. Thomas had transcribed vast numbers of particulars from the records of the old Church and he had promised to let us have some of the interesting things which he had discovered in those records.

His death makes it impossible in this issue but we hope that the manuscript which he had prepared will be placed at our disposal and that from time to time we shall be able to publish some of the interesting details which are recorded in the records of the Church.

ROMAN LONDON: MILES LANE, E.C.—During the course of an excavation over a somewhat extensive area to the west of Miles Lane and immediately to the south of Arthur Street West, large-dimensioned timbers arranged horizontally and vertically in a regular design were laid bare. The excavated area lay back from the Thames some 300 feet and from the present Upper Thames Street some 80 feet.

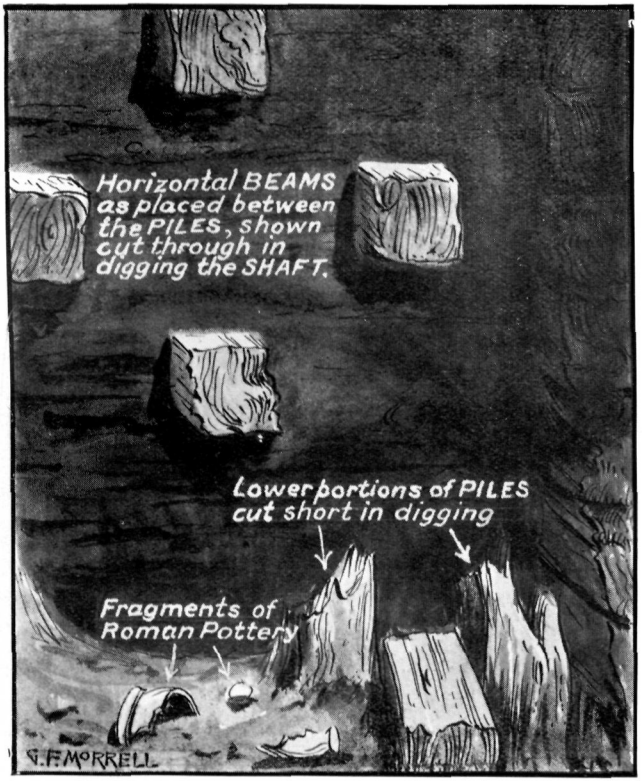
When visited by the writer, many timbers were still to be seen in position, while in a number of places the virgin soil had been reached. On the top of this soil there was a layer of black earth from 2 ins. to 4 ins. in depth mixed with oyster shells. The timbers which were brought to light had been roughly squared. From the presence of many fragments of stamped pottery, it is concluded that the structure belonged to a period earlier than A.D. 100.

The timbering apparently formed a part of the river-side Roman wharfage which, situated on the east side of Miles Lane, Mr. Frank Lambert, F.S.A., described fully in *Archæologia* [1921] Vol. LXXI, pp. 55-112. In the same Paper, Mr. Lambert dealt with the probability of a gradual sinking of land in the neighbourhood of the Thames, a probability which many geologists and antiquaries had been in substantial agreement. In addition to pottery, " a metal stylus in a splendid state of preservation and as sharp as the day it was made has also been found, together with a portion of a statuette of a woman." (*The Times Weekly Edition* 24 June, 1926).

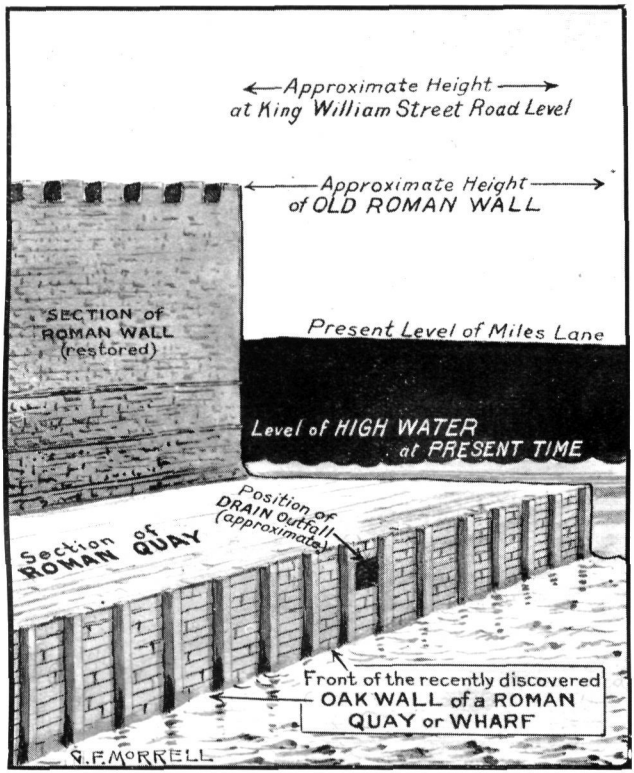
By the kindness of the proprietors of *The Graphic* we are enabled to show two sketches with which Mr. G. F. Morrell, F.R.A.S., illustrated a Paper upon " The Sinking of London. What Roman Remains have revealed." One sketch shows some of the remains in situ, the other a possible aspect of the wharfage in Roman Times and its relation to present levels (*The Graphic*, 10 July, 1926).

As regards the remains, Mr. William C. Edwards writes:—

Supposed site of the first London Bridge:—This year (March 1926) were discovered some piles at Miles Lane. These fine oak logs, about 22 feet long and 14 inches square laid crossways and horizontally on the ancient bed of the river at about 20 feet below the present level of Miles Lane, seem to point to this being the site of the first Roman Bridge over the River Thames. A careful examination of maps would suggest the theory that there was a road leading from the Castra down a street of which the remains are Clements Lane on to Crooked Lane and Miles Lane and so to the Roman Bridge. Is not Miles Lane a relic of a Latin Street name, Miles, the Soldiers' way? On the south side, this road passed to the east of what is now known as Southwark Cathedral and across the Borough High Street and then down what was known as Kent Street (now Tabard Street) on to the ancient Dover Road.



MILES LANE; E.C.: Roman remains in situ.
(*The Graphic*; 10 July, 1926).



MILES LANE, E.C.: Wharfage in Roman Times. *The Graphic*; 10 July, 1926).

P. P. BR. LON.—In his description of the Roman brick or tile found during excavation by St. Michael's church, Cornhill, (*Lon. and Middx. Trans.*, N.S., Vol. v; part II, p. 191), the writer states that it bears the imprint P. P. BR. LON, similar to a roofing tile in the British Museum, which is labelled as meaning, "Publicani (contractors) of the Province of Britain at London: . . . . ." the explanation is that 'P' represents the *publicani*, who farmed the taxes, the publicans of the Gospels."

With great respect, I beg to differ from this conclusion, inasmuch as Britain was an Imperial possession, the Emperor's personal domain, *in Manu Cæsaris*, and taxes raised for the *fiscus* were controlled by his Procurator, and were not farmed by Publicani as in a Senatorial province. The lettering may therefore refer to the Office of the Procurator of the Province of Britain at Londinium.

I might further suggest another possible solution:—Britain, though forming part of the province of Gaul, possessed a Pro-Prætor, and the names of twenty-nine of these governors are given by Wright in his "The Celt, the Roman and the Saxon." Londinium as the principal City in Britain presumably contained the head offices of the Pro-Prætor, and so the letters P.P.BR.LON. may indicate the departmental offices of the Pro-Prætor of Britain at Londinium.

MONTAGU SHARPE.

CAINSILI.—One of our members would be glad if anyone could throw light on the meaning of this word, *Cainsili*. It occurs in the Pipe Roll, 30 Henry I, A.D., 1130, in a passage which records the purchase of Pepper, cummin, and ginger, with towels (manutergiorum) et bacinis et cainsili, ad opus Regis. Replies can be sent to the Hon. Editor or to one of the Hon. Secretaries.

CASES FOR BINDING.—In response to several enquiries as to the provision of cloth cases for holding loose parts of the Transactions of the Society, the Council has decided to provide a limited number. These cases, which are eminently suitable for binding completed volumes, may be obtained from Mr. C. W. F. Goss, F.S.A., Hon. Librarian at a cost of 1/3 each.

MEMBERS' NOTES.—For inclusion in the *Transactions* of the Society, the Editor will be glad to receive from Members and others notes of archaeological and antiquarian interest concerning London and Middlesex.

OLD BLACKFRIARS.—It is hoped that a fully illustrated report of the Paper on Old Blackfriars which Dr. William Martin read to the Society in 1926, will appear in the next part of the *Transactions*.