

$\frac{1}{2}$ SIZE.

J.E. WORRALL, LITH.

STONE MALLEUS, LISCARD.

ARCHÆOLOGY IN THE MERSEY DISTRICT,
AND LIVERPOOL NOTABILIA IN 1874.

By Henry Ecroyd Smith.

[READ 18TH MARCH, 1875.]

Ancient Mining Implements at Liscard. (Vide Plate I.)

TOWARDS the end of January, some clay-cutters were at work in a field belonging to Mr. Ridalgh, and lying to the southward of Rake Lane, Liscard, when one of them encountered a stone, which he simply noticed as such at the time ; and it was not until returning to the place on the following morning, that it was seen to possess a very unnatural orifice and shape. Fortunately, it had chanced to remain uncovered on the heap of clay and was partially cleansed by a downfall of rain during the night. Evidently an old tool, manufactured ere iron had superseded stone, it was shown by the finders to their neighbours in Liscard, one of whom, James Corkhill, a plasterer, purchased it as a great curiosity, which must have been made before the flood, or it could never have gained such a position in the virgin-clay !

The implement may be best termed a *Poleaxe*, seeing that it admirably combines the uses of axe, adze, and hammer-head or mall. By measurement, it now is 7 inches long, by 3 inches in width at the wider or axe edge, and $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches at the obtuse or mall head, which is so slightly flattened as to appear nearly hemispherical. The orifice, at a first glance, would seem to be cylindrical, but proves to be slightly splayed at either mouth, giving here a diameter of $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches, whilst

internally it is $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches. The present weight of the object is $3\frac{1}{2}$ pounds, but the sharpened end has evidently seen considerable service, and adding losses from wear, fracture, and friction, one or two ounces may complement the original ponderosity. The exact place of its out-turn was a central part of the field named, lying about midway between Clifton Hall and the north end of Liscard village. Its depth below the surface of the ground, was $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet, and in the solid and *apparently untouched red marl*, 2 feet.

Owing to absence from home, through illness, we were unable to learn and examine the site, but the Rev. James North, of New Brighton, became greatly interested in the occurrence of so weighty a tool in this alluvial deposit, and on first visiting the place, detected in the undisturbed clay an unusual boulder, lying about a dozen feet from the position of the poleaxe, and a single foot nearer the surface. The upper portion of our pure boulder-clay rarely contains either boulders or smaller stones; and justly regarding the presence of this as suspicious, and as an object which might possibly prove useful in determining the age of the neighbouring poleaxe's deposition, it was secured by Mr. North. We at once recognised this boulder as identical in form and quality of stone (whinstone) with several examples of hand-malls sent us from the ancient copper-ore workings in the Great Orme's Head, where their recurrence, we were assured, has by no means been unfrequent. Like these it has been carefully selected from the neighbouring sea-beach, and probably used without the intervention of any shaft or handle, in striking the strong chisels of stone or bronze, in mining operations; the contused condition of the smaller end evidencing use by striking. Had the poleaxe occurred *alone*, opinions might have been divided as to its main use, for it would prove very applicable to the chase as also in savage warfare; nevertheless, we are best satisfied with the appropriation made.

The question of *date of fabrication* remains to be considered. From its excellent but simple contour, and the mouths of its perforated orifice being so remarkably slightly splayed, (for a *genuinely ancient* object,) we are inclined to refer its production to a period somewhat anterior to Rome's first acquaintance with Britain,—that era which, for want of a better designation, has recently been termed *late Celtic*. Those well acquainted with iron implements, declare this tool to have been sharpened at the thin edge, during its later use at least, by *iron*, a fact confirming our opinion, especially when taken in connexion with the contiguity of the mining boulder-mall. Such strong articles would naturally continue in use in many out-of-the-way localities, long subsequently to the general introduction of iron implements by the Romans in the second century. We cannot attach much consequence to the depth at which these objects were found, feeling confident that, unless some extraneous substance had, purposely or by accident, been introduced, a hundredweight of the clay might have been removed and firmly replaced over a deposit, say of a thousand years ago, without any perceptible trace now remaining to attest the introduction. In many soils the experienced delver would detect intrusion upon a virgin stratum, but we strongly doubt it in such a case of intentional concealment. It is understood that these objects of great interest, and great *rarity*, in our neighbourhood, are likely to find a fitting resting-place in the Free Public Museum of Liverpool.

To shew how deeply embedded in the ground some ancient tools have been found to lie, we subjoin an instance recorded by Baines, in his History of Lancashire,* but which occurring only as a foot note, has been generally overlooked; and all the more willingly, as the deposit took place in part of our own district.

* Vol. III., p. 648.

" On the 24th of July, 1822, a Whetstone, *encased in wood*
 " in a state of decay, was found by two colliers, about 30
 " *yards below the surface*, whilst they were sinking a coal-pit
 " two miles to the North of Newton-in-the-Willows. The
 " strata above it were a foot of brown soil, four feet red clay,
 " five feet red book-leaf marl, seventy-four feet toad-black
 " marl, and six feet grey quicksand, in which the Whetstone
 " was found, being part of a large bed of sand, 17 yards deep.
 " All the gravel in the quicksand was mixed with round
 " pieces of *coal*, and both the marl above the Whetstone, and
 " the gravel below it, *contained oyster and other sea shells*.
 " No other coal-pit had been sunk within 100 yards of this
 " place, nor is any stone of this kind found in the neigh-
 " bourhood, and the probability is, that the Whetstone has
 " remained in the quicksand as long as the sea shells, which
 " were found above and below it. This relic of other times
 " is in the possession of the Rev. Peter Leigh, Incumbent of
 " the Parochial Chapel of Newton, to whom we are indebted
 " for the communication of these interesting facts. Upwards
 " of a century before, a Whetstone was discovered in a morass,
 " some distance from Martin Mere, and with it an instrument
 " of mixed metal, resembling in form the Roman *Securis*, or
 " Sacrificing Axe." The Rev. Canon Greenwell has found
 several large and ancient Whetstones in East Yorkshire Tumuli,
 and an example from the same district will be found in the
 Mayer Collection.

Anglo Saxon and Medieval Sculptures at Neston.

One of our best English Antiquaries asserts, that scarcely
 a single Mediæval Church in this country undergoes the pro-
 cess of restoration without some traces of an *earlier*—i.e.,
Anglo-Saxon—foundation being discovered. Our recent
 local experiences confirm the dictum; instance Grappenhall,
 Roby and West Kirby, not to mention the long-acknowledged

Saxon Font of Kirby, near Simonswood. We have now to add *Neston* to the list, not forgetting that Mr. Mayer, in his well-illustrated paper in Vol. VI of our *Transactions*, furnishes us with abundant proof of Saxon sculpture still existing in the old church at Shotwick. It seems probable, indeed, that the whole range of village churches, skirting the shore of Wirral, from Wallasey and Bidstone round to Chester, has been based upon sites selected at a very early period for those of christian temples.

At Neston, the parish church, dedicated to St. Mary and St. Helen, is, with the exception of the tower, in process of re-construction, under the able supervision of Mr James F. Doyle, the Architect, of Harrington-street, in this town. The excavations made, brought to light a number of sculptured fragments; we greatly regret their imperfect state, but they are, one and all, curious and interesting. Commencing with the earlier pieces we find—

A.—Portion of the *shaft of a cross*, three feet ten by one and a half feet wide, bearing a large interlaced knot, coarsely graven upon a block of hard stone, of light colour, thus offering a contrast to its fellows, which are of the local sandstone. The border is plainly corded, like the interesting example found at West Kirby.*

B 1.—A second portion of the *shaft of a cross*, but of finer work—1 ft. 6 in. by 1 ft. 8 in. Upon one side appears a quaint female saint (?) holding in the uplifted right hand a cup or chalice, whilst the left one, dependent, grasps a forceps, or other two-pronged instrument. *Reverse*—interlaced work in *double cord*, and in excellent relief, being apparently as sharp as when freshly tooled. The lateral loops of this knot are more angular than usual for its class of work. Border, a rectangular *fret*, copied from Roman work.

* *Transactions* N.S. XI, p. 22, Plate I.

B 2.—*Top of the shaft of a cross, with portion (or lower arc) of its circular head, eight inches high.* It is carved with a group of two figures, a couple of boys wrestling, as it seems to us. The border here is corded on the right and left, but the arc, or curved side above, bears the *oblong fret*; a pretty border on Greek and Roman pavements, and a simple variety of the Greek *meandros*, which, very remarkably, is always accompanied by *Runes*, in the Isle of Man; and it may be useful to give the instances, which, possibly, might be supplemented by others with which we are unacquainted. *Runes* occur in this connection upon a cross at the church gates, Kirk Andreas; on a fragment built into the wall of Kirk Michael churchyard; on a cross in Ballaugh churchyard; and on the upper part of another preserved in the garden of the vicarage at Jurby.* We must not forget that this pattern had previously occurred, though in a rude variety in this neighbourhood, being the chief border ornament of the head of a cross found on Hilbre proper, about 1853, and now in the collection of our President, the Rev. Canon Hume. So far as our enquiries have extended, this pattern is of but rare occurrence in Ireland, as also in the North of England, and appears to be wholly absent from the early ecclesiastical sculptured stones of Scotland. These facts, if we may assume them as such, bespeak a close connexion between Mona and this opposite portion of the English coast in early christian times, and before the purer christianity of Ireland, Mona and the North Western Isles, had been overborne and corrupted by the vicious and enslaving ambition of Papal Rome.

As already stated, we have been unable to find this

* Nos. 2, 6, 9, and 35, of a handy sheet of Isle of Man crosses, &c., published by George A. Dean, Lithographer, Duke-street, Douglas.

pattern dissociated from Runes elsewhere, and yet no characters of any kind have been hitherto discovered on the sculptured remains at Neston, whilst at West Kirby the search proved equally fruitless. We are driven to conclude that our predecessors in this district were copyists when Runes had already become an obsolete mode of inscription; or if these, our local examples, were really contemporary with Runic sculptures in the Isle of Man, that such characters were either unpopular or not understood here; or, what seems most likely, that they were *too trouble-giving* to repeat. The fact, however, remains, that with analogous designs we can claim no *Runic* writing upon our early sculptures, except, perhaps, the carved stone found many years ago by the old sexton—Coventry by name, and lately deceased—who, as we have repeatedly heard from his lips, “wheeled it into the Rector’s garden” shortly after discovery. He disclaimed any further knowledge of this noticeable stone, which he described as possessing “*great scrawming* letters which nobbudy could read;” but as he invariably “made himself scarce,” after the subject was mooted, the enquirer never failed to consider that something remained *untold*. It is desirable to place this story on our record, seeing that if the Runes which it is presumed to possess had been identified by any qualified individual, he would have been accorded the praise of making known the only Runic writing hitherto discovered within the limits of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Mercia. When making what enquiries lay in our power in this connexion, information reached us of an ancient sepulchral stone, which the late Mrs. Byrth (widow of the Rector who had the Runic one wheeled into his garden,) had carried off to New Brighton and *kept in her cellar*. This lady, who had certainly appropriated a certain tombstone in a most “irregular”

manner, had lately, as we learnt, offered it to the then Rector, Mr. Haggitt, and on his refusing to have anything to do with the business, she sent the stone to the churchyard, not, however, before it had been broken and spoilt by some careless workmen whilst still in the cellar, and it now lies near the old church tower (lately converted into a mortuary chapel,) in a sadly dilapidated condition. This monument is of about the middle of the sixteenth century; its decoration is of a highly floral and ornate character, and an inscription in Gothic capitals, and ending in "ABSOLVTIO," is not only carried down the shaft of a central cross in high relief, but into the left side of the *calvary*. The Anglo-Saxon stone, we fear, is irrecoverably lost. Returning from this digression we complete our description of the Neston stone, by noting that the *reverse* side displays an angel, full-faced and standing, but very strangely proportioned (the feet seeming attached to the waist or hips,) and still more "squab" than a similar figure sculptured upon the base of the Leeds cross, or than several of analogous angels on the head of a very interesting cross at Eyam-in-the-Peak, the shaft of which bears a beautiful scrollwork and floral design, evidently copied from some Roman British Mosaic pavement, a source whence a large proportion of A.S. cross-ornament sprang. The last-named has lately been re-engraved on stone, for illustration of Mr. Alfred Rimmer's dissertation on the "Ancient Stone Crosses of England," lately contributed to the *Art Journal*. It follows a notice,* likewise illustrated, of the writer's description of the West Kirby sculptured remains.† The borders here are corded, *including* that of the arc of the inner circle of the head. The *edge* in this case is likewise graven, bearing an elongated chain pattern, of rare

* No. CLIV., New Series, p. 293. † Transactions N.S. XI.

occurrence; yet we notice it, also, as a border on the left side of the *Kirk Andreas* cross, already referred to.

B 3.—Portion of the limb of a cross, having within its triangular compartment a trifoliate knot, the exact counterpart of *each* of the four limbs of a cross at *Douglas*. The border is corded. *Reverse*, similar.

From the coarseness of its workmanship, with the lighter colour and harder grain of its stone, A would appear to be the sole representative of a cross. B 1, 2, 3—of much better execution, and displaying designs corresponding to those depicted in the illuminated MS. works of the ninth century, are, nevertheless, formed from the local red sandstone, and are probably portions of but one large cross, despite an apparent discrepancy in the varied pattern of the arc of No. 2, as it may have had a corresponding *vis à vis*; but the excavations being completed we may never recover the missing portions of this once fine cross. Sculptured monuments, such as this, were, before the conquest, so common, as to be held in but slight veneration, and when the fabric of a church was rebuilt, they would appear, not unfrequently, to have been utilized as foundation stones, or as *filling* between walls. With palpable proof of such precedents, we need not wonder at the ruthless barbarism of succeeding ages, and the unconscionably bad taste displayed by “restorers” as at West Kirby, in the same district of Wirral. Dean Howson reports, that during the recent restoration of Chester Cathedral, an important angle of the superstructure was found *based upon a number of beautifully-carved Anglo-Saxon crosses, laid regularly side by side*, and in all probability coolly abstracted from the adjoining burial ground of St. Werburgh’s Monastery! Owing to their important position only one was raised.

C.—*Tombstone*, 2 feet long by 13 inches broad; head with a plain cross rudely cut on a circular recess; border corded. *Reverse*, similar. Date, 10—12 century. It

closely resembles a small one at *Braddon*, and another at *Maughold* of superior execution.

D.—*Ditto*.—Length, 6 feet 4 inches; width at head, 16 inches; at foot, 21 to 22 inches. It bears in high relief a finely-chiselled floreate cross, the three upper limbs of which terminate in fleur de-lys, whilst the lower one narrows downward for insertion within the open mouth of a lion's head, from which, on either hand, commences a beautiful border of scrollwork and roses, which is carried round the whole frontal edge of the stone. From the centre of the cross's head depends a hand, inclining to the left, and supporting the top of a scroll or band, which, falling to the foot of the shaft is there carried behind it, and up the opposite side. Through its whole length of $6\frac{3}{4}$ feet this band has been ornamented with bosses, 2 inches wide, of pale green *glass*, set in *lead*, and a few inches apart. Enamel has been found ornamenting sculpture, but we cannot recal any other instance of the use of glass on Mediæval sepulchral monuments.

Of the few *Coins* and *Tokens* noticed during the excavations here, the following are alone deserving of notice:—

Two "Nuremburg Tokens" in brass, struck by or for Hannus Krauwinkel,* 16—17 century.

* In our last Annual we chronicled similar pieces, found upon Hilbre Island and at Huyton Church, giving some description of this peculiar class of counters or jettons, to which we now append some interesting remarks communicated to *The Reliquary*, (Vol. IX., p. 125,) by the late Richard Sainthill, Esq., of Cork:—

"When this system of keeping, or rather of casting up, accounts commenced in England, or when it ceased, I am quite ignorant. Many years ago, for a few minutes only, I saw in the library of a friend 'Record's Arithmetic,' printed circa 1550, in which the whole system was explained or taught and illustrated by engravings. A vestige of this system existed with us in the early part of this century at the card table, where, with four counters, players recorded their winnings at *whist*, from 1 to 9, 10 being game." Mr. Sainthill then records several German jettons like ours, shewing that the inscriptions are perfectly sensible, being contractions of German or Dutch words, as the case might be. For instance, one of this very "Hannus Krav Winckel in Nur"(emburg,) has upon the reverse a legend, "*Fleisige, Rechnung, Maght, Richtigkeit,*" i.e., *industrious (or careful) reckoning makes correctness*. Another bears "*Gotes, Reic, Bleibt, Ewick.*" The kingdom of God remains for ever.

A Scotch *Twenty-penny Piece*, or Quarter Noble of James I. of England.

Ob. SCOT. ANG. FRA. ET. HIB. REX. The king's bust, with flowing hair extending to the edge, XX behind.

Rev. IVSTITIA. THRONVM. FIRMAT. A Scotch Thistle crowned.

The average weight of similar pieces, a considerable number of which were examined by the late John Lindsay of Cork, he found to be 13 grains; our sample being chipped in two places has only 9 grains. As a quarter of the Scotch noble, a perfect piece in good condition, should, of course, weigh 15 grains.

Hitherto no sketches or photographs have been taken of the sculptured relics of the earlier church at Neston, but we have great pleasure in stating that Mr. Doyle has courteously promised careful drawings of all the carved portions.

Products of the Sea Beach of Cheshire.

Being pressed for time, we have secured, on this occasion, the services of Mr. Potter for particulars of the historic relics noticed upon the shore during the past year, when ill health kept us in distant localities. The objects found in recent years are, with few exceptions, accretions to his now valuable and considerable collection, and it is a source of great satisfaction to the writer, upon leaving, probably for a lengthened period, the neighbourhood of this very remarkable (and still in some respects mysterious) locality, and whilst compiling his, possibly final, annual report of its historic out-crop, that the future harvest, whether rich or poor, will continue to be as thoroughly looked after as by the older hand of past years.

During the year, a deposit of human remains was discovered in the isolated "Little Eye," (locally pronounced *ee*,) the least of the Hilbre group, a spot of great exposure to the elements, and yet the blustering western and north-western

winds had hitherto failed to uncover what appears to have been a very early interment, seeing that the remains had been carefully deposited in a hollow of the native *Keuper* sandstone rock, and piled over with stones and boulders from the contiguous beach. In all probability the interment had occurred when this sea-wasted islet formed part of a promontory, extending some miles beyond the main, like Spurn Point, upon the opposite side of Britain; but unlike the Yorkshire promontory, artificial aid has come too late to arrest its complete severance, (save at low water,) from the main. As at Hilbre, the tidal action of the sea has been wearing away the coast of Holderness for unnumbered centuries, and even during the last three or four of these, the sites of several towns and villages have been wholly swept into the German ocean. But for a large and strong embankment, the insulation of Spurn's sandy neck would have been long since effected.

Roman-British.

BRONZE. *Pin of a fibula*, with portion of its wire spring.

Pins for fastening the dress (3), with semi-globular and solid heads; two of these are three inches long, the other two inches.

Bell-shaped object, but possibly the extinguisher of a small lamp: its form is hexagonal; height $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

SILVER.

X Denarius of Constantinus Magnus. Head of the Emperor VRBS. ROMA. *Rev.* The Wolf and Twins, a rod or wand between and a star above each.

Anglo-Saxon or Early Irish.

Dress or Hair Pin, of bronze, the top adapted for a pendant, and possibly reversible, head, like several engraved by Dr. Hume in *Ancient Meols*.*

Two "third-brass" coins, both illegible.

* Plate V. and p. 75.

Ethelred II. Penny. A fragment; the centre only; bust to the right; no sceptre. *Rev.* Hand of Providence, on either side the letters A and W, for Alpha and Omega. (Second occurrence of this type on Meols beach.)

Cnut. A divided penny—half. Bust with sceptre to right. *Rev.* OD ON LEI (Leicester); a voided cross and square with pellets at each corner. (Meols beach.)

SILVER.

Medieval.

Wm. I or II. A divided penny—half. Bust full faced, a star on each side, EX AN. *Rev.* A cross on a square and pellets. (Meols beach.)

Henry II. Penny. Full face and sceptre, HENRICUS REX. *Rev.* A small double cross, with a small cross botoné in each angle, AN—AVD ON CA (Canterbury.) (Meols beach.)

Henry III. A divided penny—half. Full face, no sceptre. REX, and the numerals III. *Rev.* A long cross to outer circle, three pellets in the angles, ON. (Meols beach.)

Henry III. A divided penny—half. Full face with sceptre, the numerals III. *Rev.* Long cross, VND. (London.) (Meols beach.)

Henry III. A divided penny—quarter. The half still being folded for the purpose of division. (Meols beach.)

Henry III. Penny. Full face and sceptre, HENRICVS REX. *Rev.* Long cross, three pellets in each angle, NICOLE ON CANT. (Canterbury.) (Meols beach.)

Edward I or II. Penny. Full face. EDWARD R. ANGL. DNS. HYB. *Rev.* Cross and pellets. VILL. SCI EDMVNDI. (St. Edmundsbury.) (Meols beach.)

Edward II. Penny. Much defaced. EDWAR. AN.

Stuart. James II. A shilling, gun money. Head to left, JACOBVS II DEI GRATIA. *Rev.* MAG RE FRA, ET HIB REX. Crown and sceptres in saltire. Oct. 1689. (Found in a garden near the Meols station, Hoylake railway.)

Recent finds.

Roman. Third brass, illegible.

Henry III. Divided penny—quarter. NIC, probably for Nicolo.

Charles II. Farthing, 1673 or 5.

LATTEN. *Cross*, for personal wear, of plain form (*Humettée* or coupé St. George's cross,) with ring atop for suspension. The shaft and limbs on the front are covered with cusps, bearing traces of their original setting with coloured enamel, and in four cases the cement remains. Size $1\frac{7}{8}$ by $1\frac{1}{8}$ inch.

Brooch, circular, one inch diameter, and rudely ornamented with incised line work; pin wanting.

Ditto, with lozenge ornament; pin wanting.

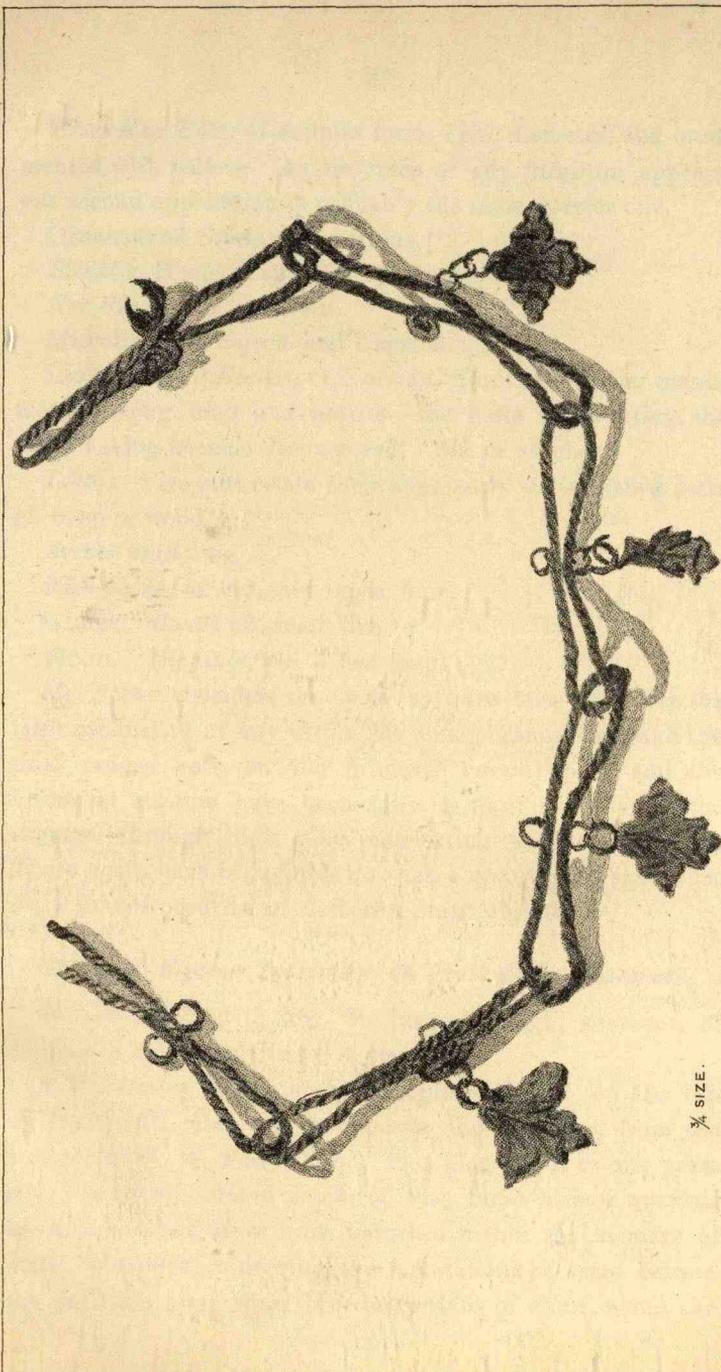
Pin for the dress, two inches long, with bifurcated head, though—as is usual in mediæval pins, needles, and other small articles made of thin sheathing metal—it is as small in the shaft and as sharply pointed as any needle of equal length now used.

Clapper of a bell, gilt; it has evidently been suspended by leather to the top of the bell, as a portion still remains in the bifurcated top or slot.

Appendages or furniture of leathern *Belts* and *Straps*, viz., buckles, hasps, tags, studs, and other ornaments, to the number of thirty-seven.

Miscellaneous objects and fragments, numbering twenty-eight.

PEWTER OR LEAD. *Necklet* or *Coronal*. This elegant ornament, described at length in our last year's report as occurring in 1873, and which was found in detached portions, has now been rendered nearly complete by the recovery of two additional links and a pendant. We have great pleasure in referring to the engraving (plate II.,) for an excellent delineation, in actual size, of this unique ornament, worn by a lady of the latter half of the fourteenth or the earlier part of the fifteenth century.



¾ SIZE.

S.W. SMITH, DEL.

NECKLET OF PEWTER, CHESHIRE SHORE.

J.E. WORRALL, LITH.

Very faint, illegible text, possibly bleed-through from the reverse side of the page. The text is arranged in several paragraphs and is mostly obscured by a large, dark, irregular stain in the center of the page.

Brooch or *Boss*, of annular form, $1\frac{1}{4}$ in. diameter, and ornamented with pellets. As no trace of any furniture appears, our second appellation is probably the more correct one.

Ornamented *Studs*, six, various.

Buckles, Hasps, Tags, &c., eleven.

Net Sinkers in lead, four.

Miscellaneous objects and fragments, nine.

IRON. *Knife Blades*, of Norman, if not still earlier manufacture, being long and narrow—the hefts are wanting, the wood having become decomposed. Six in number.

Ditto. Five still retain their apparently well-finished hefts of bone or wood.

Arrow-head, one.

Fish-hooks, of ordinary types, four.

GLASS. *Beads* of small size.

WOOD. *Digging-fork*, 3 feet long.

Mr. Potter considers this year to have been decidedly the least productive of any within his remembrance, although the tidal ranges both on the primeval (wood) beds and the mediæval stratum have been fully up to, if not beyond, the average, through high gales concurring with spring tides. These again have brought down such a quantity of sand that little chance occurred of detecting small objects.

Singular Equine Interment on Holt Hill, Tranmere.

We are indebted to Mr. W. Lownsbrough, surveyor, of Tranmere, for the subjoined notice.

A Mr. Getley lately purchased a piece of land, on the top of Holt Hill, and nearly opposite the Nunnery, from the trustees of W. W. Perry, Esq. This plot, about twenty years ago, was an unenclosed common, with furze bushes growing upon it, and had never been disturbed within the memory of man. However, in digging the foundations of some houses, the workmen came upon three large slabs of stone, about two

feet below the surface ; these formed the covering of a grave, *carefully hewn in the solid rock*, about 8 feet long, 4 feet broad, and 3 feet deep, and which was found to contain the bones of a *horse*, accompanied by a quantity of dry material like tinder. Upon searching among the last, a copper coin was found, almost defaced by wear and rust, but which proves to be a halfpenny of William and Mary. There was likewise disclosed the handle of a sword, the hilt of which is of bone, carved in a reticulated manner, whilst the strig and rivets are of iron.

I think that I have somewhere read, that William III, on his journey to or from Ireland, stayed at the Old Hall, Tranmere,* and halted on this hill ; if so, I think it very probable that the steed must have been a favourite of one of his troopers, and died either from the effect of recent wounds in Ireland, or sudden illness after crossing the channel—possibly a combination of both. The deposition of the coin is, to my mind, an excellent mode of handing down the date of the animal's death to future generations.

LIVERPOOL NOTABILIA.

In November of this year, Messrs. Vandyke and Brown, the well-known artist-photographers, issued their Prospectus of a proposed work to be entitled *Herdman's Pictorial Relics of Ancient Liverpool*, compiled from original information and authentic sources, by Richard Brown, who, by the by, assures us that he possesses no less than a couple of hundred sketches of more or less topographical interest. A large proportion of the best of these have been laboriously worked up (singly or by two or three in conjunction) into very superior drawings, of good size, by that patriarchal illustrator of old Liverpool, William Gawin Herdman. These drawings, (to

* Described and Illustrated by Mr. Joseph Mayer, *Trans.* iii, p. 107.

be reproduced for the work by the autotype process,) suitably mounted and handsomely framed, were exhibited for a couple of months in Old Post Office Place, and although this, one of the most interesting exhibitions ever produced in our midst, was as usual but very partially visited by the great mammon-hunting community of this locality, yet many availed themselves of the opportunity of seeing and comparing the old aspects of various parts of the town and its public buildings with those of to-day. The writer was tempted, upon his earliest visit, to take a few sketches and woodcuts from his small portfolio of Liverpool views, &c., to compare with Mr. Herdman's reproductions; but in several instances was surprised to find that he held in his hand an earlier and more picturesque sketch or woodcut, as the case might be. It may be worth while to note these for future reference; and we commence with a little book, in very humble dress, but containing a series of *proofs before letters*, and (with one exception) on India paper, from wood blocks, and which probably belonged to the engraver himself, seeing the first, (answering for a book-plate,) gives us the name and address of William J. Roberts, who also carried on the business of cabinet maker and upholsterer, at No. 20, Torbock Street, Liverpool.* He has signed several of the succeeding cuts with his name or initials. Unfortunately, we possess no biographical notices of local artists. A carefully compiled work on this subject is a great desideratum; and although Mr. Mayer possesses abundant materials for such a production, they form a portion of a vast accumulation for the future illustration of *British* artists and their works, which may never see the light in our day. In default of this, a carefully compiled brochure on the artists of old Liverpool would prove most useful at the present juncture.

* Afterwards of Berry Street, an early member of our Society, and the contributor to its transactions of several papers of local interest.

Returning to Mr. Roberts's little specimen book, we find the first page occupied by the book or business plate already referred to, with the owner and engraver's name, occupation, and address, as graven on a white marble tablet, let into the front of a large and square tomb of black marble, with ornamental apex and borders. Beneath is the cut of a large seal of King Stephen, when only Duke of Normandy.

Page 2 contains one cut only, the "Observatory, formerly "stood near the Mount, L'pool (see Enfield's Hist. of L'pool, "fol. 61)" This cut, which has neither been reproduced nor used by Gregson in his *Fragments*, or by poor Troughton in that well-illustrated *History* which ruined him, is signed "M. Gregson, Esq., del."—"W. I. Roberts, sculp." The building was completed about 1792, being the second erection of the kind in the town. The earlier one was situated upon ground now occupied by the Philharmonic Hall, then the highest part of Hope Street. It was planned and erected by William Everard, the architect and mathematician,—the first curator of the books which formed the nucleus of the Liverpool Library, and which he originally kept at his residence in St. Paul's Square and afterwards in John Street, 1758—70.* This view was altogether unrepresented in Post Office Place, but Mr. Herdman tells us that a copy is to be found in Mr. Binns's invaluable collection, vol. ix.

Page 3 presents us with the "Fire Beacon, Everton," which, originally erected as early as about 1220, temp. Henry II, was blown down in a storm in 1803,† having probably been intermediately rebuilt (not earlier than 16th century) of local sandstone. This is a nearer and more picturesque view than that worked up in drawing No. 78. No artist's name is attached in print, neither does it appear either in Gregson or Troughton; however, "John Drinkwater, Esq., del." has been appended by the same hand which has supplied the

* *Transactions*, vol. x (N.S.), 1869-70.

† Troughton, p. 49.

various titles given to the cuts, and which we show within inverted commas.

Page 4. *The Tower of Liverpool*, as it still appeared shortly previous to demolition, the MS. title being—"Tower, "Water Street, as it now stands, August, 1819." This portion was, we believe, the last to remain standing, as it was probably the latest erected and in best repair. Upon the removal of its foundations between 1819 and 1821, one of the bulbous bottles of olive-coloured glass of the 16th century was discovered, bearing on its neck a medallion in relief with the badge of the Stanley family, "the Eagle and Child" This interesting relic is in the possession of Miss Ellison, of Litherland, a descendant of the ancient local family of Seacombe. The cut, signed "W. I. R." represents the very plainest portion of this prison, as it had become, the rough pavement-boulders completely surrounding the base; but above, to the left, towers the fine new steeple of St. Nicholas's Church. This view does not appear in either Gregson or Troughton.

Page 5. *Cloisters of Birkenhead Priory*; but called "Part of the Stables of Birkenhead Priory, Cheshire," whilst under the cut, which is signed "G. N." (no doubt George Nicholson, a local artist, but we believe unknown as a wood engraver), appears "Chubbard *del.* in the possession of "M. Gregson, Esq." The cut, however, has neither been published by Ormerod, Gregson, nor Troughton: it is the only one of the lot printed not on India paper but on a page of the book. Whether the original was a painting or sketch by Chubbard the painter we are not aware.

Page 6. "*Melling Chapel, Lancashire.*" This cut appears in Gregson's Fragments, and is described chap. xx, p. 221. It is signed, though in a barely legible manner, "W. I. Roberts, sculp."

Page 7. "*Prince Rupert's Head Quarters, Everton,*"

evidently taken from a sketch made between 1780 and 1800. It is the best, most picturesque, and most reliable view we have ever seen of this historic cottage, and is certainly older than the better known one published by Troughton in his History. The building remains surrounded by the native sandstone rock upon which it was built, and the old windows are intact. To the right an old garden door of wood appears, which in other views is replaced by a common gate. No artist's name appears to this interesting cut, which seems to have been unknown to either Gregson or Troughton, as we were the first to notice and to publish it, though without any encouragement or appreciation of the view by the Liverpool public. It is not used in Mr. Herdman's drawing of Everton Brow and Rupert Lane (No. 81), but an interesting view of the interior, taken by this gentleman shortly before the demolition of the tenement, is numbered 83 in the catalogue.

Page 8. With the exception of the MS. title, "The Ruins of Burscough Priory, near Ormskirk, Lancashire," this page is blank, the cut (only secured by its extreme corners) having disappeared.

Page 9 contains two cuts. That to the left presents us with the "Entrance to the Stone Quarry, St. James's, Liverpool," a view of the approach to the present cemetery, not published either by Gregson or Troughton. It is signed W. I. Roberts. Secondly we find "The initial F., pendant to the foundation charter of Furness Abbey, Lanc., in the Duchy Record Office, M.G., Esq." This initial, of large size, is elaborately ornamented with foliage and quatrefoils, whilst suspended atop is the shield of arms of the celebrated Cistercian abbey. The cut is utilised repeatedly by Mr. Gregson in his *Fragments*, but is not signed by the engraver.

We have now exhausted the contents of this little book of proofs, but not all the local interest attaching to it. Deposited for a few minutes upon a chair in the saloon, it

attracted the notice of two visitors, who upon our approach were closely examining the pages, and claimed the whole of the MS. titles, &c., as the caligraphy of a late venerable maiden aunt of theirs, Miss Ellison of Litherland, and entertain no doubt of its having been in her possession. However this may be, it was subsequently in the library of the late Mr. Thomas Binns, the chief collector of materials for a compendious History of Liverpool, and was given to the writer by one of his descendants. We have already mentioned the present Miss Ellison as owner of a relic of the erectors of the tower; her aunt was sister to the late Seacombe Ellison, Esq., of Litherland House, their mother having been a Miss Seacombe, daughter to John Seacombe, Esq., of Everton,* a son or grandson of John Seacome, author of *Memoirs of the House of Stanley*, of which curious work editions appeared, published respectively at Manchester, Warrington, and Liverpool, during the last century. The reprints of the volume in Liverpool (which are known), bear the respective dates 1736, 1741, and 1801, the first being assumed by Mr. Mott and others to be the earliest edition† of this production. A younger sister of Miss Ellison is married, we believe, to A. Burrows, Esq., of Atherton, near Manchester. We have been the more particular in noting these later representatives of one of our oldest local families, having learnt from Mr. Henry Young that little or nothing was known of such. There can be no doubt but that it took its name from the *Sea comb* on the Cheshire side of the estuary, which now represents a populous township, the orthography varying according to option previously to the present century.‡

* The seal this gentleman used during his Mayoralty in 1708, and bearing the Borough crest, is in the possession of Miss Hurry of Bootle.

† *Transactions*, I (N.S.), p. 122.

‡ The following members of this worthy old local family appear in Baines's lists of the Mayors and Bailiffs of Liverpool; but this author is often very loose, and we notice a discrepancy between the years A.D. and those of the sovereign where an asterisk occurs, *i.e.*, assuming the first of the Elizabethan

Another illustration of interest is supplied by a drawing, in Indian-ink, of "Bidstone Lighthouse," opposite Liverpool, which came from a portfolio of the late Mr. Thos. Thompson, for a lengthened term of years chemist, in Church-street, Liverpool; a gentleman well known for his literary and antiquarian tastes. It is an earlier view than any hitherto published, at least so we are assured, if not of an absolutely *earlier erection* than that of 1771, and which was removed for a complete renewal in 1772. If the same building be indeed represented, the upper portion must have been greatly altered before the close of the last century, for Mr. Harding's drawing (taken in 1830,) is deficient of the low *fourth story* here shewn, as also of the cupola (with weathercock) which surmounts the centre, and a very noticeable feature in the structure. The group of neighbouring cottages and outhouses likewise present a different appearance to that of other recent views, whilst the merchants' signal poles look more like the dilapidated clothes' poles of a laundry than anything else. We consequently claim for this drawing not only priority over others known, but a picturesqueness which they lack.

The Common Seal and Arms of the Borough.

We had lately occasion to notice the poor impression of the original Seal of Liverpool, reproduced *for the only illustration* of Mr. Picton's topographical volume, when a much better one is well known to exist in the Museum of our Society, of which he is one of the oldest living members. We only recur to the fact in order that Messrs. Vandyke and

dates to be correct. *Mayors of Liverpool*:—Robert Seacombe, 1409, or 11 Hy. V; Richard Seacombe, 1475, or 14 Ed. IV; Thomas Secum, 1562, or 5 Eliz.; William Secum, 1567, or 10 Eliz.; ditto, 1575, or *17 Eliz.; ditto, 1582, or *24 Eliz.; Ralph Secum, 1602; Richard Seacum, 1608; Richard Seacome, 1619; Ralph Seacome, 1627; Robert Seacome, 1683; John Seacome, 1708. *Bailiffs*:—Thomas Secum, 1553; William Seacombe, 1558; William Secum, 1565; Ralph Secum, 1597.

Brown may avoid a similar mistake in their shortly forthcoming work.

Among the *scrapiana* of our Library we find the following memorandum in the autograph of Mr. H. C. Pidgeon, and underneath is a pen and ink sketch of a shield, bearing a Liver-like bird with a sprig of seaweed in its beak:—

“These arms were taken from add. MS. 6331 in the British Museum, containing a number of engraved coats of arms of various cities and boroughs. The present arms were cut from sheets of arms sold by William Jackson in Russell’s Court, Covent Garden, 1714—

“‘Deus Nobis hæc otia fecit’
“‘(God hath given us this tranquility.’”

The above, which we do not find to have been printed, was evidently a sort of supplemental note to Mr. Pidgeon’s paper upon the Borough Seal, read 4th January, 1849, as the memorandum is dated from London on the 28th of April of this year. 1875. see p. 85.

NOTE.

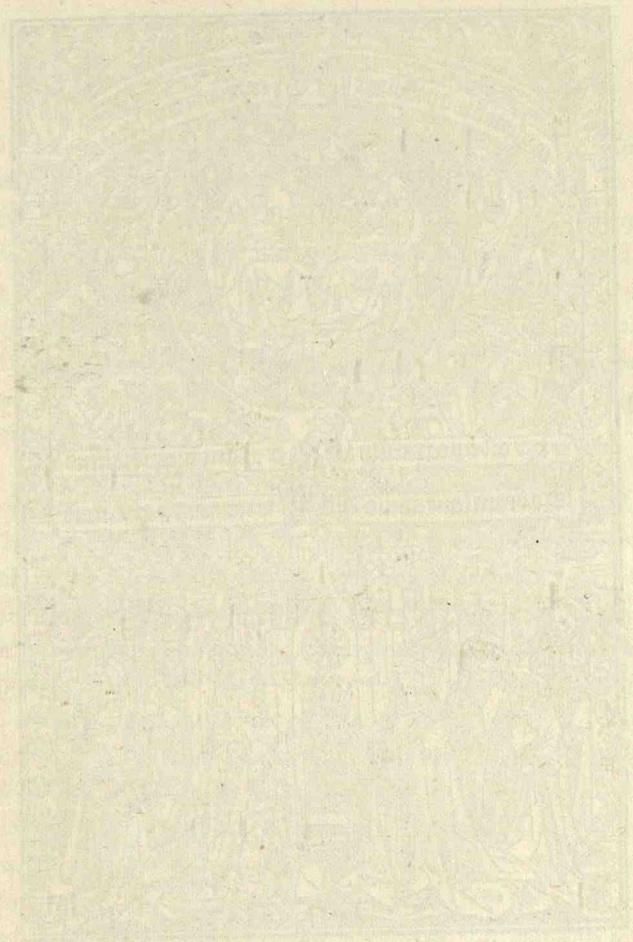
Beaches of Gt. Meols and Dunwich.—The writer had recently an opportunity of examining the site of ancient Dunwich on the coast of Suffolk, a locality which, so far as is known, alone offers a fair comparison with that of Gt. Meols, in the very varied character of its numerous historic relics, which date from an extremely early period. Despite the “dead” tides prevailing, and the assurance of nothing of any value or interest having lately been found, we soon ascertained that, as on our Cheshire beach, the soil of this devastated and abandoned city, as it gradually succumbs to invading tides, exposes objects of Roman-British fabrication,

(c) Pidgeon had removed to London
in Jan. 1851. (See S. N. B.)

below others of Mediæval times; the latter being in iron, latten, pewter, lead, glass, terra-cotta, &c. The bank most rich in these remains lies immediately opposite the monastery and the most perfect of the three ruined churches, and has a drop of from 50 to 60 feet to the sandy beach below. We can only give a cursory notice of objects procured or remarked, the Roman being confined to portions of cinerary urns; the Mediæval included a silver halfpenny of King John, a boss, stud, needle-case, and strap-tag in latten and mostly ornamented; beads in white and amber-colored glass; whilst of a rather later period some apothecaries' weights in brass and lead were recognized, several of which had been made abroad.

Dunwich does not stand alone, on the East coast, as a producer of archæological treasures. Upon naming the subject to the Rev. Scott F. Surtees, this well-known Yorkshire antiquary informed us, that when lately in the East of Norfolk he learnt that upon a certain reach of its coast Roman articles might be picked up by any one looking for them, and found the report to be correct. In the interests of archæology, let us hope this new field may be well examined and reported upon.

EXHIBITION OF THE UNITED STATES



WASHINGTON, D. C. 1876