

Mr. Thornber, before alluded to, has taken great pains to investigate the antiquities of this district, both on the River Wyre, and also between the Wyre and Ribble; and Mr. Loxham thinks some valuable information on this subject could be obtained from him. Mr. Thornber got from Mr. Loxham the heads of two oxen, taken out of the cutting in the brook at Dowbridge, before mentioned, in good preservation; also something like a battle-axe. The heads were seven or eight feet deep, imbedded in the bog, close to the gravel bed.

In the Ordnance Survey Map, the line in this neighbourhood is distinctly marked out, from Dowbridge eastward, with double lines where traces were found, connected by single dotted lines, where no certain indications are visible.

III.—REMARKS ON THE EVIDENCES OF ROMAN OCCUPATION IN THE FYLDE DISTRICT,

By the Rev. W. Thornber, B.A., Trin. Coll. Ox., of Blackpool.

When I first commenced tracing the Roman Road through the Fylde I was regarded as a mere enthusiast, nor, although in 1832 I had published my researches in the *History of Blackpool and the Traditions of the Foreland of the Fylde*, was it believed that such a road did really exist, until I succeeded in convincing the officers of the Ordnance Survey, as well as Mr. Just, that there was a well-defined agger, not to the Neb of the Naze, but to the Wyre, thus upsetting the hypothesis of Mr. Whitaker, of Manchester, that we must look for the *Portus Sistantiorum* at Freckleton, and no where else.

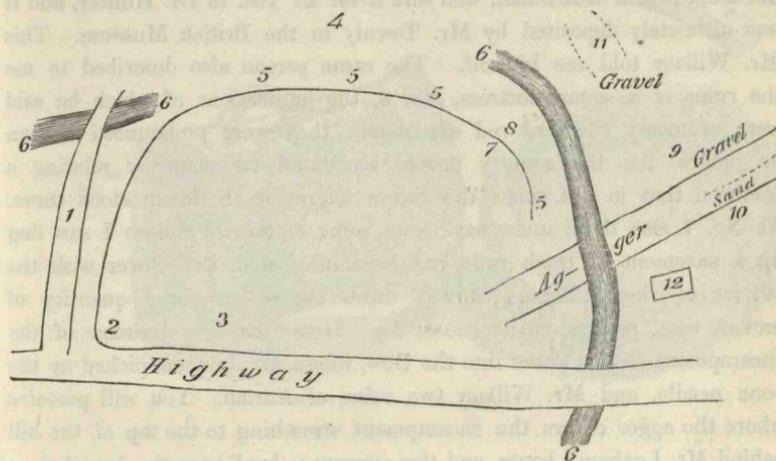
Dugdale, in 1664, speaking of the remains of a causeway running from Preston towards the west, makes mention of its "largeness and bulk." Dr. Kuerdon also informs us that the same road on Cadley Moor was of greater breadth than the one that stretched north towards Lancaster. These antiquarians, at least the former of them, say nothing of its terminus: this was left to Mr. Whitaker, who, having a theory to support, guessed that it abutted somewhere, and then made for the Neb of the Naze. Dr.

Whitaker then followed, and I remember, when a boy, how it was pressed upon him by Mr. Wilson, of Poulton, that tradition had handed it down that an agger ran from Ribchester to the Wyre, which in the Roman era was the great port of Lancashire. "There may be such a road," he replied, "but it was a very late work, and, think you, the Romans would overlook the Ribble and the Lune for a river so insignificant as the Wyre?" See *History of Richmondshire, St. Michael's*. The causeway without a doubt runs to Kirkham, and if it branched off from thence to Freckleton I would at once affirm that the protecting station of the *Portus* was at the former; but there are no traces of such a road, nor the shadow of one, for I have travelled over the intervening space again and again. I have asked for information of old natives. I have heard Mr. Tongue, a clergyman in the vicinity, declare that he has searched for remains for years. I took Mr. Just to have his opinion; and lastly Mr. Wright, to satisfy the Preston people, was especially sent down again by the Ordnance Survey to inspect the supposed site, and make all inquiries, and the result was—there never was a Roman agger that had its terminus at the Neb of the Naze. In an early publication I quoted, Mr. Whitaker so propagated the same mistake. The question is now at rest.

Richard of Cirencester, however, was no dreamer, when he included in his 7th Iter a road from Ribchester to a *Portus*. This I would now trace, taking my station at Kirkham, the *metropolis of the *Sistantii*. The site of this town was one which a Roman general would choose. A good look out was indispensable, to gain which at all points their roads were generally straight, or if the country was flat and boggy, as the Fylde was, they stretched from hill to hill. Here an object so desirable was gained to perfection, for eminences at intervals run all the way nearly from Preston to the Wyre, each having a view of the other. The town of Kirkham stands on four, what Fylde folk call, high hills; the first on the east being Dowbridge Hill; the next, the largest and the highest, being that on which was the encampment called Mill Hill; and on the last stands the Workhouse. These run almost due east and west. Look at Mill Hill—on the north a steep bank

* Kirkham is called the metropolis of the Fylde still, and in an undated deed circa 1200, a landowner of that town attests it by the name of *Amaricus de la Campton*—i. e. of the town of the Field.

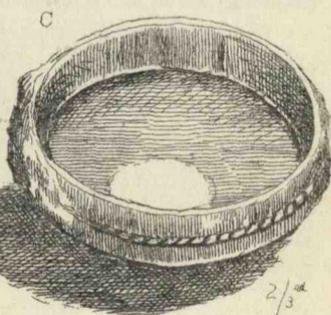
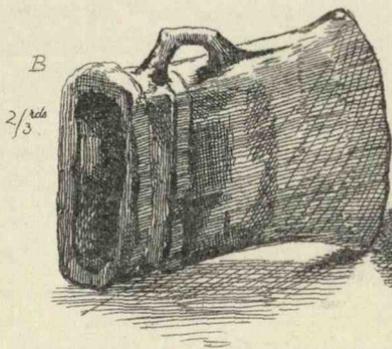
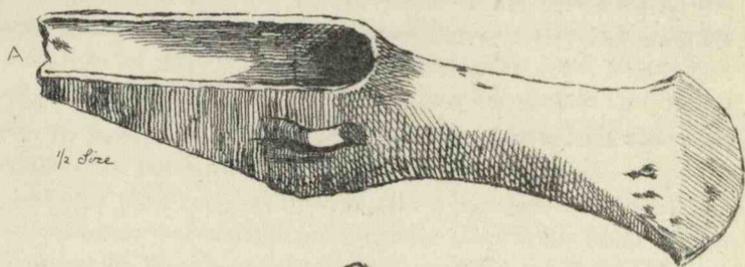
washed by the Dow; on the south a gentle declivity, where in winter the garrison of about 500 men could enjoy the warmth of the sun, and the area, occupied by the camp, fortified naturally on the west, east, and north by the Dow, a steep bank and a swampy broad morass; and if I might add to these advantages that there was an Observatory, neighbouring, as it is said, on a high hill to the north-east—Mowbrick—I would ask what more suitable spot could there have been for a station of protection?

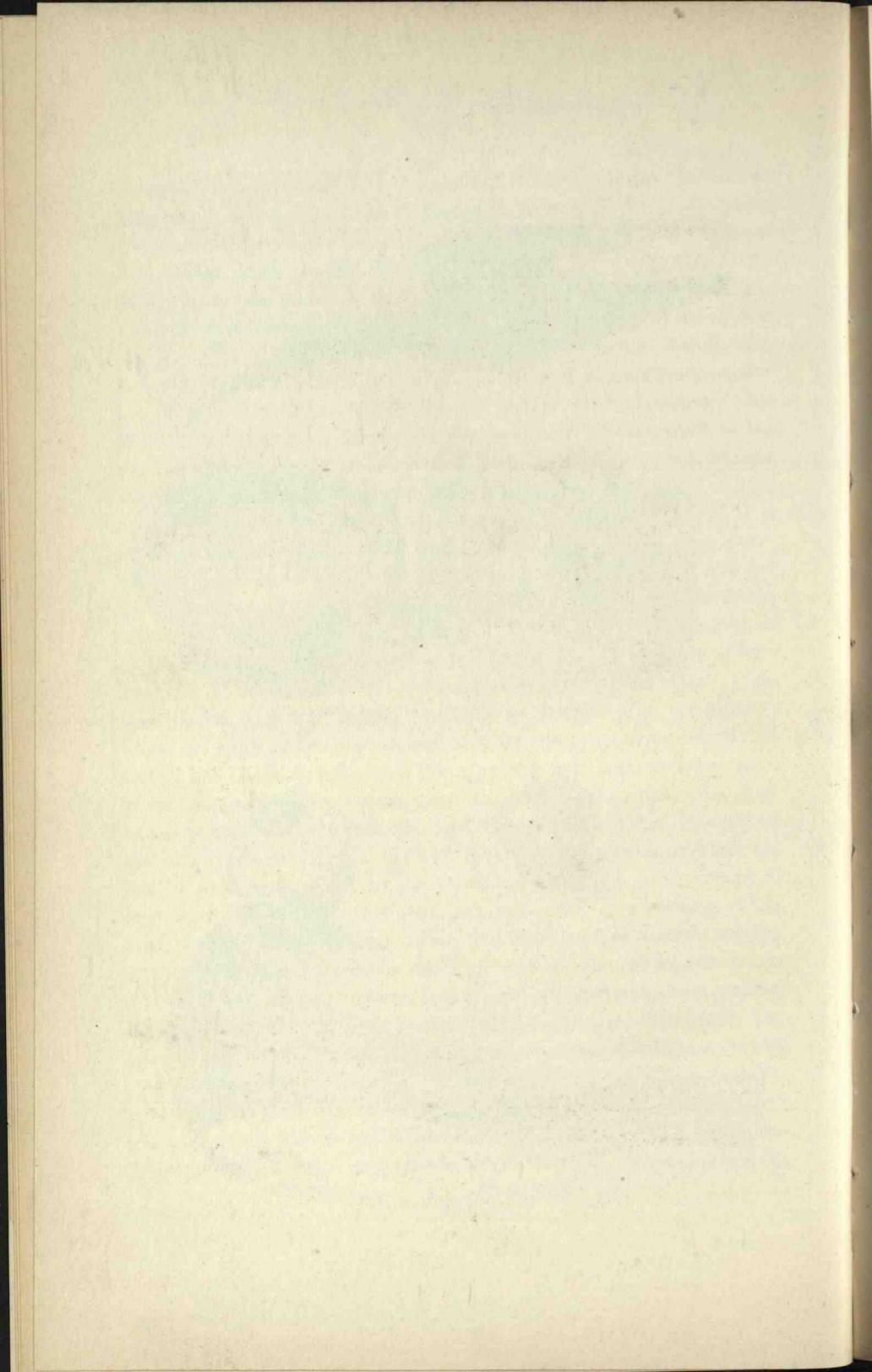


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| <p>1. Deep narrow lane.</p> <p>2. The mill.</p> <p>3. The ruins of the fort.</p> <p>4. The morass.</p> <p>5. The east steep bank of the station.</p> <p>6. The Dow.</p> | <p>7. The spot where pavement of tiles found.</p> <p>8. The spring where the umbo was found.</p> <p>9. The square mound.</p> <p>10. Urns found, &c.</p> <p>11. The remains of an agger.</p> <p>12. Loxham's house.</p> |
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The site of the encampment having been levelled for agricultural purposes, no mounds, &c., are distinguishable; but I never put a spade down in any part of the area that it did not disclose burnt earth, charred wood, pottery, bricks, and bones. The river, you perceive, flows on the east and north, and has made a precipice especially on the side of the former. At No. 8, near New England spring, was found the umbo of a shield. I will not describe it, as any one may see a representation of it in Whitaker's Richmondshire, although he tells us by mistake that it was found at Garstang.

He calls it a votive shield, and I cannot but think that it was dedicated to Minerva, who, under the name of Regina or Minerva Belisama, the queen of heaven, had a temple dedicated to her at Ribchester, at the head of Belisama, of which she was the presiding deity. But this is wandering; yet if you ask, was there ever an altar found dedicated to Minerva Belisama, I answer, read Bochart Geog. sac. 663. However this may be, this shield was found by Mr. Willacy in 1800, squeezed up, near the spring. He intrusted it to a Scotchman, who sold it for £1 10s. to Dr. Hunter, and it was ultimately deposited by Mr. Townly in the British Museum. This Mr. Willacy told me himself. The same person also described to me the ruins of a square fortress, No. 3, the foundations of which he said were of massy chiselled red sandstone: they were pronounced Roman by judges, but the country people accounted for them by relating a tradition that in old times the Saxon church of Kirkham stood there. At No. 7 also there must have been some erection, for here I saw dug up a pavement of thick rude red brick tiles, and, twice over with the officers of the Ordnance Survey, threw out a surprising quantity of broken tiles, *pateræ*, burnt bones, &c. Here, too, the drainage of the encampment had its outlet into the Dow, where Mr. Loxham picked up the bone needle, and Mr. Willacy two coins of Adrian. You will perceive where the agger enters the encampment stretching to the top of the hill behind Mr. Loxham's house, and this appears to have been the burial-place of the station. At No. 9 some years ago I inspected a square area which was surrounded with a trench one yard deep, similar to that formerly on the Maudlands at Preston. It rose into a mound with four sides. At No. 10, in 1840, Mr. Loxham discovered an urn filled with portions of large sized bones, a piece of a skull, and an amulet or something of the kind, which I cannot describe better than likening it to a string of pipe stoppers. It was of iron, but much corroded and injured with the action of fire. We could see, however, that it was perforated with three-cornered holes, by which its links had been attached by a thong. The corpse had been burnt on the spot, for much charcoal and ashes lay around. Not far from this spot the same gentleman in preparing for brick in 1849 discovered seven more urns, all well made, but plain, without ornament, and not one entire; also a small lachrymatory. Here, too, on this hill was found an iron *securis*. I wonder whether it were the instrument used in





sacrificing the Seghs, whose heads were discovered in the peaty matter near the Dow. But of all the relics found here the most singular and curious is a druid's egg or amulet in excellent preservation. I give you the exact size of it. It is a ring of light green glass, roped by a cord of blue, which cord is wrapped thus by a thread of white.

From its having been much worn in the centre rim it must have been suspended from the neck by a chain. Did the legionaries adopt the superstition of their conquered foe, or shall I say that it belonged to a Briton? I cannot but think, from the number of celts, &c., found between Kirkham and the Wyre, especially in the mosses, that the Fylde had many inhabitants before, or at least an early period of, the Roman invasion.

But we are on the spot, where Mr. Loxham exposed for me a beautiful section of the agger, so we will commence our search eastward to Preston. I was astonished not to find one road, but two running side by side, perfectly distinct; the one on the left, being three yards wide, consisted of a pretty deep layer of shingle; the other ten yards of the coarse red sand of the neighbourhood: the first hard enough for horses, in which shoes are found; and the latter for foot soldiers. Care had been taken to render both lines perfectly dry by cutting trenches between, and on each side of them. The gravel one was lower, as if worn. Was one of these of British formation? It may be so, for the Romans appear to have found many roads of British construction, which they remodelled and repaired in such a manner as to leave few traces of their first projectors. Where forests and morasses abounded, as in the Fylde, even the rude Britons saw the necessity of constructing pathways to connect their towns, and that Kirkham may have been one might be proved from so many of the places, &c., in its neighbourhood having names of British origin. But there is reason to suppose that they had accomplished more than this, and the conjecture is supported by the commentator of Richard of Cirencester, when he remarks—"That in many places are vestiges of a continued road skirting the western side of the island in the same manner as Ermyn-street did the eastern, of which parts were never adopted by the Romans, because it connects many of the British towns. It appears to have commenced on the coast of Devon, and to have gone by Exeter, Taunton, &c., to Warrington, Preston, Lancaster, &c."

But I must march forward. From the top of Loxham's hill even yet there is no difficulty in tracing the agger to Preston. To Highgate—mark the word *gate*, and there are others in this vicinity—we meet with it in the ditches, and in some of the fields, but near Highgate it is very observable, as it crosses an occupation lane; then in Gregson's garden; next in Newton, near which place an old gentleman, Mr. Hornby, told me he cut through it when sinking a marl pit. From Newton it stretches to Lund Hill, and going through the garden on the summit it makes an angle, and runs down the hill over the brook Savig through Deepdale wood, and at Lea we have the most perfect section on the line. Even its very surface a few years ago was untouched. I need follow it no further. On Cadley Moor, by-the-bye, we have many caths, cats, and cads in the neighbourhood of the agger—Cat-houses, Cat-ford, Catteral-hall,—all signifying strong hold, hence war. I inspected it with Mr. Gilbertson, the great fossilist. A little more than half a mile from Preston it crosses the Lancaster causeway, and thence over Longridge Fell, where it is called the Green-lane: it arrives at Ribchester, from the north side of which it continues its course to York; thus connecting Wyre, as I shall show, with Coccium, the emporium of the Port of Lanc, and Kirkham the metropolis of the western Sistantii with Eboracum, that of the Brigantes; and by it (the agger) Severus may have marched to subdue Caledonia, taking shipping at the Portus to Conishead Priory, and travelling forward to the Duddon by the Causeway which commences in Furness.

On this line of road from Kirkham to Preston I have been told that there are some tumuli near Salwick, but I never saw them. In the month of July, 1820, however, a copper coin of Vespasian was dug up near to Woodplumpton. I have a dagger with a brass handle and steel blade which was found amongst some skulls, bones, and pieces of iron not far from the junction of the Wyre and Lancaster Causeway. I have been told it was British, but I cannot fancy it to have belonged to any other than a canny Scotchman who opposed Cromwell. It is much corroded.

We will now return to Kirkham, and take a western direction. I had many a weary travel to find traces of the agger near the town. It is astonishing what pavements are discovered branching towards the north-west, some of them sunk very deep in the ground. My investigations were successful. Not only can I give some corroboration to the tradition, that

there was a vicinal road to Elswick,* where there is a spot called the Danes' Hills, in fact tumuli, but it is now ascertained that the Causeway ran from the Roman station at Kirkham, nearly down the present street, crossing rather nearer the church, a stream at that time, now a deep channel called the Skipbourne, to the site on which stands the present Poorhouse, where you know it was discovered. Before I was aware of its being here, the name of Wrangway-bridge, which is thrown over the Dow in its vicinity, had led me to expect to find the agger near it. A little farther a section of it is to be seen in the stunted oak field, the property of a Mrs. Moon : the tree grows upon it. I cannot tell how we missed the spot when I pointed out the line of road to Mr. Just and the officers of the Survey. From this field stretching up Ribby Brow, anciently written Rigeby, the town on the ridge, I discovered it from the circumstance of a farmer carting away a coarse red sand opposite Tarn-brick-farm-yard gate. On inquiry I found that he had been in the habit of taking away its materials for years, as it formed a *ridge* on one side, the left, of the highway. We are not now far from Westby Mill Hill. Here Mr. Just fancied that he distinguished traces of it, but Mr. Hall, sent afterwards with me over the line for the last time, would not attest them, though an old man, named Segar, declared that he had ploughed through it many times and oft. But here commences the gravel with which the road is made to the Wyre, and as the nature of the ground is gravelly, and the signs of an agger doubtful, I agree with Mr. Hall; yet that it abutted at this high hill there can be no doubt. If we meet with the road before we arrive at Thomas Jolly's, Weeton—the Wadeton of Doomsday; and, by-the-bye, is there not some Saxon lord, Wada, whom tradition describes as a great tyrant, Macadam?—it is in a cop in the hollow before you rise the hill to his house, but I insist not on it, because we here, crossing the highway to Mythorp and a valley, have a sight of the highest ridge on the whole line, indeed so large and bulky as well worthy of the skill of a railway contractor; there it is, though diminishing yearly to supply gravel for the township highways to the neglect of the open pits out of which it was constructed. It is called the Danes'-pad, and its hardness

* Since I wrote the above I have visited this place, where I was told by a native upwards of 70 years of age, and by-the-bye 7 ft. and 5½ in. high—that deep beneath the ground he had dug up a pavement of boulders tending to Kirkham, in the midst of the village. Also, that he had found half a dozen balls of lead buried in the earth. I inspected the plot of land called Danes' Hills; but cultivation had levelled it. Tradition calls Elswick a *city* destroyed with *balls* by the sea pirates.

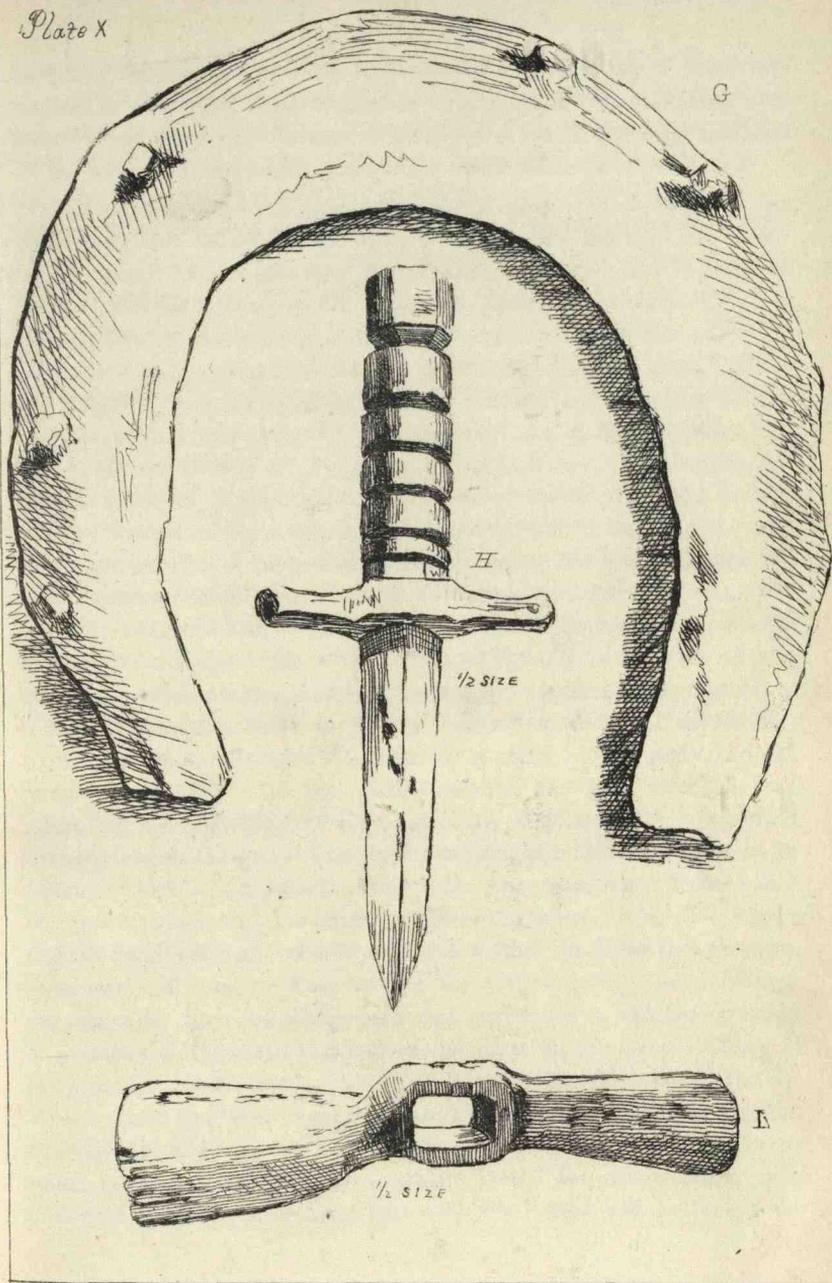
has given rise to the proverb, as hard as the Danes' pad. These pirates, no doubt from Wyre, made their inroads along its path, and their cruelty and sojourn is so well remembered by tradition in the Fylde, that every remain of antiquity is pronounced Danish. Even the celts found in those oases or hills in the midst of Marton and Pilling mosses, &c., and the curious roads to these British hiding-places, are said to have been the work of the Danes. I have before me an amulet which was dug out from the base of this agger, so near that it might have been dropped into the water by some marching soldier. It is made of earth, oval, ribbed, and painted blue, and is exactly like one marked in Camden.

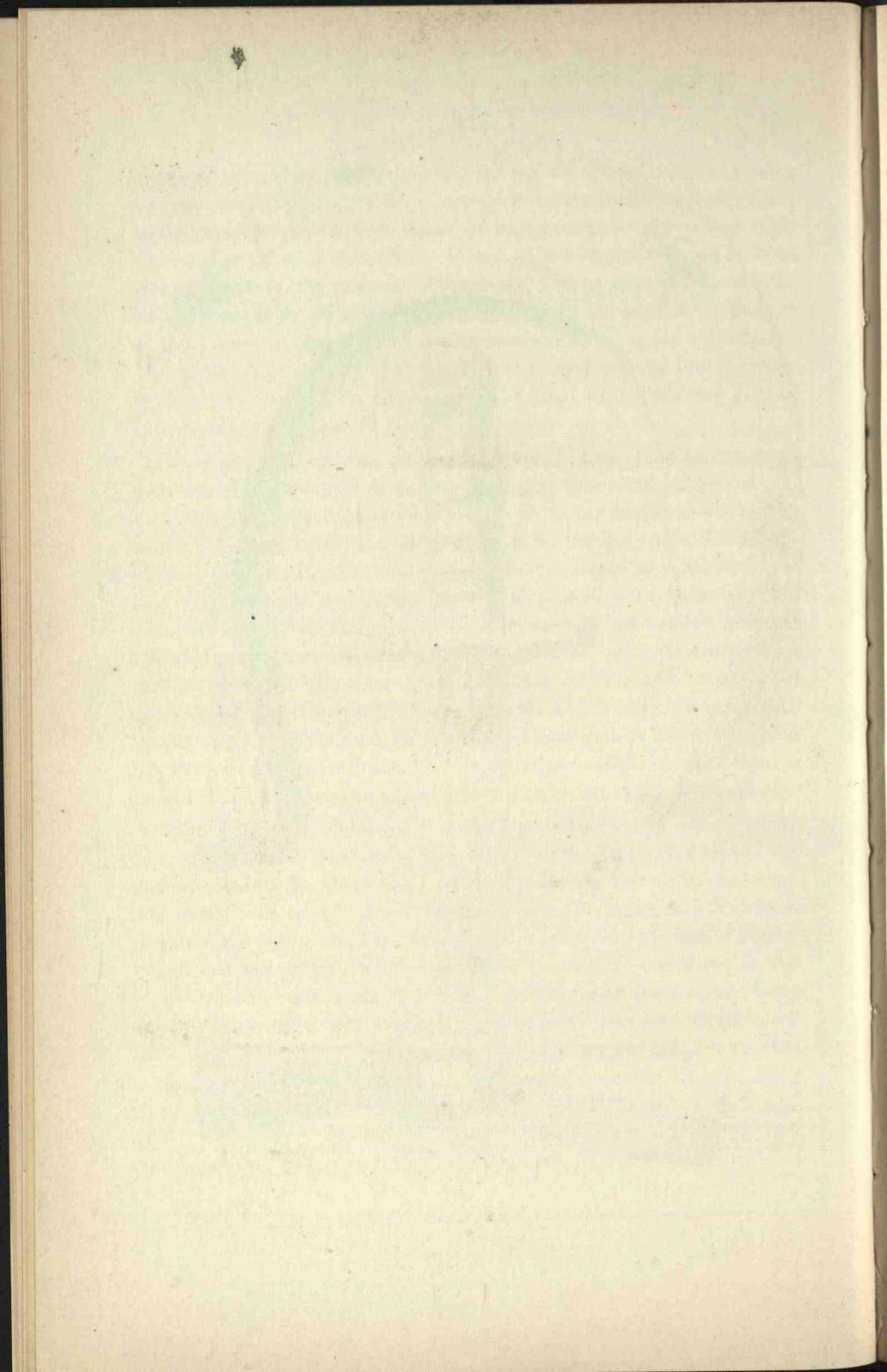
I have also a heavy brass celt without a loop, found about twenty yards from the same place, as well as two small thin iron shoes without a slut. You must not suppose these to have belonged to the horses of the Roman cavalry; no, they must have been worn, either by the native Galloways, which Dion Cassius calls little ones, as they conveyed merchandise from the Wyre, or when they carried in "crate panniers" on their back the materials to construct the road. I must prefer the latter opinion, although tradition asserts that the gravel was conveyed in the aprons of the harassed natives, because the shoes are found imbedded, as if sucked off during the labour; and the crate panniers, one foot and a half deep, which are constantly dug out of the road, have, all that I have seen or heard of, wooden oak doors at the bottom, as if to unload. Many a shoe, together with a broken sword, has been lost in the omnium gatherum of the village smithy.

Before I leave this village of Weeton, I must take you to a cairn not far from Weeton Lane Head, in a field called Moor Hey, on the side of the highway leading to Preston. I relate the strange tale of its discovery. The farmer was ploughing on the spot, when the horses took fright and fled from the field—would the fatty ground smell?—and the man in dismay ran after, being pursued by the demon of the Fylde—something in the shape of a calf. For years the cairn was untouched, but boulders being wanted for paving it was attacked, when lo, many urns were found, black earth, &c. This I have heard told by one, who saw the urns.* To what

* The rudeness of the urns, and the distance of the cairn from the agger, prove them not Roman, and until the Danes were Christianized they were merely marauders through the Fylde. After they became Christians they ceased to burn their dead. They were then British.

Plate X





race they belonged I know not: however, a few years ago, I came into possession of a rude, thick, half-baked urn, marked perpendicularly with dots; it had been just discovered in a gravel pit in the neighbourhood of the cairn. If Roman, the makers were rude potters and engravers.

After passing over the next hill from Weeton, we behold the agger crossing another valley, through which a "main dyke" has been cut, bisecting the road. We are now near Benson's farm, Staining, in the parish of Poulton, and not far from its Mere, generally known by the name of Marton Mere, where on the cutting of the above-mentioned dyke, the waters left bare a brass celt, two skin boats, and a skin cap without a seam. These the Rev. Mr. Buck inspected in Poulton. Many shoes and pieces of iron have been taken yearly out of the causeway here, as its materials, land gravel, are carted away for the repair of the highways. I have measured it, and found its breadth at the crown about twelve yards and its base twenty, whereas on the sound land it is not more than eight or ten yards. There are no signs of ruts—and I doubt whether any wheel carriage was used thereon—whilst I can prove that sledges were; for as we walk up to the farm-house and look at the oak-posts at the first gate, we may see the two sides of a sledge which were dug out of the agger. They are of rude oak, much weather-beaten, and have been joined together by cross pieces at the top and bottom, where they were mortised to them. Here also was found another amulet, which I have: it is small, oblong, and of foreign white soft marble. In the same township we meet with the road again, beneath the village of Hardhorn, near Paddle House. It is plain enough, though the gravel has been removed, and it is making direct for Poulton, which is not far off. Here ends every trace which I dare vouch for; yet it is said that the causeway gained the top of Poulton-hill, by the Church Sunday School. I affirm it not: neither do I say that there are some marks of a square fosse around the Church-yard. Certainly there was a peculiar ditch and a high bank that surrounded it, with the exception of a portion on the south near and at the great church gates. This I do know, that I saw two copper coins of Adrian in the possession of Mr. H. Wilson which had been found near the church, and I am assured that Mr. Crossfield, of Kirkham, has a pretty large medal of Germanicus, which was taken by Miss Threlfalls from a garden behind the market-place. Mr. Just fancied that Poulton might have been the Portus, and the pool of the

Wyre and the Skippon, half a mile distant, the *rode* or *statio navium*. I rather fancy that the agger ran past Poulton on to the Town-fields near Little Poulton Hall, having only a branch to Poulton Hill. On the high ground of the Town-fields there is a track of an ancient road which evidently was gravelled over the low lands, and this road leads by a curious cut through the banks of the Wyre to the Shard, or as anciently written Aldwath, or the old ford, so denominated before 1300.

The agger could not go to the mouth of the Wyre over Thornton Marsh for obvious reasons. But the Bergerode of Wyre, so called in old maps, was between the hill of Bourne Hall and that of Stana, and in my opinion was approached from Skippool. It is singular I have paid little or no attention to Stana, although it has been in my mother's family for a century, and I fancy something has been said of ruins there—and an agger *could* approach *it* from Poulton. At Bourne, which is marked in the Domesday survey by mistake of Baines, as Bryning near Lytham—there are certain rough grounds named Danes' Pad by the country people. Rawcliffe, anciently in Domesday written *Rodecliffe*, and the commencement of *Kates' Pad*, lie across the water nearly opposite, and *Wardless, where till Fleetwood was founded, was the *rode* of shipping for time immemorial; and these places might have been gained from an agger to Stana by the old ford of Bulk across the Wyre. Of Fleetwood I must say little; but that in 1840, between Rossal Point and Fenny, some brickmakers discovered a treasure of 400 silver denarii, consisting of the coins of Trajan, Adrian, Vespasian, Titus, Domitian, Antoninus, Severus, Caracalla, Sabina, Faustina, &c. I possess 40 of them, and myself and brother here saw destroyed, for the sake of its materials, a large paved platform, which I had often fancied had been used for a landing-place. At this spot I have heard old people speak of the ruins of a rude, thick-walled, circular building, round which it was uncanny to sport.

I have not time to travel over the water, which, if time had allowed, ought to have been done. Of Kate's Pad you will read an account of mine read by the Rev. Mr. Banister, of Pilling, at Lancaster, to the Archæological Society. Roman and British remains have been found over Wyre; but of Kate's Pad, as the moss is dug off, more may and will be disclosed.

* Does *Wardless* speak of one of the Burgi being erected on its hill?

Mr. Bannister possesses an unique celt, found near a heap of deer horns, &c., on a hill in the midst of the moss. I assure you I feel it a payment for my labours in tracing the Fylde Roman agger, by knowing that the Wyre is now acknowledged to have been the great port of Lanc. ; and that *anything* in our remote section of the island has attracted the attention of your Society.

P.S.—The round cairn of fire-burnt broken stones, in the very vicinity of the *urn cairn* at Weeton Lane Head, which was shown to Mr. Just and myself, and afterwards cut through by Capt. Tucker, is a Beltain or Teenla cairn. There are many on the line of the road. I can count no less than eight in Staining. The Teenla is yet celebrated here, though the fey stone is not used. There was a Teenla cairn on Westby Hill. Some have ventured to assert that the squares on Dowbridge Hill and the Maudlands were used for the same purpose.