

closed in glass. This like the cross has been ornamented with coloured stones or paste, and gilt all over.—All these are beautifully illuminated in colours of Limoges enamel.

A bronze key, 20 inches long, with raised characters on the shaft, and on the head or bow part. The meaning of these was not explained. It was suggested that the key had belonged to a Gnostic Society, and that it had been the symbol of office borne by the chief or principal.

Two leaden cups and a spoon;—specimens of the ordinary domestic utensils of the middle classes in England, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

Three Roman bronze fibulæ, and a small bronze bell.

A letter was read from Thomas Lyon, Esq., of Appleton Hall, near Warrington, shewing some recent discoveries in the Roman Road near Stretton. It was accompanied by a map, on which the discoveries were marked.

The following Papers were read :—

I.—ON THE CHESHIRE WATLING STREET, AND TRACES OF ROMAN OCCUPATION IN LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE.

By John Robson, Esq.

There can be no doubt that Archæologists are indebted, and by and by will be still more indebted, to the Ordnance Survey of this country. It is, indeed, a document newly recovered, by which we may explain and correct our written records, few and imperfect at the best, and a careful study of which will throw great light upon the early history of Lancashire and Cheshire.

We find laid down upon this map a road named Watling Street, following a remarkably direct course from Manchester, through Northwich, to Chester. Between Manchester and Stretford it is marked "Roman Road;" between Stretford and Northwich "Watling Street," as also in Delamere Forest and under Edisbury Hill—but between Chester and Kelsall it is again marked as "Roman Road."

It would be exceedingly desirable to ascertain what foundation there is for the name of "Watling Street"—whether it is so called in any ancient document, or whether the country people know it by that name, and if it be authentic, then does it imply that it was a *primeval* road, adopted by the Romans? or, was it an original work of that people?

From the map it would seem that between Manchester and Northwich it coincided with the present Highway, except near Dunham, where the latter makes a detour by Altrincham. About a mile from Northwich, on the East, we find "Over Street," in the direct course of King Street, and which probably points out the intersection of the two roads. At $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Northwich, on the West, the present road runs a little to the South, while the old one continues its straight course, and here we find evident remains of it.

Two roads intersect each other at Crabtree Green, and it is from the angle on the West that the Watling Street, following the right line from Northwich, goes across a field, and through a plantation, to the corner of the Forest Inclosures. It is here planted over, and is more or less clearly marked for half a mile, running a little to the South of West. It is 9 or 10 yards across, bearing a well-marked crown, with shallow ditches on each side, and traces of mounds or cops beyond them. Gravel is spread over the surface, and there is said by the Foresters to be a strong bed of solid gravel, 18 inches deep, below. The traces, after an interval of about a mile and a half, reappear with a different character, still keeping the original course under Edisbury Hill. Here it has the appearance of two rather high embankments, from between which the gravel may have been removed; in one part, for 60 or 70 yards, where the red sandstone cropped out, there were two deep ruts, with the Horse track between, while the soft rock has been cut down on each side, so as clearly to define the breadth of the road.

It soon (probably) joined the present road again, but its course to Kelsall is not given on the map, and the modern road again makes a curve to the South. To the west of Kelsall we have Street Farm, and the Highway goes on to Tarvin—but in the direct line of Street Farm, and about half a mile from the part that turns to Tarvin, we have the remainder of the Roman Road, still for four miles used as the Highway, and continued for a mile in the direction of Street Farm.

We have here, therefore, distinct evidence of a road either adopted or constructed by the Romans, with occasional breaks, it is true, but so trifling, as to throw not the shadow of a doubt upon the fact. A large portion of it is still used as the great Highway, between Manchester and Chester; much of the remainder is still evident, and it is highly probable that every part of it might be clearly demonstrated.

The general course of this road may be described as South South-west, from Manchester to Holford Street, and as a little to the South of West from thence to Chester.

King Street, which has been already mentioned, runs from Broken Cross, a little to the East of South, to Kinderton, and though the road Over Street, (about a mile) and from that point to Frandley, ($2\frac{1}{2}$ miles) has not been traced, I do not think any person will deny that King Street is a continuation of the road at Stockton Heath, and that this North and South road crossed the Watling Street at or near the point marked Over Street on the map—that is about a mile to the East of Northwich.

In the first volume of the *Archæologia*, we have part of a letter from Mr. Thos. Percival, dated Royston, July 6, 1760, in which he says, “I have traced the Roman roads from Manchester with the utmost care, and find that the Condate of the Romans was Kinderton, in Cheshire; the road is visible almost all the way, and the camp yet visible at Kinderton, where the Dane and Weaver join: there is a Roman way from thence to Chester, another to Chesterton, near Newcastle-under-Lyne, and another by Nantwich and Whitchurch to Wroxeter.” Whitaker, who appears to have been rather sore at being forestalled in this discovery by Percival, says, (*Hist. of Manchester*, vol. I. p. 153.) “In the first volume of *Archeologia*, published this very winter (1770-71), by the Antiquarian Society, I find that the late Thomas Percival, Esq., fixes Condate at Kinderton with me. But he asserts the Roman road from Manchester to be ‘visible almost all the way;’ when, the Roman and present actually running almost all the way together, it is impossible for the former to be more than partially and occasionally seen. And he also asserts the Roman Camp to be ‘yet visible at Kinderton, where the Dane and Weaver join,’ when it is seen only in the remains of two ditches, and these are at the distance of some miles from the conjunction of those rivers. But Mr. Percival was only a young Antiquarian when he died. Had he lived longer, his natural genius for these studies

would have been more highly cultivated, his fund of learning considerably enriched, and his lively mind have acquired new vigor and additional accuracy, from the habit of observing and reflecting."

It seems, then, that all that was to be seen at Kinderton was the remains of two ditches. But we must briefly advert to Whitaker's own account of the Roman road to Chester. After tracing this to half a mile past Holford Street, he says, "A little beyond the conclusion of this, the present road beginning to tend too much towards Northwich, the Roman insensibly steals away to the left; but about a mile beyond the point, and in the direction of the course, we recover it again," (p. 142.) It is exceedingly difficult, with the Ordnance map before us, to imagine how it would be possible to heap up so many blunders in so small a space. "The present road beginning to tend too much towards Northwich," might lead one to suppose that it had at any time tended to some other point. "The Roman *insensibly steals away* to the left." But the Roman is not such a sly fox as Whitaker would have us believe; he leaves the Northwich road most abruptly, at an acute angle, turning his back upon Chester, and taking a course as has already been stated, a little to the East of South, certainly in the direction of its own course, but assuredly in no course between Manchester and Chester, or Manchester and Kinderton. With reference to the name of Kind Street, given to it by Horsely and Percival, we may ask, as with Watling Street, what is the authority for it? If it is merely a suggestion of those writers, we must protest against its use. But if the original name can be shewn to be Kind Street, it is quite at variance with custom to give such a name to a road ending at the place which gives it. Thus we have in the town of Warrington, Sankey Street, Winwick Street, and Manchester Lane, all leading to those places; but we have no Warrington Street. The roads from the gates of Rome were named from the places to which they led, but it would be ridiculous to add instances of so well known a custom. Again, says Whitaker, "The name *Condate* is pretty loudly echoed in that of Kinderton"—an Irish echo evidently. He felt the difficulty of the *R*, and attempts feebly to get over it. I am not aware of an instance where the Saxon *ton* has been added to a Latin name, and in Domesday Book we find it written *Kinbreton*, which wont echo at all. After a description of the Harboro' field, he says that a Roman road which traverses "a field immediately without the camp, goes to Mediolanum, in

Shropshire. Another went by Holme Street Hall to Chester, and a third extended by Street Forge and Red Street to Chesterton, near Newcastle." I shall not follow Whitaker in his excursions into the territories of the Carnabii and Cornavii, though as a specimen of learned folly and ingenious trifling it would be hard to find its equal.* I have now to notice the latest discoveries that have been made at Kinderton, by the Venerable the Archdeacon of Chester, and published in the Memoirs of the Archæological Society of Chester.

The Harboro' Field, which the Archdeacon, following Whitaker, supposes to have been the site of a Roman Station, was explored in July, 1849, for the purpose of ascertaining "how far the gravel of the road extended, and in each place opened, small fragments of Roman pottery, some of Samian ware, were immediately thrown out, sufficient to indicate the place to be Roman, and shewing the probability of much being discovered if diligent search were instituted." This is a very important fact, as it was not known that any thing characteristic of Roman occupation had been found previously, and I think corroborates the opinion I expressed in a previous communication to the Society, that we may place Mediolanum near Middlewich.

It is certainly much to be desired, that the learned gentleman should have said something more about the road which he was looking for. Twenty years ago, the farmer who then occupied the field removed a portion of it, and if it were a continuation of King Street, it must, apparently, have run nearly parallel with the present Lane (Whitaker considers this Lane as part of the top of the Station), and just within the hedge, and if so, the Station must be sought elsewhere, most likely somewhere about the junction of the roads from the South, where we are told the gravel "may be traced

* Dr. Gale, in his notes on Antoninus, places Condate at Congleton, and says, "Procul dubio autem ad nos venerit a Condate Rhedonum prope Sigerim, Vult autem eruditus Ravennatis editor Galliens (marginal note, *V. Valesii Notitiam Galliarum, in verbo Condate*), illam deduci a Condate, quod affirmat apud veteres Gallos duorum fluminum denotare conjunctionem," (p. 50.)—He says this is the case at Congleton. It is equally so at Kinderton, Northwich, and Stockton Heath. Whitaker asserts that Condate means the principal city, but adduces no evidence, and from this concludes that it was the capital city of the Carnabii!

to the width of between 40 to 50 yards, forming a platea or roadway.* One of these roads, the one from Chesterton, follows a short accommodation road, called Parson's Lane, and then passes onwards, still discernible to the junction just named. Another is supposed to come from Wem, in Shropshire, by Minshull Vernon; it crosses the river Wheelock, near Sutton Mill, and passing through Sutton and Newton, nearly in a line with the present road, unites with the other ways at Kinderton. A foot note says, "The farmers tell me that they find this road very little below the green sod, and that, like many of the Roman roads, it has at intervals narrow footways branching from it."

I need hardly say that it would add immensely to the value of statements like these, if, instead of saying the Roman road appears so and so, the Archæologist would state distinctly what he found. Our actual knowledge, for want of these particulars, amounts to very little, and I should doubt whether a better spot for a thorough investigation of Roman road-making than the neighbourhood of Middlewich could be found in the two counties. It will merely be necessary to refer the members to Dr. Hume's paper on the Roman remains at Stockton Heath as an example.

Whitaker, as has been already shewn, left the direct road to Chester, in order to get to his supposed Condate by King Street; Mr. Archdeacon Wood supposes that he has discovered the way to bring him back again to it. "There has been also a road from the junction at Kinderton to Chester, which would cross the river Wheelock below Stanthorn Hill, and the river Weaver at Bradford near Newbridge, in digging the foundation of which, Roman antiquities were found. I have traced this road from Kinderton a short way, and if the line of it was extended it would pass down Bradford Mill Lane by the south side of Whitegate Church, and leaving Petty Pool to the right would enter the Northwich and Chester road, the northern Watling Street, at 18 miles from Chester." There is a typographical

* I cannot believe that all the names occurring in the Itinera of Antoninus, and which are generally considered as Roman stations, were either fortified or military positions. The word station is ambiguous and without sufficient classical authority. In the time of Tacitus the following words were commonly used—*Presidium*, a garrison town—*Castellum*, an outlying fort—*Mansio*, a post house—while *Castra* means merely a temporary encampment.

error I suppose, as it would be about 13 miles from Chester upon the line pointed out. But for what possible purpose could the Romans pass over 13 or 14 miles, when the direct course of 4 or 5 was open before them? This is so utterly at variance with all we know of the routes of that wonderful people, that it would be useless to say a word upon the subject. There are two other roads described as pointing upon Kinderton, but as the only fact connected with them is the discovery of a spearhead (said to be Roman, but the metal is not named) and a bell from a horse's harness, both found when excavating for the foundation of the viaduct at Saltersford, we need not do more than allude to them.

It will not be necessary for me to go into Mr. Archdeacon Wood's recapitulation of the evidence to shew that Condate was at Kinderton. But perhaps a general remark or two may not be out of place. The pseudo-nonymous Richard of Cirencester, as I believe the whole of his pretended history is now acknowledged to be a forgery, and as the Itinera are not admitted into the *MONUMENTA HISTORICA*, should be altogether discarded, unless some champion reestablishes his authority. Neither should it be allowed to alter the names of towns, and distances, as they appear in Antoninus, and then to shew how capitally they agree with our own peculiar views. The evidence is there, such as it is, to be either taken or rejected, but not to be altered without demonstrative proof. Whitaker treated these matters very lightly. He sought for a place—Condate, Veratinum, Coccium, the Portus Sistuntiorum—and always found the site where they *must* have been; but his successors, till Mr. Archdeacon Wood produced evidence of the Roman occupation of Kinderton, have been less fortunate, and the other three sites are most assuredly *Chateaux en Espagne*, not *Castra Romana*.

I have already alluded to the evidence, and the necessity of adhering strictly to it till some new proof is exhibited. All that we have at present is the Itinera of Antoninus, and if without altering in any way that evidence, we find it accordant with existing remains, we do all that can be done towards identifying a route so described. The second Iter of Antoninus in describing the road from York to Chester has the last station but one, Mamucium or Manutium, as written in some MSS. No one has ever doubted that this place was Castlefield near Manchester, and between this place and Chester, at 18 miles from the former and 20

miles from the latter, is Condate, which agrees with great precision with the position of Stockton Heath. If again we take the tenth Iter, and reverse it, beginning at Middlewich and considering it as Mediolanum, we have 17 miles to the north, on the line of a great Roman road, Condate at Stockton Heath—proceeding along the same road direct north, in 18 miles we arrive at Mancunium, or as read in other MSS. Mancocunium, which would take us to Standish; 17 miles further north brings us to the Lancashire Watling street, and where we should naturally expect to find a post of some sort, this would be Coccium; and at 20 miles beyond this is Lancaster, or the station of Bremetonax or Bremetonacæ. Now in this statement I have changed neither names nor figures. The existence of the road no one doubts, and I feel confident that proofs of Roman occupation will be found at Standish, and at the intersection of the roads to the north of Preston, if carefully looked for. And when we know that such proofs have been found only lately in Middlewich and Stockton Heath, we may confidently expect that a proper search will be followed by successful results, not merely at the two spots already named, but at other places on the line of road. For such inquiry the Historic Society affords a good opportunity, and perhaps we may be allowed to hope that such Members as reside in the neighbourhood of the road will allow no chance to pass them of increasing our knowledge of the Roman occupation of Great Britain.

The Members will be gratified to learn that Mr. Lyon has again come upon the Roman road at Stretton, between the point to which Dr. Hume traced it, and Stretton Church, in the Dog Fields. It has the same structure—a foundation of sandstone with gravel over—and points a little to the West of the Church. The gravel appears here to have been less disturbed, and consequently is more plentiful. It is 18 feet wide as in the parts previously examined.

II.—NOTES ON GENEALOGY.

By Sir William Betham, F.S.A., M.R.I.A.

A communication was read from Sir William Betham which contained a transcript of a Pedigree confirmatory of the descent of Norres of Speke, in female line, from the original house of Le Noreis of Blackrod. See Proceedings, vol. ii. p. 141.