

The University of Missouri, Columbia, U.S.A.

The Life and Works of Marciel Gutierrez Najera, by
N. Walker, M.A.

The English Monastic Boroughs, by N. M. Tranholme,
Ph.D.

The Hon. Librarian.

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REGINALD THRELFALL BAILEY,

Hon. Librarian.

6th February 1930.

REPORT OF THE LOCAL SECRETARY FOR LANCASTER.

LANCASTER MUSEUM EXCAVATIONS, 1929.¹

The excavations this year were begun on the 23rd September and lasted until the 5th October with 8 to 10 men engaged in the "dig." Work has been carried on at two points, in the Vicarage Field, as in former years, and immediately east of the Church. At the latter spot it was hoped to find a continuation of the massive wall that was found under the Chancel during alterations carried out in 1911, a description of which, together with a set of plans, was published by the late Mr. Austin, the architect. Unfortunately nothing was found that could definitely be connected with this wall. The excavations were carried to a depth of 7 ft. 6 in. below the surface, when the undisturbed boulder clay was reached. Above this was an irregular bed of cobblestones in transported clay containing fragments of charcoal. It was not, however, possible to connect this certainly with the foundations of the wall in question. The soil above contained a mixed deposit of Roman and Mediæval pottery, in which the former predominated; and covered a period ranging from the second century to the fourteenth. One find of special interest was a silver coin belonging to the reign of Antoninus Pius.

In the Vicarage Field the aim of the work was to obtain confirmation of the conclusions suggested by last year's work, and to this end four additional trenches were cut. Three of these were designed to cut through the ramparts and ditches as nearly as possible at right angles, while the fourth was carried along the boundary fence next to the Vicarage Lane, in the hope, which was not realised, of striking the wall of some building,

¹ See *Trans.*, 80, 224.

this part of the field being the only portion sufficiently far from the main rampart to make such a discovery likely.

In a general way the ditches and ramparts now uncovered agree with the previous discoveries, but there are indications that the defences were remodelled at least in part during the fourth century, since two of the ditches were proved to have been filled up during that period as is shown by the pottery and coins found in the deposits. It may be said now that in the south-western half of the portion of the field covered by the earthworks the defences consisted of two, and in one place three, series of ramparts with ditch in front, the whole apparently flanking the cobbled roadway leading up the hill through the gap in the main rampart to the small gravelled plateau in the highest part of the field by the Churchyard wall.

Small finds have been comparatively few this year, but are of interest inasmuch as they confirm the dating of the Roman occupation from the last quarter of the first century to the latter part of the fourth. Whether or not this occupation was continuous as yet there is no certain evidence. The five coins found are of the third and fourth centuries. Of the pottery the largest proportion of the coarse ware was late, but the red Samian ware, both plain and decorated, belonged in the main to the second century.

The only bronze objects found were a stud and a small section of chain. The upper layers produced sherds of Mediæval pottery and two silver pennies, one of Edward I., and the other probably Edward III.

Mr. G. M. Bland, F.R.G.S., Borough Librarian and Curator, has carried through all arrangements in connection with the work.

The Museum Committee were again fortunate in having the expert advice and guidance of Professors R. Newstead, F.R.S., M.Sc., F.E.S., and J. P. Droop, M.A., of the University of Liverpool.

All the "finds," together with plans, photographs, and printed records, will be permanently exhibited and stored in the Lancaster Museum.