

Galacum and Bremetonacæ, and more than this, he has assigned no distances either between Alauna and the station next north of it, nor between it and Coccium southward; so that while he verifies Antoninus by securing certain stations on the same line of military road, he varies from him in others. Yet connecting Coccium with Mancunium, and according with Antoninus in the distance between the two stations, he supports Antoninus, though the latter is the more correct account of the Iter. We thus have two authorities for the line of military road which we have traced out in this paper. With the stations on the Iter we have nothing to do; nor with the opinions of others, as to its line, direction, &c., who differ from us; because our object is not to find fault either with what our predecessors have done or left undone, but to give to the society a just account of a fact as it simply is, as history ever should do, leaving that fact and our account of it, to stand simply connected by themselves, for the assistance and satisfaction of all others hereafter, who may think fit to do as we have done, go, see, observe, and judge for themselves.

The two Roman roads alluded to, in connection with the present one, must stand over to form a sequel to the present paper, if deemed acceptable to the members of this society.

A special vote of thanks to Mr. Just for his able and interesting paper was carried by acclamation.

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## II.—OBSERVATIONS ON THE INSCRIPTION UPON THE COMMON SEAL OF LIVERPOOL.

*By Richard Brooke, Esq., F.S.A.*

The explanation which was suggested in the paper, upon the Common Seal of Liverpool, read at the meeting of the 4th January last, not being satisfactory to my mind, I am induced to offer the following observations on the subject.

In commencing, I imagine that we may reject without any scruple Mr. Gregson's notion, of the bird engraved on the Seal being an Eagle, and of

the word in the scroll or label under it, being "Jovis"; for I never met with any person who attached the least weight to his conjecture; and it may well admit of doubt, whether in the low state of classical learning on the 28th August, 1207, the date of the first Liverpool Charter, either King John, or any of his court had ever heard of Jupiter, or of the Eagle being called the bird of Jove.

Some years ago, I had a conversation with Mr. Barron Field, the author of a paper on the Liverpool Seal, and also with Mr. Okill, and inspected the cast which he shewed me, taken from the impression of an old Seal, which he said had been affixed to a deed of the age, (as far as I can recollect) of either Mary or Elizabeth, and which I suppose to have been the same deed which was alluded to in the paper of the 4th January last; and I cannot help entertaining the opinion, that the explanation which was suggested or revived on the 4th January of the meaning of the word, or letters engraved on the separate line or scroll below the inscription, cannot be correct.

It appears from the paper alluded to, that we cannot come to the conclusion suggested in it, unless we are prepared to admit that the letters in the scroll or label are reversed, or in other words, engraved the wrong way upwards; which appears to me to be highly improbable.

Besides which there is another difficulty against the supposition of the five letters, or word, being intended for a contraction of "Johannis," (in English "of John" or "John's,") because to put a noun-substantive, or a proper name quite alone, and in the genitive case, without any other word to give it some meaning, such for example, as would signify, "the Grant" or the "Gift" of John, does not make sense; and bad as the Latin of the middle ages often was, it was scarcely so bad as that, nor so much at variance with the rules of Grammar.

In Lewis' Topographical Dictionary, there are vast numbers of engravings of Seals of Corporations, &c., yet I cannot recollect a single instance of one with the name of a King placed all alone, in so extraordinary a manner. I cannot help entertaining the opinion, that Mr. Hamper, in the letter in the *Archæologia*, vol. 21, has probably given if not the correct explanation, at least the best explanation hitherto given of it; thus—"*Sigillum commune Burgensium Leverpolis*," and the letters beneath the



principal inscription, forming the termination of the word LEVERPOLIS, having been placed there for the want of room.

In the work on the Great Charter, the Charter of the Forest, &c. &c. by William Blackstone, Vinerian professor of the laws of England, afterwards Mr. Justice Blackstone, no mean authority, he gives copies of the impressions of the great Seal of King John, affixed to two instruments of importance; in one the "Articuli," or heads, which were afterwards to be reduced to the form of a Charter, and to which the King affixed his great Seal, the copy shews his name engraved in the circumscription, in full, "IOHANNES"; and in the other, which is Magna Charta, the copy gives the reverse or counter-seal as Blackstone terms it, and there the King's name appears in a contraction in the circumscription, thus—"IOhS"; the inscriptions also contain his royal and other titles.

It is also worthy of notice, that the copies of the Great Seal of John, given by Blackstone, neither contain any crescent, star, or any other ornamental device,\* though Magna Charta was granted on 15th June, 1215, which was almost eight years after the grant of the Liverpool Charter; and if he had usually adopted any such device, as a star, or crescent, it seems rather more natural, to expect to find it in his own Seal, than on the seal of a town to which he had granted a charter.

The letter *h* in those instances, resembles the small *h* now in use in printing; and it should be borne in mind that at that period the *H* was not very commonly formed as at present, of two upright lines, with a horizontal line connecting them in the midst, but somewhat like the present small letter *h*. Unless that circumstance is borne in mind, the mode in which the word IOHIS is printed on the last line of page 58, of the proceedings of this Society, of 4th January last, might possibly mislead.

I think that the letter said to be *h*, and to be engraved the wrong end upwards, in the scroll, or label, in the most ancient Seal, is in fact the letter *P*; at least it appears so to my eyes; and when we consider the barbarous Latin of the middle ages, I do not feel certain, whether the word may not be intended for LEVERPOLIOPIS; the last five letters being placed in the scroll, or label below the rest of the inscription. I suggest that

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\* There is a very small cross at the end of each inscription, but that is merely such as is seen in many other seals and coins, and cannot be considered as a device.

that may probably be the correct word, which in fact does not differ much from LEVERPOLIS, which Mr. Hamper gives us, and is about as good mediæval Latin; for it is not easy to say what word would be used in the middle ages for the genitive case of Liverpool; and as the letter which precedes the letter L in the word, or part of a word, "LEVERPOL" is defaced, I think that Mr. Hamper may probably be right in suggesting that it is M, and not D.

Upon the whole, I am inclined to think that Mr. Hamper's explanation, if not correct, is nearly so; but if not, then it appears to me that we have yet to seek for the correct explanation of the meaning of the five letters, or word, on the scroll, or label, especially as no instance appears to be adduced of any other Seal containing such remarkable deviations from what is usual in inscriptions on Seals of cities and towns.

Mr. Pidgeon said, he was content that he had been the first publicly to call attention to the existence of an impression of the Ancient Seal of Liverpool, and that he had given to the members of the Society the power of judging for themselves as to the inscription. He had most carefully drawn every part, and they might rely on the general correctness of the etching. In particular, he believed that the letter preceding the word "Leverpol" was D, and not M as suggested by Mr. Brooke, and the modern, though faulty copy corroborated this reading. With these remarks he would leave the subject in the hands of the members of the Society.

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III.—NOTICE OF RECENT DISCOVERIES AT CHESTER, IN A LETTER FROM  
WILLIAM AYRTON, ESQ., OF CHESTER.

*Chester, 30th January, 1849.*

MY DEAR SIR,

I have much pleasure in complying with your request, by giving you, to the best of my ability, a short account of ancient remains and excavations, which have been lately exposed in making fresh drains in Chester, and which have fallen under my own observation.

The most interesting of these is undoubtedly an excavation of some extent, which was discovered in making the drains in St. John street, Pepper street, Cuppin street, and Bridge street; in each of which streets the labourers came across a previous excavation, which takes the form of a