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Reports

CANTERBURY EXCAVATION COMMITTEE

IN Vol. LVII (1944) of *Arch. Cantiana* appeared a preliminary report of excavations undertaken in September to October, 1944, between the ruins of St. George's Church and the fragment of the old city wall of A.D. 1300 adjoining the site of St. George's Gate. The work in progress also included trial trenches at Martyr's Field where an inhumation cemetery had been located (Victoria County History), but no burials were found.

Since the above work was reported excavation has been carried on in Burgate Street at Christmas and during April, 1945. As previously, Mrs. Audrey Williams of the Ministry of Works supervised the work. Here part of the foundation and walling of a large building of, it is considered, the latter part of the 2nd century A.D. were found. Two rubbish pits which had been dug in the area seemed to prove this. One had contents dating to not later than the mid 2nd c., the other, which was later than the building, had pottery not earlier than the 3rd and 4th centuries.

In September, 1945, further work was undertaken in Watling Street when two gravel roads, one of them perhaps the Roman Watling Street itself, were cut. On this site foundations of a wall at least six feet wide were found.

The latest excavations have been undertaken since Christmas in Butchery Lane where the spectacular find of two mosaic pavements of coarse grey green cubes enclosing panels of conventional flower design in small coloured tesserae has been opened up. This seems to belong to the corridor of a late 3rd or 4th c. house. Coins and other small finds are dated to this period.

Some of the main results of the excavations so far completed have been given by Mr. B. H. St. J. O'Neil, Chief Inspector of Ancient Monuments. He considers that the evidence shows Canterbury to have been of Roman foundation, since so far there is no trace of an earlier settlement on the site, but that it must have been founded immediately after the Roman Conquest. From an early date it must have had a defensive bank and ditch. Slight traces of early buildings of timber have been found; of stone walls the earliest so far located is one of a building, which was considerably altered in or soon after the reign of Hadrian.

The building found in Burgate Street had very substantial walls and was certainly more than an ordinary dwelling. Further work here might be most profitable, especially as the building has been

dated with fair precision. The latest site of all, in Butchery Lane, has proved most profitable already and encouraging for the future. The building was probably a private house of some size, and with a complicated structural history.

So far there is no evidence of continued occupation of the site after the 4th century A.D. The coins range from a barbarous copy of an issue of Claudius I to one of Valens with a possible example of Arcadius.

Major F. W. Tomlinson, F.S.A., has proved a most energetic and efficient Hon. Secretary, and he has been most successful in recruiting volunteers for work which has often been arduous and in unpleasant weather.

W.P.D.S.,
Member of the Committee.

DOVER EXCAVATION COMMITTEE

Before the formation of the Committee Warrant Officer M. M. Rix, the late Mr. Eric Taylor and volunteers were engaged upon the clearance of debris in and around some medieval walling, revealed by demolition after damage in Snargate Street. The walling appears to be a garderobe pit and the base of two shoots which discharged into it. The pit is divided into two portions, both vaulted in stone, by a wall within which is a double opening with round-headed arches. The masonry suggests a date in the 12th century for this garderobe, but it is quite uncertain what was the building which it served. It does not stand on the line of the Town Wall, as that is usually drawn.

In the filling of the pit there was some medieval pottery. Amongst redeposited debris lying across its ruins there was much pottery of many ages from the Roman onwards, including a most interesting and rare sherd of late 11th century ware. This is an import from northern France and the ware has only once been found before in this country, at Pevensey Castle. The surface colour is buff, with vertical stripes of reddish brown paint, and the spout is tubular. Derived from Pingsdorf ware of the 9th century onwards, this pottery in a modified form was made at such places as Goincourt near Beauvais. The sherd is fully described in *Ant. Journ.* XXV, 153-4.

After the formation of the Committee work was undertaken in August, 1945, with the aid of volunteers under the supervision of Mrs. Leslie Murray Threipland on two devastated sites, where it was hoped to find evidence of Roman and perhaps also later occupation.

These were in Church Street and off Queen Street behind Fox's Bakery. Sections of a thick wall have been found from time to time in the past which, linked together, suggest the enceinte of a Roman fort. The trench in Queen Street yielded little direct evidence of a wall, but significantly there was in a thin layer of mortared stones a well

made rectangular vertical hole, such as could have held a wooden post. Such post holes have been found in the lowest footings of the Roman fortress at Pevensey, and so may give support to the suggestion that, with the evidence of the pottery, walling of the late 3rd century or soon after has been located where it might have been expected.

The second trench yielded better Roman walling, but the evidence was complicated by two large medieval rubbish pits. The fortress wall, which must normally have been a massive structure, seems not to have been found, but on the other hand it is possible that what was opened up may have been part of a turret or even a gateway on the line of the wall. Mr. O'Neil considers that the results of the excavations, as far as they have gone, are most encouraging, and is most appreciative of the work of the band of volunteers who with and under the direction of Mrs. Murray Threipland gave their time in what it is fair to say is not an easy undertaking. He also desires to thank the Hon. Secretary of the Committee, Mr. P. V. Marchant, who has laboured exceedingly in the cause. For the submission of the Report, which I have epitomised and quoted from, I must thank Mr. J. H. Mowll, one of the two Vice-Chairmen.

W.P.D.S.