

XXXVIII.—*On Horse-trappings found at Westhall. In a Letter from HENRY HARROD, Esq., F.S.A., to J. Y. AKERMAN, Esq., Secretary.*

---

Read May 3, 1855.

---

MY DEAR SIR,

I HAD the honour of exhibiting, at a Meeting in May last, a collection of remarkable antiquities which had been shortly before found in Suffolk.

A farmer at Westhall (a small village about three miles north-east of Halesworth) was engaged in draining a field, called the "Millpost Field," carrying the trenches to a depth of between two and three feet from the surface, in a stiff clayey soil, and in the direction of a small watercourse which ran along the east side of the field. A space of about two acres in extent, in the lowest part of the field adjoining the watercourse, presented, when ploughed up, a much darker soil than the other parts of it; and in making his drains through this part of the field much burnt earth and fragments of pottery were thrown out of the trenches. Near the centre of the space, and about two feet from the surface, he met with a quantity of bronze rings and other fragments, which he gave to a Mr. Hylton, a Norfolk farmer, who communicated the discovery to me, and enabled me to exhibit them to the Society: and in order that every possible information might be obtained, I joined them, on the 2nd of May, and carefully went over the ground with the spade. All the bronze fragments had been gathered together, and my search added nothing to the collection.

Every part of the two acres I have mentioned presented, at the depth of eighteen inches to three feet, a soil blackened by the action of fire, much charcoal, and a great quantity of broken pottery, all of the commonest and plainest kind, and in great variety; but the ground had been so disturbed that no single urn could be found complete, each spadeful of earth containing a dozen fragments of a dozen different urns. A solitary fragment of a plain Samian patera was thrown out, but my search after the rest of it was fruitless. All, however, were indubitably of Roman-British manufacture.

The various bronze objects appear to have been contained in a bronze vessel, of which the bottom and part of the side remained, and over them the thin bronze

plate or cover, of which the fragments are figured on Plate XXXVIII. fig. 1. Upon this was placed a large flint stone. The thin bronze plate seems to be of a ruder workmanship than the other bronzes, and has, in its centre, a circular ornament with a figure of an animal rather difficult to identify.

Of the objects contained in the vessel, the Plates will give a better idea than any written description.

The two bronze plates, of which Plate XXXVII. figs. 1 and 2 show the front and back, are about an eighth of an inch thick, and have on one side an enameled pattern, much resembling that on a similar plate among the Polden Hill Antiquities now in the British Museum (figured in the *Archæologia*, Vol. XIV. Plate XVIII. fig. 3), and the back is furnished with projecting loops for a rein or strap, exactly like those on the Polden Hill specimen. A similar ornament, with a number of bronze rings, was found at Saham Toney, Norfolk, near the great Roman Camp at Ovington some years ago; they are now in the Norwich Museum, and are figured in the Appendix to the second volume of the *Journal* published by the Norfolk and Norwich Archæological Society. In addition to the dull red enamel, these plates are further ornamented with small circular pieces of coloured glass, and what appears to be white marble.

No doubt can exist that these plates and those of Polden Hill and Saham were all intended for a similar purpose.

The object (Plate XXXVII. fig. 3) has also its counterpart among the Polden Hill and Saham collections, although they all differ in their ornamentation. The Polden Hill ring had a series of knobs; the Saham one was flattened on the outer side, on which was an enameled pattern. In the Westhall specimen, the ring spreads out like a cockscomb, and has a very curious and graceful pattern in enamel on each side, the outer edge being milled. The purpose to which these rings were applied seems to be the same as that of the modern turret (as our saddlers term it), namely, for the passage of the reins over the back of the horse. All have about a fourth of their diameter left rough; and this part was probably embedded in the harness on the back or neck of the horse. The inner side of the Westhall example being a good deal worn, appears to confirm this idea.

The rings marked 4 and 5, Plate XXXVII., although of the same pattern as the large one, are evidently for a different part of the harness—instead of the rough, unfinished portion there is a flat bar. These, again, are like some of the Polden Hill and Saham rings; and also like some in the Stanwick Collection in the British Museum. Of the larger size (fig. 4), four were found at Westhall, and three of the smaller (fig. 5).

Together with these were six hollow bronze cylinders, about  $1\frac{3}{4}$  in. in length (Plate II. figs 2 and 3), three of them with the larger end open, and the other having a square aperture. The fourth has been a good deal injured, and contains a mass of iron ; as has the fifth, which also has the square aperture at its smaller end blocked up with iron : and, to still further perplex the inquirer, the sixth—exactly like the others in every other respect—has not the square hole at all. There is a slight corrosion of the bronze—but clearly nothing more.

Some small pieces of bronze—one of which had been riveted over another—were among the miscellaneous fragments ; a small blue glass bead was also with them, and a brass coin, said to be of Faustina, very much corroded.

I presume there can be little doubt that these objects are of the Roman-British period. There can be no doubt, however, about the next one (Plate XXXVIII. fig. 4)—a bronze lamp of undoubted Roman manufacture. Over the handle is a crescent cast with the lamp, and on each side loops for small chains, by which it could be suspended. In the Eighth Volume of the Journal of the British Archæological Association, I find four lamps of a similar pattern engraved. Two of these had been found in the City of London, one in Cannon Street, and the other in Princes Street, and one of them retained a link of the chain. The Author of the Memoir accompanying the engraving maintained that these lamps with crescents were sacred to Diana ; and one he referred to in the Brandenburg Museum has a dedication to Artemis of Ephesus on the crescent. Were these lamps intended for sacred purposes or not, it should be observed that the crescent over the handle does wonderfully facilitate its steady carriage when taken up by the hand ; and there is a small knob at each end of the crescent which protects the thumb from being scratched.

Three flint-stones of the kind found on the sea-coast some seven miles from Westhall were with these bronzes. Two had each of them one of their sides much rubbed down, and the other had both sides so treated—a work of very considerable labour.

Since I had the honour of exhibiting these interesting antiquities to the Society, they have been purchased for, and will be now found at, the British Museum.

HENRY HARROD.

To J. Y. Akerman, Esq.