

XX. *Account of the Remains of a Roman Villa, discovered at Bignor, in Sussex, in the Years 1811, 1812, 1813, 1814, and 1815. By SAMUEL LYSONS, Esq. V. P. F. R. S.*

Read 17th June, 1813, and 9th March, 1815.

THE village of Bignor, in Sussex, is pleasantly situated on the north side of the South Downs, at the distance of about nine miles from the sea, six miles from Petworth, and about the same distance from Arundel. Within half a mile of the village runs a Roman road, very distinctly marked, leading from Chichester by way of Pulborough (where it crosses the river Arun) to Dorking, and from thence to London. On this road there was great reason to expect some traces of a Roman station about Bignor, as Richard of Cirencester, in his fifteenth Iter, next after *Regnum*, proceeding eastward, introduces a station which he terms "*Ad decimum*," not noticed in the Itinerary of Antonine; and Bignor is, by the Roman road, about ten miles distant from Chichester, the *Regnum* of the Romans. No Roman remains had however been noticed near this place till the year 1811, when a mosaic pavement was discovered by the plough in the month of July, in a field called the Berry, about a quarter of a mile east of the church, part of a copyhold estate held under the Earl of Newburgh by Mr. George Tupper, a respectable farmer, by whom it is also occupied. The inhabitants of the village have a tradition, that Bignor formerly stood in this field, and the common field adjoining, on the east, called the Town-Field.

This discovery having been thus accidentally made, the farmer removed the earth, which varied in depth from one to two feet, to a considerable extent; and the pavement was soon found to be of large dimensions.^a Its general design is in a good taste, and the various figures are better executed than any which had been before discovered in this country.

^a See the annexed Plan, Pl. XIX. A.

The decorations of this pavement consist of two circular compartments, the one seven feet six inches in diameter, the other sixteen feet; the smaller one contains a representation of the rape of Ganymede, apparently as well executed as the nature of the materials would admit; surrounded with a sort of fret, a braided guilloche, and a serrated border of black and white. The braid of the guilloche is composed of three rows of tesserae (besides the two black ones which form the outline), being cubes of about half an inch; red, yellow, and white; and blue, ash colour, and white, alternately, two and one. The fret was composed of the same materials, laid in the same order. The dark brown and red tesserae were factitious, the blue were of that kind of stone commonly called blue lyas, the white of marble, the yellow of a hard kind of stone. The tesserae of the inner circle, containing the figure, were much smaller, those of the white ground being cubes of the third of an inch; and those of the figure (some of which were of different coloured marbles, others factitious,) much smaller, many of them not exceeding the sixth of an inch.

The larger circular compartment contains six smaller ones, which are hexagonal, and all of the same form and dimensions, having unequal sides, and each being bordered with a kind of fret, and a guilloche, formed of the same materials and of the same colours as the ornaments already described; the red and yellow, and blue and ash colour, being here alternate. Within the hexagonal compartments are figures of dancing nymphs, much in the style of those which appear in the Roman paintings discovered in Italy. Neither of the figures was quite entire, but enough remained of five of them, to indicate what had been the attitude and dress; the sixth was entirely destroyed. Upon the whole, these figures are well executed, and as well drawn as could be expected, considering the nature of the work; with the exception of a defect in the lower limbs, the thighs being all too short. In the centre of this compartment is an hexagonal *piscina* or cistern, formed of a hard white sort of stone, four feet in diameter, and one foot seven inches and three quarters in depth, with a border

of stone round it nine inches and a half in width, and a step within it, at nearly half its depth, five inches and a half in width; at the bottom is a round hole three inches in diameter, from which a leaden pipe for carrying off the water was afterwards discovered on the outside of the south wall, running southward. This pipe was one inch and a half in diameter, and was laid in a sort of gutter of stone six inches wide.

The spandrils of the great circular compartment were filled with scrolls of ivy leaves; those at the south-east corner, proceeding from a goblet; and on the east side of this compartment was an elegant double fret; only a few traces remained of that which had answered it on the opposite side.

It appeared that the room to which this pavement belonged, had been heated by an hypocaust, some of the flues of which having given way, the surface of the pavement has been rendered very unequal. In clearing away the earth from this pavement, part of a small column was found, consisting of the capital and part of the shaft; it was of the Doric order, with some irregularity in its mouldings.

An opening having been made about thirty feet west of these remains, part of another pavement was discovered, which appeared to have been of large dimensions; and to have consisted of two principal compartments, the one a square of twelve feet nine inches, the other of twelve feet three inches; and two narrow ones, each of an oblong form. The fragments which remained were for the most part of small extent, but fortunately they were such as to indicate with great certainty, the general design of both compartments.

The square compartment at the north end appears to have contained four octagonal divisions, each including a star, formed by two interlaced squares, producing an inner octagon, within which there seems to have been originally the head of one of the four Seasons; as that which remains at the north-east corner, (every part of which is represented as covered with drapery, except the face; and by the side of which is a leafless branch,) has evidently been designed for Winter. The outside border of this compartment, and of the octagons, &c. within it, are formed by guilloches, like those already described, and of

the same colours, used alternately. Whether the central division of this compartment was similar to the other four, or an octagon including a circle, (which is more probable, from the variety which usually prevails in works of this kind,) could not be ascertained. A row of very old ash trees, which were taken down about thirty years ago, are said to have grown over this part of the pavement, the destruction of which may be attributed to this circumstance.

The other square compartment included a circle, which appeared to have contained eight hexagonal divisions, each connected with one side of an octagon, all formed by a guilloche of red, yellow, and white, and blue, ash colour, and white, alternately. Though only a small portion remained of one of these divisions, yet it was sufficient to shew the whole of the pattern with great certainty. The angular spaces between the hexagons appear to have contained an inscription, of which the letters, TR.^b remain in the part which has been preserved.

In the spandrils at the four corners of this square compartment have been ovals formed by the guilloche, part of one of which remains, with a fragment of the figure of a boy, and on each side of the oval is a pheasant and a cornucopia. In the middle, on each side of the square, was the figure of a dolphin; that on the east side is entire, and part remains of that on the south side. The walls of the room to which this pavement belonged remained to the height of more than two feet at the north-east corner, where was a funnel above the pavement, communicating with the hypocaust beneath. Between the mosaic work and the wall was a pavement of coarse red tesserae, being cubes of somewhat more than an inch; and it was clearly ascertained that the dimensions of the room had been forty feet four inches by seventeen feet. (See the annexed plan B.)

In the latter end of October, after this discovery, the pavements were covered up with earth, to preserve them from the frost of the ensuing winter.

In the following year (1812) I availed myself of an invitation from my friend John Hawkins, Esq. of Bignor Park, and went down thi-

^b It seems probable that the second letter was intended for a combination of E and R, but it is not so clearly marked as to render this point certain.

ther in the month of June for the purpose of investigating these curious remains. The first step taken was to remove the earth from the extremities of the pavement first discovered, in order to ascertain the form and dimensions of the room. It appeared to have been an oblong of nineteen feet by thirty, with a recess on the north side twenty feet ten inches wide, making the whole length of the room from north to south thirty-one feet eleven inches. (See the plan A.)

The walls on the east, west, and north sides, were two feet six inches in thickness, that on the south side three feet. Between the ornamented part of the pavement and the wall was a considerable space, (filled up with a coarse tessellated pavement of red brick tesserae,) varying in width on the east and west sides from four feet six inches to five feet, four feet ten inches in width on the north, and one foot ten inches on the south side, producing a good effect, as it serves to relieve and set off the design of the mosaic work. The walls of the recess and the northern compartment, containing the figure of Ganymede, are well squared; but the great circular compartment of this pavement, and the oblong which includes it, are strangely distorted; the west wall of this part of the room is not at right angles with that on the south side, and the lines of the mosaic work appear to have been adapted to that of the wall. Another instance of such an irregularity occurs in one of the walls of the pavement last described, marked B in the plan.^c It seems probable that this room was a *triclinium*, or grand banquetting room, in which the couches might have been so disposed on the red ground as not to have hid any of the elegant decorations of the pavement; and the recess was well calculated to answer the purpose of the high table in our public halls.

^c In most of the remains of Roman villas which have been found in this country similar deviations from regularity are to be observed; and the same occur in the remains of a Roman villa discovered at Relves in Spain, published in 1788 by Don Pedro Arnal. We need not be surprized that such instances should occur in the provinces of the Roman empire, when Cicero, giving his brother Quintus an account of the progress of his villa near Rome, complains that the architect had neither placed the columns upright, nor in a straight line. "*Columnas neque rectas neque e regione Dipylus collocaret: eas scilicet demolietur aliquando perpendicularo et linea discet uti.*" Epist. ad Q. Fratrem, lib. iii. 1.

The walls had been ornamented with paintings on stucco, many fragments having been found among the rubbish; the colours of which, when wetted, were very fresh and brilliant. The wall of the room marked B had the stucco remaining on it of a plain red colour.

On the west side of the recess, in the great room, another pavement (marked C in the plan) was discovered, twenty feet by nine feet nine inches, quite entire. The mosaic work consisted of two compartments, each five feet four inches square, with an oblong one between them, five feet four inches by two feet six inches; the rest of the pavement being filled up with coarse red tesserae. The design of the oblong compartment in the middle was elegant, consisting of two scrolls of ivy leaves, &c. proceeding from a goblet, round which were two borders, viz. a guilloche, and an indented one, black and white. One of the square compartments enclosed an octagon filled with squares and rhombs, in which were frets and ivy leaves; in the middle of this compartment was a square enclosing a large rose. The other square compartment included a sort of star of twelve points formed of rhombs, in the middle of which was a smaller square, with a guilloche border enclosing a flower. This pavement was several inches above the level of that first described, from which it was separated by a wall two feet six inches thick; and did not appear to have any communication with it, as the wall remained a foot above the pavement, and there were no traces of a doorway at that end of the room. At the opposite end was a doorway three feet three inches and a half in width, leading into another room twenty-two feet by ten feet four inches, the pavement of which was formed entirely of coarse red tesserae.

On the south side of the great pavement the foundation walls of a *cryptoporticus* were discovered (D in the plan), which appears to have been of much larger dimensions than any one hitherto discovered in this island: it was ten feet in width, and remains of the walls were traced to the extent of one hundred and fifty feet to the eastward: a tessellated pavement was remaining at the west end about sixty-five feet in length; the rest appeared to have been destroyed by the

plough, the soil in that part of the field being very shallow, above the level of the pavement. The pattern of this pavement was a labyrinth fret of a blue colour, composed of tesserae, (which were cubes of somewhat more than half an inch), with a red and white stripe on each side of it, the space between which and the wall was filled with large red tesserae. On the north side of this gallery the foundation walls of a range of rooms was discovered running eastward in a line with the great room first discovered: the one which adjoined that room on the east side (marked F in the plan) was nineteen feet two inches by eighteen feet nine inches, and had a floor of terras of a light red colour. The next room to the eastward (marked G) was nearly of the same dimensions, and had a tessellated pavement of coarse tesserae of stone of a light brown colour.

Adjoining the two last-mentioned rooms on the north side were the foundations of one sixteen feet square (marked H), in which was a mosaic pavement eight feet square, formed of four square compartments composed of squares, rhombs, and triangles.

The *præfurnium* of the hypocaust, by which the great room and others had been heated, was discovered on the north side of the north wall of the room marked C, and consisted of two walls eighteen inches thick and eighteen inches asunder, projecting sixteen inches from the wall of the building: between them was a sort of arch formed by bricks projecting beyond each other, and communicating with the flues under the different pavements.

About thirty feet north of the room marked I in the plan, a piece of very fine mosaic work was discovered, a little below the bottom of the ditch on the north side of the field, apparently part of a pavement of large dimensions, but the season being far advanced, it was carefully covered up again till the following Summer (1813), when the investigation of these remains was resumed, and the whole of this pavement laid open (marked K), which proved to be a parallelogram of twenty-two feet by nineteen feet ten inches, with a semicircular recess at the north end, ten feet in diameter, making the whole length thirty-two feet. The room marked I, with a plain red pavement, now

appeared to have been an anti-room to this magnificent apartment; the door way between them remained, four feet wide.

The design of this pavement was remarkably rich, and its subject particularly interesting; it consisted of one large compartment thirteen feet six inches square, between two narrow oblong ones, with a fourth approaching to a semicircle, occupying the recess at the north end. The square enclosed an octagon, within which had been eight small oblong compartments meeting towards the centre, where they must have formed an inner octagon, none of which remained, as this part of the pavement had been entirely demolished, evidently by the fall of the roof, which had forced several fragments of it, with great quantities of the heavy stone tile of the roof, down into the hypocaust; a large portion of which was laid open, and several of the piers of stone, two feet six inches and a half in height, with large bricks laid on them, became visible.

Each of the small oblong compartments was two feet nine inches by sixteen inches; two of them were entire, containing figures of cupids or genii, dancing in the manner of bacchantes; and of three others, sufficient remained to shew the attitudes of the figures.

Two of the triangular divisions at the four corners of the square contained figures of urns, with fruit and foliage; the other two were filled with cornucopiæ and foliage. The several divisions of the large square compartment were formed by a guilloche, of the same alternate colours as those in the other pavements.

The oblong compartment on the north side of the square one, was thirteen feet seven inches long and two feet six inches wide, including the border, formed of a doubly braided guilloche: it contained twelve figures of cupids or genii habited as gladiators, and exhibiting a very complete representation of the costume of the *retiarii* and *secutores*. The *secutores* appear in that remarkable kind of armour from which they originally obtained the appellation of *Samnites*; being the same which was worn by that people, and described by Livy as consisting of a shield, wider at the top for the better protection of the breast, and

shoulders, a greave for the left leg, and a crested helmet: exactly the same armour appears in the figure of a sepulchral monument erected to the memory of a gladiator, who fell a sacrifice to the cruelty of the Emperor Caracalla, which is given by Monfaucon in the second part of the third volume of his *Antiquité Expliquée*, Pl. CLIV.

The *Retiarii* appear as they are described by the Roman writers, with their heads uncovered, and with a trident in their left hands. The net by which they endeavoured to entangle their adversaries, appears in the right hand of the one who is preparing for the combat; in the others it must be supposed to be concealed in the right hand, as we are told it usually was till thrown out. They are all provided with a short sword, which they hold in the left hand with the trident. This circumstance serves to illustrate a passage in Valerius Maximus, who relates that Alterius Rufus, a Roman knight, was accidentally killed by the sword of a *Retiarius*, with which he was endeavouring to strike his fallen antagonist. On this passage Pitiscus observes, that he could not well conceive how the *Retiarius* could manage a sword, if he held the net in his right hand and the trident in his left. He suggests, however, that he might have had the sword by his side, for the purpose of dispatching his fallen adversary.

Here also appear the *Rudiarii*, or veteran gladiators, who having been presented with a rod as a token of manumission, instructed the young beginners, and regulated the combats, in which latter service they appear here to be employed.

The subject of this compartment seems to have been designed to represent four different scenes, in which the same parties are engaged. In one they are seen preparing for the combat, in another just engaged in it; in a third the *retiarius* is wounded, as appears by the bloody sword of his antagonist, and the *rudiarius* is coming to his assistance; in the last he is fallen, disarmed, and wounded in the thigh.^a

The semicircular division at the north end of the pavement is formed by a guilloche, within which is an elegant scroll of foliage pro-

^a See an outline of this subject in Pl. XIX.

ceeding from a goblet; and enclosing a circular compartment with a fret border, within which is represented a female head, ornamented with a chaplet of flowers; tresses of hair appear on the shoulders, which are naked. The most remarkable circumstance attending this subject is, that the head is surrounded with a *nimbus*, like that of Christian saints, of a light blue colour; few examples of which appear in any of the remains of ancient art, and only one is described as having been discovered in a work of this kind. From the *nimbus* it is clear that this was designed for the head of a deity; and the circumstance of the shoulders being naked, leaves little room to doubt that it was intended for Venus.

On each side of the circular compartment are cornucopiæ and festoons of foliage, with two birds, one on each side, which seem to have been designed for pheasants.

The wall on the north side of this room was found to continue thirty-two feet towards the west, where it terminated with a projection or buttress of two feet, forming two sides of what appeared to have been a sort of court (M in the plan), enclosing an area of thirty feet, filled with great quantities of stones, bricks, and tiles, in some places to the depth of four feet. A considerable portion of this area was opened to the foundation of the walls, but no pavement was then discovered, nor any remains of cross walls. At a small distance from the west wall of the great room last described, the base and part of the shaft of a small column were discovered, having the same irregular mouldings as those discovered at Woodchester, and figured in the account of the Roman antiquities of that place; evidently of a much later date than the mosaic pavements, and other parts of this building.

At the west end of the anti-room, marked I in the plan, was a very small room marked L, the dimensions of which were eight feet two inches by twelve feet, with two door ways, one on the east side opening into the anti-room I, and the other on the north communicating with the square area marked M in the plan.

The continuation of the east wall of the room at the west end of the

cryptoporticus was next explored to the southward, and traces of it were found to the extent of one hundred feet in that direction, with several cross walls, of which enough remained to shew that there had been a range of rooms running north and south, connected with that running east and west; and leaving no room to doubt that the remains already discovered formed part of a very extensive edifice, built round a court.

The room (marked N) adjoining that marked B, had a terras floor nearly two feet below the level of the pavement of that room; the walls which remained pretty entire on the east, north, and south sides, to the height of about two feet, were covered with stucco two inches thick, painted of a red colour, and at the bottom was a sort of skirting of plaster projecting two inches and a quarter from the wall and two inches in height. The same was observed in all the other remains of rooms, where the pavement or other floor was entire, up to the wall; and any portion of the stucco remained, down to the bottom of the wall. On the west side the greater part of the wall had been destroyed quite to the foundation; on the east side it remained perfect to the height of two feet ten inches and a half, which circumstance fortunately occasioned the preservation of a fire-place twenty-one inches and a half wide in the front, seventeen inches at the back, and eight inches deep, with a hearth formed of eight bricks, each about seven inches square. The fire-place was formed by two brick tiles on each side, which had been cramped together with iron, and were placed as on the sides of the stove introduced by Count Rumford: no part of any chimney or funnel by which the smoke might have been conveyed away, remained. I am not aware of any open fire-place of this kind having been discovered elsewhere in the remains of a Roman building, though it is certain, from various passages in the Roman writers, that other means were employed by the ancients for warming their apartments besides hypocausts. The *caminus* is mentioned by Cicero, Horace, Vitruvius, and others, but the learned commentators on these authors are by no means agreed as to its form or situation; and it has been much ques-

tioned by some of them, on the authority of several passages in ancient writers, and from none having been discovered in the remains of Roman buildings, whether there was any chimney, or other means of conveying away the smoke; though it is hardly to be conceived that a room could have been habitable under such circumstances, at times when it was necessary to close the doors and windows. The dimensions of this room were fourteen feet six inches by seventeen feet. At the distance of forty-four feet from the south wall proceeding southward, the foundation walls were traced of another room (marked O) sixteen feet five inches by fifteen feet six inches; about a fourth part of the floor had a coarse tessellated pavement, formed of a light brown stone, the rest was of terras. Against the west wall was a fire-place, with a hearth formed of four square bricks; the fire-place was constructed in the same manner as that above described, but was of smaller dimensions, the opening in front being only nineteen inches and a half.

In the autumn of the same year, by following the foundations of walls in the adjoining common field called the Town Field, at the east end of the *cryptoporticus*, a second gallery was discovered (marked P) separated from the former by a wall, in which no doubt there had been a door-way, though the wall did not remain to a sufficient height to shew it. This second gallery, or continuation of the *cryptoporticus*, was like that ten feet wide, and extended to the length of sixty-eight feet, making the whole length of this extraordinary *ambulatio* no less than two hundred and twenty-seven feet. Part of a tessellated pavement remained about the middle of the lesser gallery, the design of which was similar to that already described as remaining in the larger one, except that the colours of the labyrinth were changed, what was red in the one being blue in the other, and vice versa; and that, instead of a guilloche border, the pavement in the smaller gallery had a blue and white indented one.

The range of rooms running eastward from the great *triclinium* were found to extend the whole length of the *cryptoporticus*. Besides those above-mentioned, the foundation walls of five others were found

(marked Q, R, S, T, X), of the following dimensions: eight feet one inch by eighteen feet ten inches, sixteen feet six inches by eighteen feet ten inches, twenty-five feet by eighteen feet ten inches, sixteen feet three inches by eighteen feet ten inches, and twenty-six feet six inches by eighteen feet ten inches; and at the east end of this range of apartments were the foundation walls of two other rooms; one of them (W) thirteen feet two inches by twenty-four feet, the other (U) eighteen feet three inches by eighteen feet six inches; and a passage (a) eighteen feet six inches by four feet one inch, running northward where the building appeared to have extended further, but could not well be traced in that direction beyond the hedge of the town field, as on the other side of that hedge is an orchard, and the foundations lay very deep. None of the seven rooms last-mentioned appear to have had either tessellated or mosaic pavements. One of them (marked S in the plan,) appeared to have been floored with bricks ten inches and three quarters square; and another, marked T, to have been paved with large flag stones. The width of the walls in this part of the building varied from two to three feet; they were all of the stone of the country unhewn, and had evidently been plastered.

At the east end of the room, marked [w] in the plan, were the foundations of a building marked [b], forming on the south side a semicircle eight feet ten inches in diameter, which was all that could be traced of it.

The wall which terminated the building to the eastward was found not to stand at right angles with the cryptoporticus, but to run in the diagonal direction expressed in the plan. From the south-east corner of the cryptoporticus this outside wall was found to run in the same diagonal direction to the southward, where it continued as a single wall, there having been no apartments on the east side of the great court: having been traced to the extent of one hundred and thirty-three feet to the southward, a cross wall two feet wide occurred; and eight feet further, another two feet five inches in width, which, by being traced to the westward, were soon found to be the remains of a *cryptoporticus* on the south side of the court, marked (d), communicating

with a range of rooms twelve in number, which did not contain any pavements, or any thing remarkable, except those at the east end, which presented very interesting remains of the baths. The first room from the outside of the eastern wall (marked c) would have been a square of twenty-five feet, but that its figure is a little distorted on the east side by the diagonal direction of the wall above-mentioned. It contained a mosaic pavement, in a better state of preservation than any which had been hitherto discovered in this place. Its design was a square compartment, containing four stars of eight points each, formed by two interlaced squares composed of guilloches differently coloured; within each star was a circle of three borders, the vitruvian scroll, a guilloche, and an indented one with a flower in the centre. In the middle of the pavement was a circle, consisting of a guilloche between two indented borders, within which was the head of Medusa. The square compartment had a border consisting of frets of a red colour and guilloches placed alternately. Beyond the mosaic pavement were three rows of black and red tiles six inches square laid chequer-wise, and next to the wall a row of bricks, each eleven inches by fifteen inches and a half. Great part of a small column of stone was found lying on the mosaic pavement: this pillar was in the same style as the fragment first discovered, being a sort of irregular Doric, the most remarkable feature of which is, that the *tori* of the base are both of the same size: the base was fourteen inches and three quarters in diameter, the shaft two feet two inches in length: it had been originally of one stone, but was broken into two pieces. Both the base and capital had made deep impressions on the pavement, at about the distance of four feet from which were similar impressions, evidently made by another pillar of the same size; leaving no room to doubt that they had stood, at some height above the pavement, on each side of a doorway between this and the adjoining room, the dimensions of which appeared to have been thirty feet by thirty-five. The floor of this room, marked (e) a great part of which remained, consisted of black and white stones, each six inches square, laid chequer-wise: the white were of the same kind of hard stone as those in the cistern of the large triclinium, the

black were a sort of slate. Next to the wall of the room was a row of bricks each eleven inches by fifteen inches and a half. Nearly in the middle of this room was a cold bath, eighteen feet from east to west, and three feet two inches deep from the level of the floor: it had three steps on the east, west, and north sides, of various width and height; some ten inches and a half wide, others eleven inches, and varying in height from one foot seven-eighths to thirteen inches and a half; the lowermost was only six inches high. The steps on the north side were covered with stones very smoothly wrought; at the east and west ends, their sides, as well as the bottom of the bath, were covered with terras laid about two inches thick on bricks. Many fragments of a neat cornice of stone two inches wide, with an ogee moulding, were found among the rubbish which filled the bath.

On the west side of the room in which the cold bath was discovered, appeared the remains of an extensive hypocaust (f in the plan) thirty-four feet by twelve, with a semicircular projection six feet two inches in diameter, on the west side at the north end. From the frequency of the brick piers, it appeared that the apartment over it must have been a sudatory, probably divided into several smaller rooms, of different degrees of heat. The *præfurnium* was on the outside of the wall at the south end: the piers were two feet nine inches in height and seven inches and a half square, consisting of eighteen layers of bricks, with a larger one ten inches and a half square laid at the top and bottom. Above the piers was a stratum ten inches and a half thick, composed of mortar and pounded brick, on which was laid a coarse tessellated pavement of stone; some pieces of which remained in their original position, being of one colour, formed of a light brown stone; other fragments, on which were some ornaments of a blue colour on a white ground, were found between the piers of the hypocaust; and two small pieces near the north-east corner, in their original position, on one of which was an ivy leaf and other remains of ornaments, which indicated that the pavement had been in the same style as those discovered in other parts of the building.

In the adjoining room, marked [h] in the plan, were considerable remains of a coarse tessellated pavement, and under it was an hypo-

caust which communicated with the large one above-mentioned by means of an arch of brick, three feet nine inches wide, and three feet two inches high: immediately over this arch was a doorway two feet three inches wide, with a skirting of plaster on each side; from which it was apparent that there could never have been a door.

In the month of June 1815, the investigation was resumed, when on entirely removing the earth from what appeared to be a court thirty feet square at the north-west corner of the building, marked L in the plan, an inner wall was discovered eighteen inches wide, at the distance of six feet two inches from the outer one, and forming a sort of portico, the walls of which appeared to have been plastered. The earth, stones, and rubbish, were here accumulated to the height of four feet from the bottom of the walls; immediately above the floor, which appeared to have been of terras, lay great quantities of heavy hexagonal stone tiles, in many of which were the nails for fastening them. It is probable that this portico was not entirely close, but that it had a range of low columns, resting at a certain height on the inner wall, the fragment of one having been discovered in this place two years ago, and the whole of a similar one was now found on the east side; it was in two pieces, of a white stone much resembling the Painswick stone of Gloucestershire: the whole height of this pillar was only three feet ten inches, nothing was wanting of it, except the plinth of the base, which had been broken off; it was of the same irregular kind of Doric as that before described.

The next subject of investigation was the cold bath before mentioned in the room thirty-five feet by thirty, marked U in the plan. When the earth was entirely removed from this bath, it appeared to be an oblong of eighteen feet two inches by twelve feet, with a recess seven feet by seven feet on the north side, terminating in the segment of a circle, making the whole extent of the bottom of the bath fourteen feet three inches and a quarter from east to west, and thirteen feet one inch from north to south; and of the top eighteen feet two inches by eighteen feet four inches. No drain was to be perceived at the bottom, though no doubt there had been one, but as the terras

floor was every where broken up except at the north-west corner, all traces of it had been destroyed: from the remains of the floor at the north-west corner, it appeared that there had been a layer of bricks under the terras floor at the bottom of the bath.

After clearing away all the earth from the remains of the hypocaust, it appeared that there had been two rooms over it, one of them twelve feet square, the other twenty-eight feet eight inches by twelve feet; the hypocaust being separated into two parts of those dimensions by brick piers two feet wide, between which were arched openings eighteen inches wide for the communication of the heat between the two divisions. The smaller room had a mosaic pavement, a fragment of which has been before mentioned.

Having thus stated the several facts relative to the discovery of the remains of a Roman building at Bignor, I propose to submit to the Society a few conjectures, as to the origin and use of that building.

From what has been already discovered, which, by a comparison with other works of the same kind, could have been only a part of the building; and from the extent and magnificence of the apartments which it contained, far exceeding in number what have been commonly discovered in similar remains, no reasonable doubt, I think, can be entertained that it was the villa of some person of consequence, if not a public work, intended for the residence of the *Proprætor*, or at least the legate or governor of the province.

The province of the *Regni*, within which it is situated, the capital of which was *Regnum*, now Chichester, ten miles distant from this place, was in all probability one of those reduced by the Romans under Vespasian in the reign of the emperor Claudius, as we find recorded by Suetonius.^a

And it is certain that Cogidunus, a British prince, who had submitted to the Roman power, and was made legate in Britain by Claudius, governed in this province of the *Regni*, as we learn from the inscribed stone found in the year 1723 at Chichester, and now in the possession of the Duke of Richmond; whence it appears, that by

^a “Duas validissimas gentes, superque viginti oppida, et insulam Vectem Britannicæ proximam in deditionem redegit.”

his order, a temple dedicated to Neptune and Minerva was erected at *Regnum* by the *Collegium Fabrorum*. This is further confirmed by a passage in Tacitus's Life of Agricola: "Quædam civitates Cogiduno regi donatæ;" adding, that he remained faithful to the Romans down to his time.

That considerable buildings were erected in Britain during the reign of Titus we also learn from Tacitus, who informs us that the Britons erected temples, houses, porticos, and baths, by the advice and with the assistance of Agricola. Many, no doubt, had previously been erected by the Romans themselves.

By a comparison of the different specimens of mosaic work discovered at Bignor, with the figures of similar remains in other parts of Europe, the age of which has been pretty satisfactorily ascertained, there appears good ground for supposing that they may be referred to as early a period as the reign of Titus.

In the year 1708, a mosaic pavement was discovered at Avenches in Switzerland, the *Aventicum Helvetiorum* of Antonine's Itinerary, called by Tacitus *Gentis Caput*, which was patronized in a particular manner by the emperor Vespasian. Of this pavement a particular account was published by Mr. De Schmidt, Seigneur de Rossan, in his *Recueil d'Antiquités de la Suisse*, from which it appears so exactly to resemble the large pavement first discovered at Bignor, that there seems good ground for conjecturing that they are the work of the same artist. Each of them has a cistern of about the same size (that at Avenches being octangular), being the only examples of the kind which are mentioned as having been before discovered. The pavement at Avenches has figures of Bacchantes in octagonal compartments, executed exactly in the same style, and with the same defect in the drawing, of the lower extremities being too short as they appear in the Bignor pavement, and a blue *nimbus* round the head of Bacchus, as it here appears round that of Venus, which is, I believe, peculiar to these two pavements. There is also a general agreement between the style of ornament in both of them.

Another circumstance which strongly inclines me to refer these pavements to so early a period is, that many of the ornaments and

general style of the mosaic work bear a striking resemblance to those of the pavements discovered at Pompeii, which could not have been of a later date than the reign of Titus. The ball in the stem of the vases which fill two of the spandrils of the pavement last discovered, and of that from which the scrolls in the bow proceed, is a peculiarity which occurs in one of the pavements at Pompeii.

To this may be added, that the general style and arrangement of the ornaments which uniformly prevail in all the Bignor pavements differs from any yet discovered in Britain, and has the appearance of much greater antiquity. The figures, too, are composed of much better materials, and are much better drawn and executed than those which appear in other works of the kind so frequently found in this island.

S. LYSONS.