

ROMAN PERIOD.

Roman Sites in the Borough of Colchester.

BARN HALL ESTATE. An *as* of Antoninus Pius (138.41) and a *sesterce* of Trajan (16.44) were found on these allotments. This estate has been extensively excavated for various mains for housing, but nothing further has come to light.

CASTLE PARK. The usual steady flow of Roman coins from this area has been maintained. In 1935, a new bowling green was laid out in the lower park at a point where some levelling of the ground near the outer lip of the Town Ditch was necessary. The maximum depth removed was about three feet. The earth removed was found to be full of Roman remains of all periods mixed together. So far as could be observed the facts seem to be that the Roman Town Ditch has, at some distant date, been enlarged, or at least cleaned out, and the upcast thrown up on the north side, thus accounting for this bank of soil which is full of mixed remains. At a later date still, an incredible number of interments had been made in this earth, unless indeed these too were thrown up when the Ditch was cleared. Human bones were found everywhere in the few feet of soil removed (and may, of course, exist still lower); in some cases as much as half a skeleton might be found in position, but in most cases the bones were mixed up and loose. The soil of Colchester behaves freakishly with skeletons, it may rapidly destroy all traces of them or part of them only, and it is likely that these interments were made before the ditch was cleared, at a very shallow depth, possibly in Saxon times. Only scientific investigation can clear this up, and a good section of the Ditch is much to be desired. The position is just west of the N.E. Postern, and almost adjacent to the Roman cemetery in Everett's brickfield, which is just east of the gate.

The numerous Roman remains found are listed under their own sections (a number of them, including a bronze figure of Apollo, were included in the 1937 Report). The pottery includes T.S. forms 27 and 29, placing the beginning of the series in late Flavian times, while among the coarse wares forms 360 (May, XLI., 145), 365 (May, XLI., 144), together with "Antonine" forms show that it continues into late Roman times. 108-129.38.

Noteworthy among the finds were part of the hair from a life-size terra cotta statue (114.38) and part of a mortarium carved from alabaster. (116.38).

CASTLE PARK. In 1938 two air-raid shelters consisting of very deep traversed trenches, running N.-S. were dug in the S.W. corner of Holly Trees Meadow. The work, surprisingly, revealed no new foundations or floors of Roman buildings. The coins found comprised—Nero; Trajan, 2; Hadrian, 2; Alex. Severus; Postumus; Gallienus; Tetricus, 2; Cl. Gothicus, 2; illeg. radiate heads, 7; Helena or Theodora; Constantine I., 3; Urbs Roma, 4; Constantine II., 3; Constans; Constantius II., 2; one a silver siliqua; Constantinian, 2;

Valens or Valentinian, 3; illeg. 4th century, 3; also a jetton, and a half-groat (Calais) of one of the Henries.

CROUCH STREET. A trench for a cable on the N. side of the street, near the Excise Office produced pottery from the Belgic-Claudian period to late Roman times. 16-21.38.

A great quantity of pottery recovered when Mr. Jarmin's shop was built included a great amount of wares exactly similar to those produced in the kilns of 1933 and so numerous as to give reason to believe that similar kilns must lie in this vicinity. 22-30.38; 156-158.38.

GLEN ESTATE. Coins of Claudius Gothicus, Constantine I. and II., a barbarous radiate head, and an iron arrow-head were found. They had been carted in sand from the sand pit there. 148-9 and 153-4.40.

ROMAN ROAD. Excavations made in the invasion scare of 1940 revealed the corner of one of the internal towers on the Roman Town Wall. It is situated in the middle of the curve of the N.E. angle, in the Friends Burial Ground.

MAGDALENE STREET. When the Corporation Bus Depot was extended in 1938, one coin each was found of Antoninus Pius; Allectus (Colchester Mint); Constantine the Great; Theodora; Gratian, and an illegible radiate head. There was previously little or no evidence of Roman occupation in this part of the town. 414-420.38.

THE NEW PUBLIC LIBRARY SITE. In 1938-39 the basements for the new Library were excavated. The area had been tested before, in 1934, when trenches were cut at the instigation of H.M. Office of Works to test the possibilities of the site, which had just been cleared of the factory which occupied it. The depth to the Roman level was found to be nine feet, and as no considerable remains were found no further work was undertaken.

The trenches for the foundations revealed fragments of red tessellated pavements at the N.W., N.E. and S.E. corners of the new building, and again near the S.W. corner. Otherwise no noteworthy remains were found. But a most valuable discovery was that of the junction of two of the Roman streets, which lies just a little North of the present main entrance to the building. The E.-W. street was nearly 29-ft. wide, metalled with gravel, and on each side were remains of the stone wall forming the boundary of the adjacent insulae, that on the South turning southwards along the side of the N.-S. street. Within this corner was yet a fifth piece of red pavement, with a wall along its north side. Immediately east of this, two foundation trenches indicated the position of walls running approximately parallel and only 4-ft. 6-ins. apart. They may belong to two different houses, or may not have been contemporary.

A tessellated pavement found in 1934 now lies immediately against the middle of the south wall of the Library. It was 9-ft. long from N.-S., and continued in all directions except the north.

The manner of the excavation precluded, as usual, any possibility of observing stratification or recovering objects from the different