

RETROSPECTIONS.

FIRST VISIT TO RICHBOROUGH AND RECVLVER.

It was early in my antiquarian youth, and late in the autumn, that I made my first acquaintance with Richborough and Reculver; and, at the same time, with Mr. William Henry Rolfe of Sandwich, with whom I soon became allied in close friendship. Mr. Nicholls, who had been surveying Sandwich under the new Reform Act, talked to me of Richborough, and of Mr. Rolfe and Mr. Reader of Sandwich; and, as it is my nature to be prompt, I at once resolved to visit the three. Mr. Rosser, F.S.A., with whom, and other members of the Noviomagian Society, I had become acquainted, advised me in going to make myself known to Kennet Beacham Martin. He commanded one of the Ramsgate steamers, was the author of *Oral Traditions of the Cinque Ports*, and a man of intelligence and affable manners. As I was placed at his side at the dinner-table, a friendly compact was at once made, and I entered him in my list of correspondents. A few years after, he communicated to me an account of Roman and Saxon burials near Ramsgate. This little voyage was in every way agreeable. As I write, I am reminded of airs from *Les Huguenots*, played by the band upon deck. With me, places are often associated with tunes, and tunes with places.

The day was closing in as I got into the Sandwich van; and I could only see that I was travelling along a

low maritime tract. A rattle over a bridge, the sound of the wheels under an arched gateway, and a lamp, told of my arrival in the once important and still well-to-do town of Sandwich. But if the streets are now lighted, then they were not. A lamp here and there only shewed how dark a town can be; nothing more. I had some difficulty in finding my way to the comfortable *Fleur-de-Lis*, where by the fireside, in a room by myself, I thought over the events of the day, and speculated upon what was in reserve for the morrow. During the last two years, I have twice sought the good shelter and fare of the *Fleur-de-Lis*, on exploratory excursions with friends; but not long after my first visit, Mr. Rolfe's house became my inn, or, rather, as he made it seem, my own *villa rustica*, for rural it really was, though in a town.

The morning broke cloudy and misty. My first call was on Mr. Edward Stratton Reader, of the Bank, who then lived near St. Bartholomew's Hospital; and he accompanied me to Mr. Rolfe's. I was received most kindly; and was shewn his own collection of antiquities and that of his grandfather, Boys, the historian of Sandwich; and then seated to examine a rather large hoard of Roman small brass coins (enough to fill a gallon measure), found in the sand-hills between Sandwich and Deal.¹ I did not then perceive the peculiar scientific interest of this hoard, which accords with so many to which I have lately drawn attention in *The Numismatic Chronicle*.² It consists of coins from Valerian to the Tetrici, with two only of Aurelian, shewing that they were there buried early in the reign of that emperor, when he overcame Tetricus; and that, like so many similar hoards, it was concealed by some soldier or recruit on the point of leaving Britain, never, as it thus appears, to return. These sand-hills are

¹ *The Numismatic Chronicle*, vol. ii, p. 259.

² *Idem*, 1881. I find also that I failed in seeing the peculiar interest of the Ancaster hoard referred to in *Col. Ant.*, vol. v, p. 150; and described in *Num. Chron.*, vol. v, p. 157.

very interesting in considering the state of the coast at the time of the Romans ; and compared also with those on the coast of France.

I then introduced myself to Richborough, destined in coming years to receive me a frequent visitor. Returning to Sandwich, I set out early in the afternoon to walk to Reculver. Mr. Rolfe had pointed out the difficulties at that late season ; but I got directions from him, and a recommendation to call, in my way, on Mr. Freeman, a surgeon at Minster, and author of a poem on Reculver.¹ In my copy, I see I have inserted a letter from Mr. Rolfe, in which I read : “ Old Mr. Freeman, disgusted with the democracy of the Yankees, has unexpectedly returned to his home at Minster.”

Upon Mr. Freeman I called in about the middle of the afternoon. He not only gave me no encouraging account of the road ; but on the contrary, he pointed out the difficulty and even danger to a stranger in crossing the marshes from St. Nicholas at such a season, and so late in the day ; but I had resolved ; and inquired if I could get a bed there at the inn. He said I possibly might ; and added that he himself had been there that very day to see the landlord’s wife, who was unwell. This information I turned to account in the sequel. I passed by places rich in Saxon cemeteries then undiscovered ; and arrived at St. Nicholas late in the afternoon. Here my troubles began. Night was setting in ; but the spires of Reculver church seemed so close that I fancied I must reach them in half-an-hour :

“ So little distant dangers seem :
So we mistake the future’s face,
Eye’d through hope’s deluding glass.”

A good-natured and good-looking girl volunteered to conduct me into the marshes, and to put me upon a

¹ *Regulbium, a Poem with an Historical and Descriptive Account of the Roman Station at Reculver in Kent.* By R. Freeman. Canterbury and London, 1810. He wrote also *Kentish Poets*, in two vols., small 8vo., Canterbury, 1821.

path which, she said, would take me across if I could keep to it. This was impossible; and I soon found myself intercepted and surrounded by impassable dykes. Much time was vainly spent in trying for an egress from the marshy labyrinth; and now I realised my situation, and thought reproachfully of the warnings I had despised. Luckily the moon had risen, and I could discern a hillock at the entrance of the marshes by the side of a dyke, which I noticed led in a straight line towards the sea. I succeeded in getting back to this, and followed its course almost to the end. Here it was crossed by another; but I perceived a chance of exit by means of some open hurdles, or slats as they are called in Kent, if they would bear me. I ventured upon them, and successfully reached the sea beach, at a considerable distance from Reculver. My road now was safe and clear, but clayey, and of bad footing, so that it was rather late before I reached the inn. Mr. Freeman, and his visit there in the morning, I at once used as credentials. Possibly they were not needed; but I could have gone no further. I was well entertained. After my boots had been taken off, and I had sat by the fire and made a substantial meal, I found it difficult even to move my legs. I invited the landlord to spend the remainder of the evening with me, and from him heard much of the state of Reculver during the last forty or fifty years; of the encroachment of the sea, and of the desecration of the church; matters which I was destined to record under peculiar advantages, but which I did not then dream of in the excellent bed which closed and rewarded the day's adventures.

Reculver has contributed largely to my life's pleasures. The last visit to it was in company with my friend and neighbour, Mr. John Howell Ball, who, the year before last, drove me through Eastern Kent by Sibertswold (corrupted into Shepherd's Well), Barfreston, and Coldred, to Deal and Sandwich, thence to Reculver. At St. Nicholas, we were forced to make a

retreating circuit of some six or seven miles ; but the weather was fine, and I was enabled to tell of discoveries made in many places which we passed ; and, descending to modern times, to point out the routes of the flying smugglers in Barham's graphic and humorous poem—

“ From St. Nicholas quite
To the Foreland light ;”

—“ down Chislett Lane, and away to Up Street”, Sarre Bridge, Monkton Hill and Mead, Minster Level, and other sites, made famous by the poet's fancy, of which not one in ten thousand who had read or listened to the poem had ever before heard, the opening scene being Reculver Cliff. Of the Rev. R. H. Barham, with whom it was my fortune to be associated, I shall hereafter have a few words to say.

Mr. Rolfe stands the central and prominent figure in the group of my Sandwich friends. “ To whom related, and by whom begot,” I have already recorded;¹ but how little have I been able to express what I owe to his unswerving friendship, to his warm attachment ! During the cares and labour of a London life, I could ever look forward to him and his charming surroundings for intellectual recreation and repose. His manners were refined and cheerful, his heart full of benevolence. He not only welcomed me, but my friends also. Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps and I are the only survivors of the party he entertained when he made excavations in the Saxon cemetery at Osengal;² and of his own immediate circle, I recall only Dr. Hillier, Mr. Emerson, Mrs. J. A. Jacobs, and M. Lejoindre.

The Rev. James Layton, Master of the Grammar School, was one of Mr. Rolfe's most intimate friends. He was a most accomplished man, a scholar, a botanist, and geologist. To him, then of Catfield, Norfolk, Mr.

¹ *Collectanea Antiqua*, vol. v, p. 270.

² *Idem*, vol. iii, pp. 1 to 18. Rolfe is an old Kent family, deriving the name probably from Rofecæstre (Rochester), and not, as supposed, giving name to the town.

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Charles Roach Smith

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Dawson Turner dedicated his *Tour in Normandy*, a work as instructive as it is charming in style. Mr. Layton visited his old friend in his last illness, referred to in the following letter :—

“ Sandwich, Feb. 29 (1856).

“ MY DEAR MR. SMITH,—I received your notes in due course, by the post, and yet omitted acknowledging them or any way expressing my thanks, acted upon by an unaccountable horror of putting pen to paper. Insanity is a poor excuse in such cases ; and yet I hope you will overlook my fault ; and what is more, that you will prove it by letting me know how Mr. Turner gets on. I feel convinced that he is better, and in some degree recovering from the stroke ; but I should be greatly obliged by your testimony that he does. The visitation is with him corporeal, with me it is mental ; and while I am scrawling this, my head is all confused. If Mr. Turner mentions me again, ask him whether, unable to hear, to speak, or to act, I can be the slightest comfort to him by my presence. God bless him ; and God bless you too, and all who belong to you.

“ Rolfe is in excellent health.

“ Yours faithfully,

“ JAS. LAYTON.”

The Rev. Henry Pemble, Rector of St. Peter's, Sandwich, was another of Mr. Rolfe's chosen associates. He laid open some of the desecrated old monuments in St. Peter's church ; and so far as he could do, made judicious reparations ; and here, after his residence at Mundham, near Chichester, he was buried. “ No doubt, you saw”, writes Mr. Rolfe, on September 21, 1855, “ the death of poor Mr. Pemble, in *The Times*. I followed him to his grave in St. Peter's fallen aisle, on Tuesday. His brother, Mr. Wrightson, of *The Dispatch*, attended. He gave me a sad account of our friend's sufferings, which he bore most patiently.”

With Mr. Reader, who married a sister of Mr. Layton, and who survived Mr. Rolfe several years, I continued on most friendly terms to his death, not very long before which I and Mr. Waller visited him and stayed a night. His collection of coins from Richborough I luckily examined, and described for my Richborough volume ; for after his death it was dispersed by sale in London, where their local interest could not possibly be appreciated. He interchanged

fossils with M. De Gerville of Valognes, who gave me a rare, if not unique, coin of Carausius found at Richborough, which Mr. Rolfe had presented to him. Mr. Rolfe was fond of the fine arts, and possessed some good paintings, fossils, and books. With his nephew, Mr. George Dowker, F.G.S., a pupil of Mr. Layton, I have for some few years been associated in archaeological researches.

Mr. Raphaël Lejoindre, who resided at Sandwich, I became acquainted with at Mr. Rolfe's. He is yet following, in good health, his vocation as Professor of Languages and Painting at Gravesend. In walking from Deal to Sandwich, at about a quarter of a mile from Sandown Castle, and between the shore and the path to Sandwich, he discovered some vestiges of Roman habitation, which he gave to Mr. Rolfe. It is only since I commenced these *Retrospections* that I have seen the peculiar evidence of this discovery, the full importance of which I hope, with the aid of Mr. Dowker, soon to test. I have already mentioned the hoard of Roman coins found in the same locality. The sand hills or *dunes*, like those on the coast of France at Etaples, where an extensive Roman *vicus* was found, may be considered as post-Roman. Mr. Dowker has printed his views on the changes which have taken place in East Kent in the coast and river valleys since the Roman occupation. I hope he will be induced to publish them, with the result of his additional researches.

To the memory of the late Mrs. Joseph Young, to whom Mr. Rolfe bequeathed his house and garden, I add a tributary expression of esteem and regard for constant attentions and kindnesses during my long acquaintance and many visits. How much of domestic comfort hangs upon kind-hearted feminine influence and control, it has ever been my good fortune to know and feel. Among the brightest and most genial who have passed away, Mrs. Young will by me be ever remembered.

THE CANTERBURY CONGRESS.

THE first Archæological Congress ever held in this country, had in itself a charm wanting in the many which have succeeded ; that of novelty. Various were the opinions and speculations on what the result would be ; and there were wanting elements of a certain kind of success which have been present in some which have not produced such good archæological consequences. The Central Committee did not prepare or authorise any opening address. All was left to the president and myself ; and my introductory remarks had to be written at Canterbury just before the opening meeting. Yet all passed off well. We had good men with us ; and we were cordially received by the Corporation and the chief residents in the city and its neighbourhood. At the close, the Mayor, Alderman Neame, called upon me at my inn, and expressed himself warmly as thoroughly gratified with the week's proceedings ; and grateful, he added, for my exertions.

I and Thomas Wright, my acting colleague (for Mr. Albert Way, appointed co-secretary with me, did not attend), took up our abode at the *Queen's Head*. Here we were joined by Joseph Clarke, J. O. Halliwell, Thomas Bateman, Alfred Dunkin, W. Addison Combs, and the Rev. Stephen Isaacson. The first numbers of the first volume of my *Collectanea Antiqua*¹ had introduced me to Mr. Bateman ; and I had recently made the acquaintance of Mr. Isaacson from an antiquarian visit to Dymchurch. Mr. Rolfe and other personal

¹ *Collectanea Antiqua*, vol. i, p. 4.

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friends stayed at *The Fountain*; Mr. W. Stevenson Fitch and others from Ipswich chose the *Falstaff*. Mr. and Mrs. Crofton Croker and their son Dillon Croker, stayed with the president, at Bourne Park. Lieut. Waghorn came solely to see the mummy unrolled by Mr. Pettigrew. Among those whose acquaintance I made were, James the historian and novelist; Barham, more widely known as "Ingoldsby"; Harrison Ainsworth, the novelist; W. F. Ainsworth, the traveller and historian;¹ Sir William Betham; Alderman Brent and his family, including Mr. John Brent, the poet, and historian of Canterbury; Professor Willis; Dr. Buckland; and J. Russell Smith, the Editor of the *Bibliotheca Cantiana*, of which a new edition is so much wanted. With Mr. Britton, Mr. George Godwin, Mr. Parker, Mr. Stapleton, Mr. W. J. Taylor, the medal engraver, and others, I was previously acquainted.

The Saxon barrows, opened by Lord Albert Conyngnam, in sequence of many previously excavated on the Breach Downs, were an attractive and scientific feature in the week's proceedings; and a stimulus to future researches. I am not sure that the sceattas found in one of the tumuli had been engraved elsewhere than in the first volume of my *Collectanea Antiqua*. They are of great importance in the evidences disclosed in the Kentish Saxon graves.

VISIT TO HEPPINGTON.

Still more interesting was the visit to Heppington, and the vast collection of Saxon sepulchral remains made by Bryan Faussett. In the Preface to his *Inventorium Sepulchrale*, I have narrated my self-introduction to the Rev. Dr. Faussett, his grandson, the inheritor of his valuable collection. It had been for many years almost unknown except to the family; but to me Dr. Faussett had very kindly given access; and now I had to take advantage of the indulgence, by trying to induce him to throw it open to the Congress. I antici-

¹ Author of *Travels in Asia Minor, Lares and Penates*, etc. See *The Biograph*, No. 34, vol. vi.

pated objections, and was prepared to meet and conquer them. I arranged that the small room, in which the precious collections were kept, should be visited in detachments under my own guidance, and that then the visitors should be conducted to the hall for refreshments; and I had police in attendance without. Dr. Faussett was much pleased; and all passed off most agreeably. On the Saturday, the closing day of the Congress, I received gratifying compliments from many who were strangers to me. Among these were a group who said: "We think the exhibition and reception at Heppington the greatest triumph of all. We are friends and neighbours of Dr. Faussett, and we were before quite ignorant of the wonderful things we saw the other day!"

An incident occurred during the visit which may now be told. Mr. Bateman, who had come from Derbyshire to the Congress, was, of course, most anxious to see all that could be seen at Heppington. As I have said, the room in which Bryan Faussett's collection was kept was so small that only a few could be admitted, and every party had to take a rapid view and retreat to make room for the next. Dr. Faussett had expressed a wish to be introduced to Mr. Bateman; and, bearing this in mind, I asked him, just as he had entered the room, to wait for a later or the last party, as then he would see more. I saw nothing more of him, until my return to Canterbury; and then, to my surprise, and I may add indignation, I learned, that hurt and offended at being asked to wait, he not only left Heppington at once, but would also have left Canterbury if he could have procured a coach! He ultimately confessed to me, that he was altogether in the wrong. He never saw what he wanted to see; or Dr. Faussett, who wanted to see him! Mr. Britton, who had cause for being offended with members of the architectural section, did not, in consequence, leave Canterbury; he called to his aid philosophy and common sense.

The importance of the visit to Heppington was not