

ARCHAEOLOGICAL NOTES.

Berryfield, Colchester.—Attention has recently been drawn to this locality by two discoveries. One of these was made by Mr. Gurney Benham, who found the name in one of the borough records, on which he has done such excellent work;¹ the other was the unearthing, by chance, of the notable Roman pavement in the cultivated portion of the field, on its western side, of which Mr. Lewis is tenant. There was, at first, some confusion between

¹ See his account of this discovery in *Essex Review* for April, 1923 (vol. xxxii., p. 92).

'Berryfield' and 'Boroughfield,' although the latter, as I have shown, lay quite outside and to the west of the walls of the borough and south of the Lexden road. Mr. Benham, who found a curious entry in the borough records, some five centuries ago, concerning 'Beryfield,' undoubtedly connected it with the 'Boroughfield,' at first, in the *Essex County Standard*, and others followed suit, and argued on that supposition.

I was not surprised at this confusion, for I have always found that the name and identity of 'Berryfield' were hardly, if at all, known. As I have been intimately acquainted with the field and its surroundings, when staying at East Hill House, I am anxious to set them on record in the pages of our *Transactions*. In order, however, that they may not rest on my own statements alone, I desire to show that—as I observed in the *Essex County Standard*—Morant was very well acquainted with the locality and its name.

He began his account of St. James' parish by stating that it contains—"The house of George Wegg, Esq., his garden east of the same, and part of his field and garden south of the said house, formerly called Berryfield." In his detailed measurement of the town wall, he speaks of "the bastion' in Beryfield" (still in existence). Berryfield was bounded by the town-wall on the east and the south, which explains the entry in the borough records discovered by Mr. Gurney Benham. A strip has been taken off the east side of the field and planted with trees, now of considerable height. This is called "The wilderness."² On its western side, a similar broad strip, running north and south, has been used as an extensive fruit and vegetable garden, now in the occupation of Mr. Lewis. It was here that the fine mosaic pavement was recently brought to light by Mr. Lewis, presented to the Corporation by the landlord (Mr. Douglass G. Round), and transferred to the castle museum.

Morant, writing of Roman pavements, observed that "there is also one in Berry-field, in St. James' parish, of which part was discovered by George Wegg, Esq. The tesserae were red, intermixed with many white ones, disposed in a star-like form." This may have been the one that was re-discovered by the late Mr. Francis R. Round in the north-east corner of the field, when a bowling green was being made." The recently found pavement is

¹ These bastions are shown on Morant's plan of the town.

² This strip, with the winding paths through it, is well shown in Chapman & Andre's plan of the town.

³ See the late Dr. Laver's paper in our *Transactions*, vol. x., p. 89.

illustrated in our Society's *Transactions* (vol. xvi., p. 295) and in the *Essex Review* (vol. xxxii., pp. 66, 90 and frontispiece).

Portraits of the Mr. George Wegg mentioned by Morant, his wife, *nee* Creffield, and her niece, Miss Creffield, heiress of that family (all three by Hudson), used to hang in the fine drawing-room of East Hill House. I mention this because Morant, after describing, as above, the pavement found by Mr. Wegg, makes an important statement that "In the beginning of the year 1748, one was discovered in the garden of Peter Creffeild, now of James Round, Esq.; in the parish of Holy Trinity." As portions of urns, together with a coin, were found with it, the discovery was of some importance. It is desirable, therefore, to identify the locality of this find. The Colchester residence of the Creffeilds¹ was one of the five big houses shown, as such, with its garden, in Morant's plan of the town, immediately to the east of the churchyard of Holy Trinity.² They seem to have occupied a considerable area, south of Culver street, and to have descended to the above Miss Creffeild, who married, in 1758, Mr. James Round, eldest son of the squire of Birch. I have never seen this house even mentioned. Another of these notable houses, similarly shown on Morant's map, is mentioned by him in his text, immediately before the residence of the Creffeilds. This was what he terms "Dr. Daniell's house," of which he states that, while it "was re-building," an urn and a Roman pavement were discovered. This house was nearly opposite St. Martin's church, whence it was sometimes styled St. Martin's house. This seems to be the explanation of his footnote appended to this statement, *viz.*: that the finding of urns "in St. Martin's parish" and the lower parts of the town implies that "the Roman town did not extend to these places." His own evidence seems to me to contradict that view; but I do not profess to speak with any special knowledge of Roman matters.

As in my papers on 'The Hornchurch road' and 'The Mersea road,' the only point I wish to make is that a knowledge of estates and their owners, of antiquaries' statements, of maps, and of plans dating from the eighteenth century, may sometimes be of unexpected use in tracing the places at which Roman remains have been found. For instance, in this case, there is no trace on Mr. Cutts' map of Roman remains in what was the garden of Dr. Daniell's

¹ Lady Creffeild was residing there in 1734.

² This garden is also shown on Chapman & Andre's plan of the town, published in 1777, and appears to be the "garden of Messrs. Cooper & Garrad," shown on the map facing p. 34 of Mr. Cutts' *Colchester* (1888), as having contained Roman remains.

house.¹ Is it possible that this was the pavement mentioned in Dr. Laver's useful paper on "Mosaic pavements in Colchester," as "found in 1794 in a garden on the west side of Angel Lane"? I only throw out this suggestion, but the names I have mentioned might perhaps throw light on the locality of some of the discoveries named in Dr. Laver's paper. On the other hand, Mr. Philip Laver, in a note on "The Boroughfield,"² give the names of the then owner of a certain house as a landmark. This, surely, will be forgotten and become, therefore, useless for the purpose.

I have still to deal with the entrance to Berryfield. Morant, in his Appendix, has printed, from the borough records, an order of 1563, concerning "St. Denyse Faire, *alias* Pardon Faire." The fair is there ordered to "begyn benethe Bery feld gate." Morant also, in his account of the borough's fairs, states that "the first day is a fair for live cattle, kept in Berye-field." Now the entrance to this field is extremely well known to me. Indeed, when at East Hill House, I must have used it most days. It is reached from Queen street, nearly opposite Culver street, by what we always termed "The Chase." I did not attach, at that time, any importance to the name; but I now think that this name must be of great antiquity. In Mr. Miller Christy's interesting paper on the Chignals, based on his local knowledge,³ he shows, on his second plan, "a field lane (*sic*) called 'Blackwall chase.'" His explanation of the word, however, is not satisfactory to me. A 'lane' might have been named a 'chase' in early days; for we read of 'chasing' and 're-chasing' in those days, as meaning a way for cattle.⁴ But the word, in the two cases I have given, could not possibly mean "a hunting-preserve." The inconvenience of the entrance to Berryfield, in the days I speak of, was bad enough when the field was lent for semi-public purposes; but when live cattle had to enter the field, it must have been much worse, with the consequence that the right to sell them there was eventually bought off by the owners.

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¹ It passed to my great-grandfather, who was afterwards acting Recorder of Colchester, and my grandfather was born there (in 1783). I inherit some of Dr. Daniell's silver plate.

² *E.A.T.*, vol. x., pp. 84-90.

³ *Ibid.*, vol. xv., p. 98.

⁴ April and July, 1923 (*Essex Review*, vol. xxxii., pp. 57, 138).

⁵ See Canon Foster's Lines. *Final Concords* (1920), vol. ii., pp. lxxviii., 128, 271; also our *Feet of Fines for Essex*, vol. i., p. 120 (No. 586)—"ingress and egress for chasing and re-chasing all his cattle and flocks"; and vol. i., p. 229 (No. 1359)—"chase and re-chase."