

**On a Romano-British cemetery, and a Roman camp, at Hardham, in West Sussex / by W. Boyd Dawkins.**

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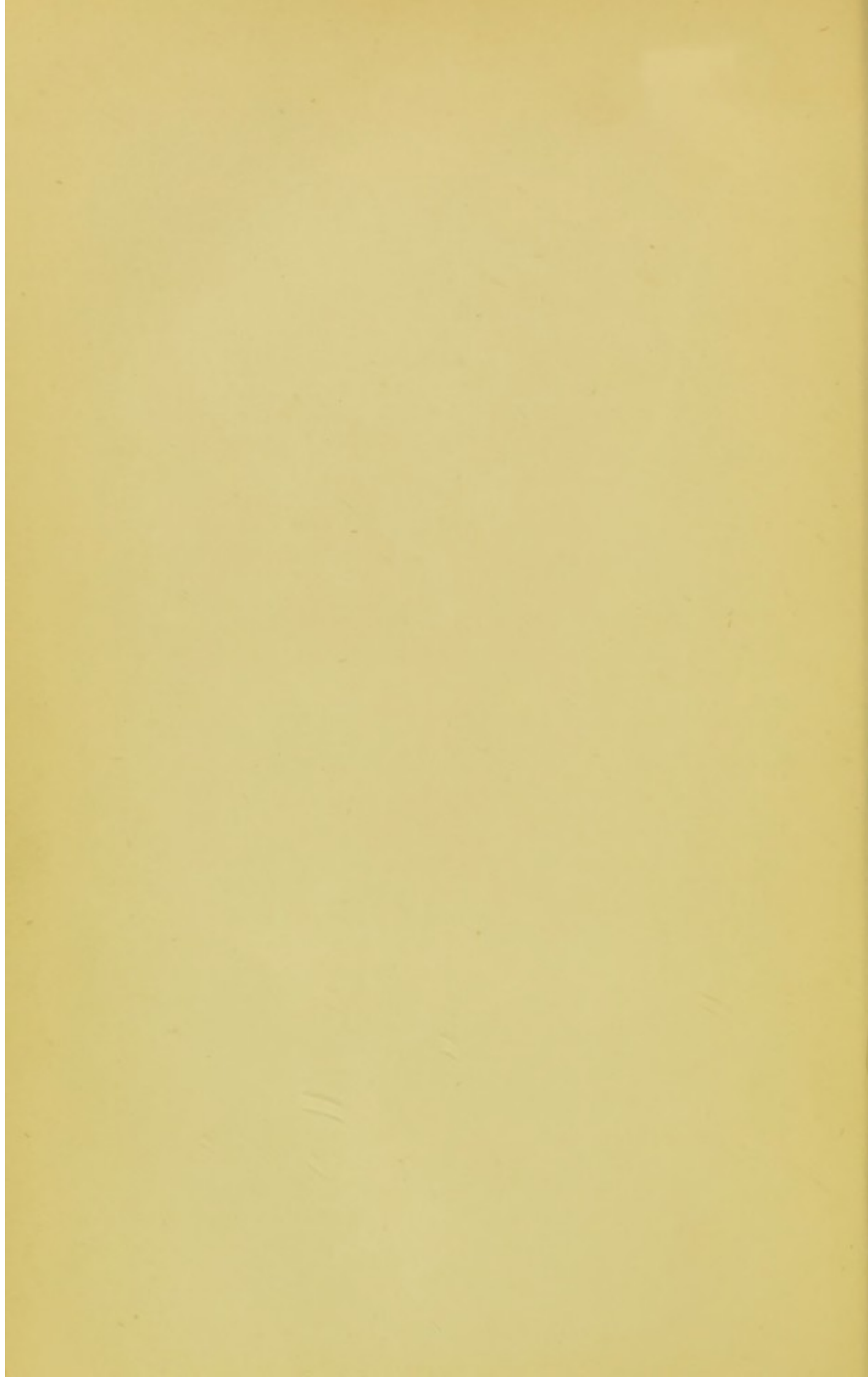
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146.  
*See also Collectanea Antiqua vi. 1868. p. 254.*

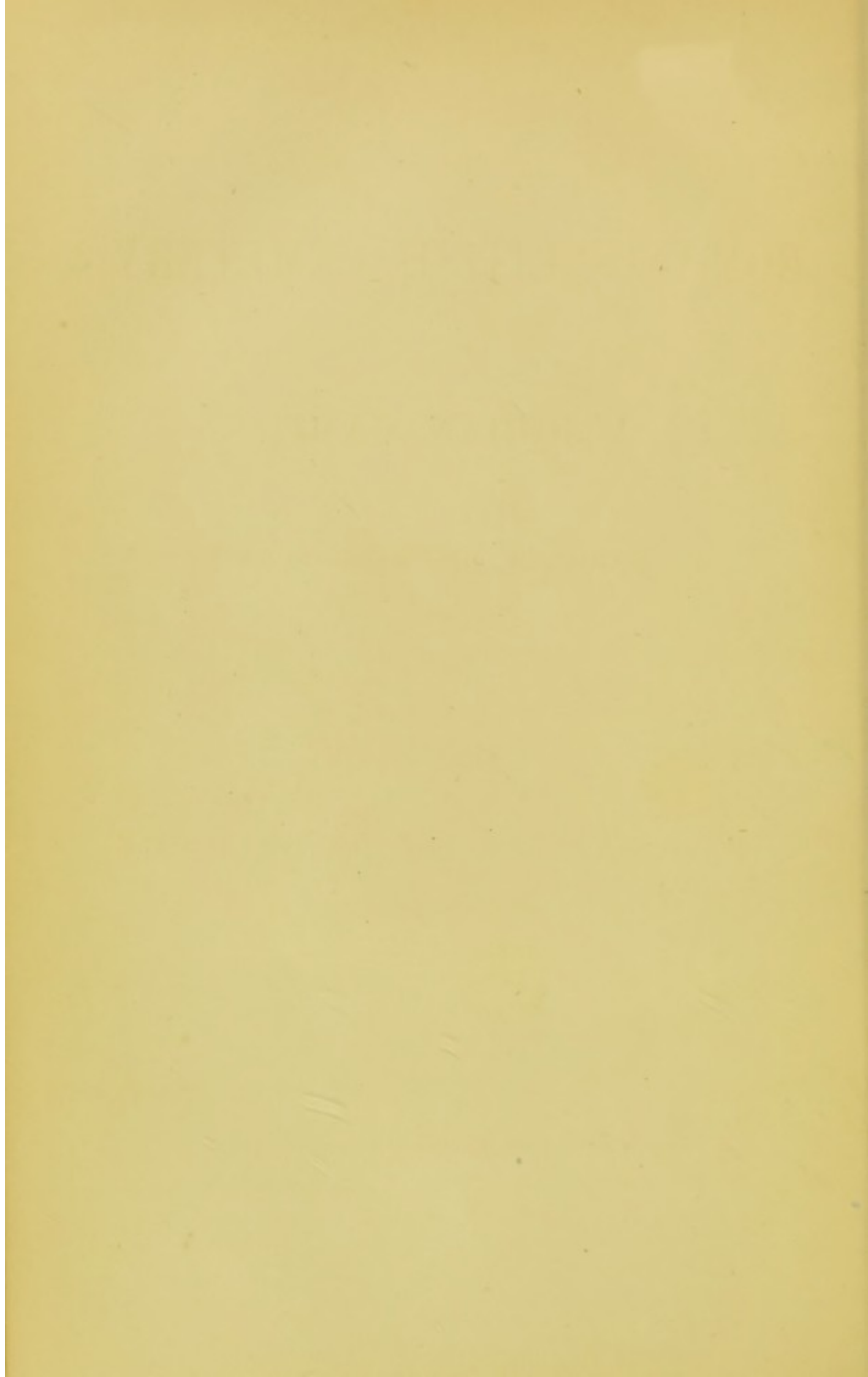
ON A  
ROMANO-BRITISH CEMETERY,  
AND  
A ROMAN CAMP,  
AT HARDHAM, IN WEST SUSSEX.

BY  
W. BOYD DAWKINS, Esq., B.A., OXON, F.G.S.,

H.M. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY



from the author



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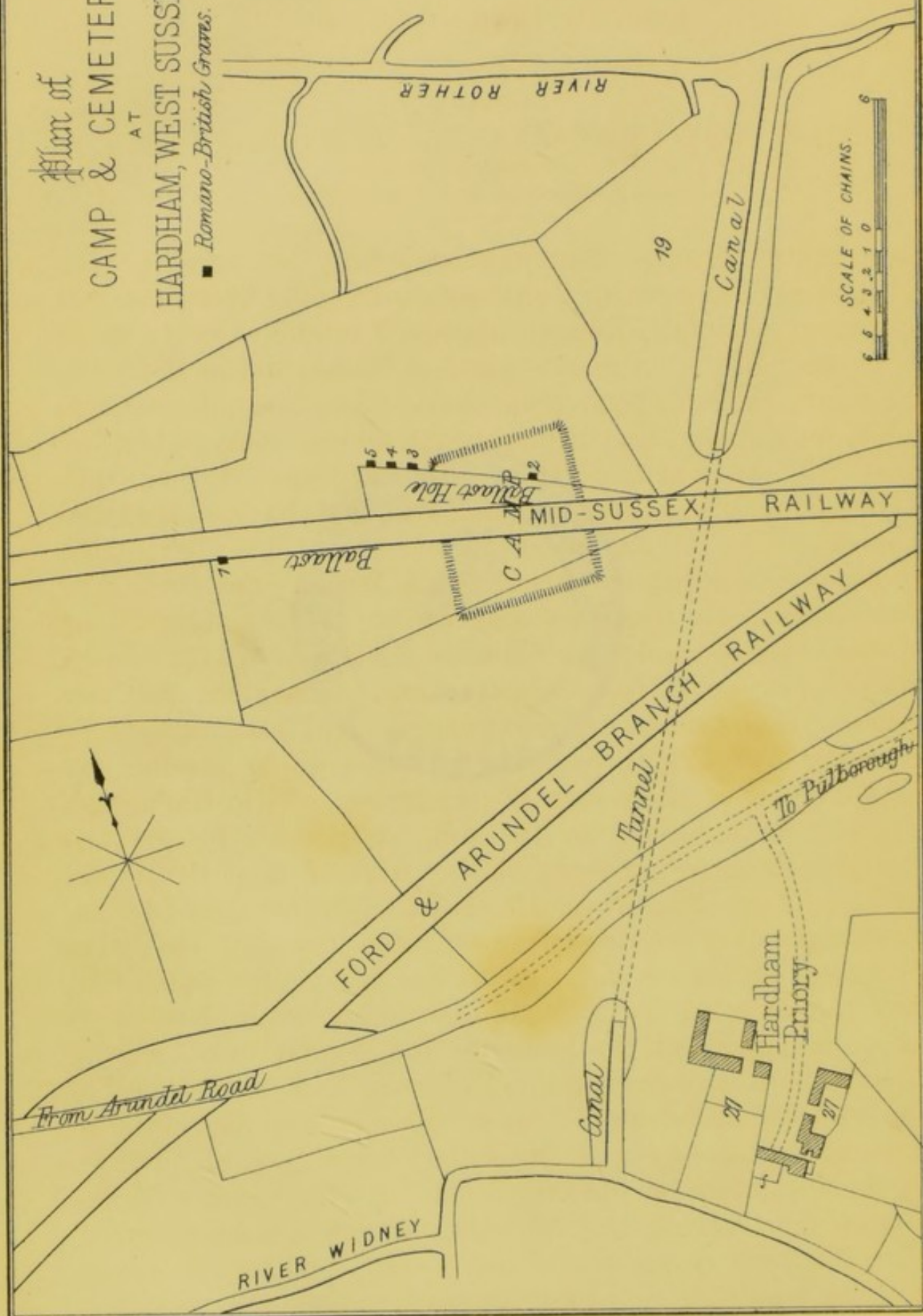
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Plan of  
CAMP & CEMETERY  
AT  
HARDHAM, WEST SUSSEX.  
■ Romano-British Graves.

SCALE OF CHAINS.  
6 5 4 3 2 1 0





ON A ROMANO-BRITISH CEMETERY,  
AND A ROMAN CAMP,  
AT HARDHAM, IN WEST SUSSEX.

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BY W. BOYD DAWKINS, ESQ., B.A., OXON, F.G.S.,  
H.M. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY.  
[READ AT BRAMBER, 14TH AUGUST, 1863.]

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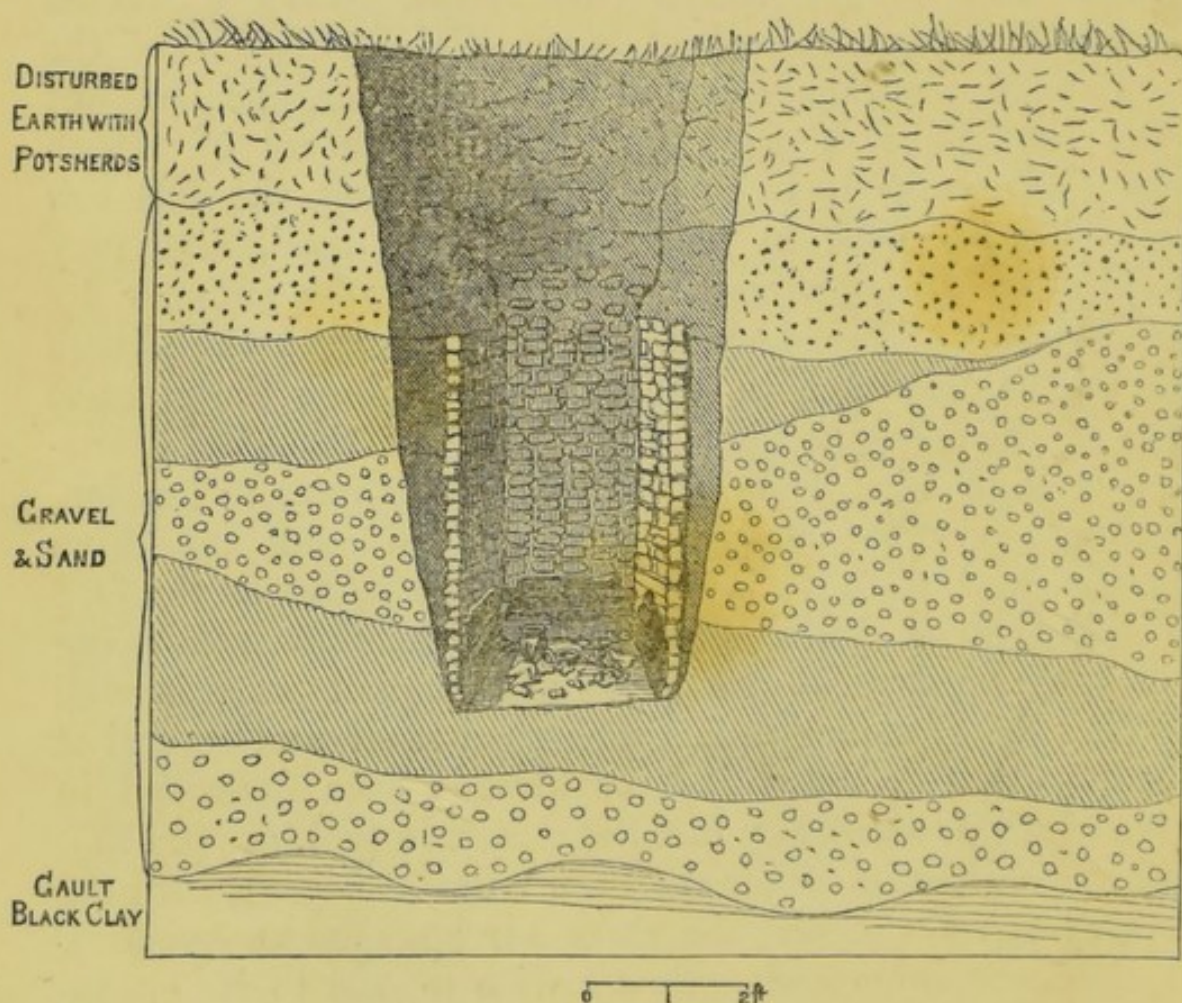
I.—INTRODUCTION.—THE more carefully we examine the antiquities of our country, the more we wonder at the marvellous energy that the Romans displayed in almost every nook and corner of it. In remote parts of Wales, and in the Lowlands of Scotland, their villas have alike been discovered; while in England they argue wealth and security, which we miss till the reign of Henry the Eighth. If we turn to our mineral resources, we find that they have anticipated a great many of our recent discoveries. They extracted gold out of the quartz rock of South Wales,<sup>1</sup> iron out of the Devonians of the Somerset and Devon border, and lead out of the lime-stone of the Mendip Hills; in all of which places their works have been resumed during the last few years. Their roads, in many places still used, and very generally traceable through the pastures in dry summer by the difference in the colour of the grass, and in the plough lands by the difference in the soil, are perhaps the greatest results of their engineering skill. And of them the Stanestreet, or high road from Chichester (Regnum) to London, stretching over the chalk downs, and piercing the Silva Anderida, and with villas on either side as far as the ford over the Arun at Pulborough, and in its tombs reminding us of the approach to Rome by the Appian way, is well deserving of a monograph. The road itself and several of the camps that defended it have already been described in the works of this society by Mr. Peter Martin (vol. xi., p. 127). Of the antiquities on either side, the villas at Bignor, with the tessellated pavement, and the stone sarcophagus at Avisford, have also been described. Now I wish to add to its literature the results of an examination of a camp and cemetery on the isthmus of land bounded on three sides by the river Arun, and its affluents the Rother and Widney, formerly part

<sup>1</sup> See Murchison's *Siluria*, 8vo.



of the domain of Hardham Priory, and situate close to the Stane-street, before it crosses the Arun and plunges into the Weald. The Central Sussex Railway passes through both Camp and Cemetery, and in the course of its construction some years ago afforded urns and other remains, which Mr. Peter Martin has briefly noticed in one of his papers. But up to the time of my visit by far the greater portion of the antiquities found had been thrown away by the workmen.

II.—DESCRIPTION OF GRAVES.—On walking along the Railway near Hardham, and in the direction of Petworth, in the course of the Geological Survey in June, 1863, I was much struck by the thickness and blackness of the disturbed mould which rests upon the gravel in the ballast-hole that is now being worked—two characteristics which I have found to indicate invariably the former presence of man in the neighbourhood. The numerous potsherds, also, scattered about, made me think the place worthy of a close investigation.

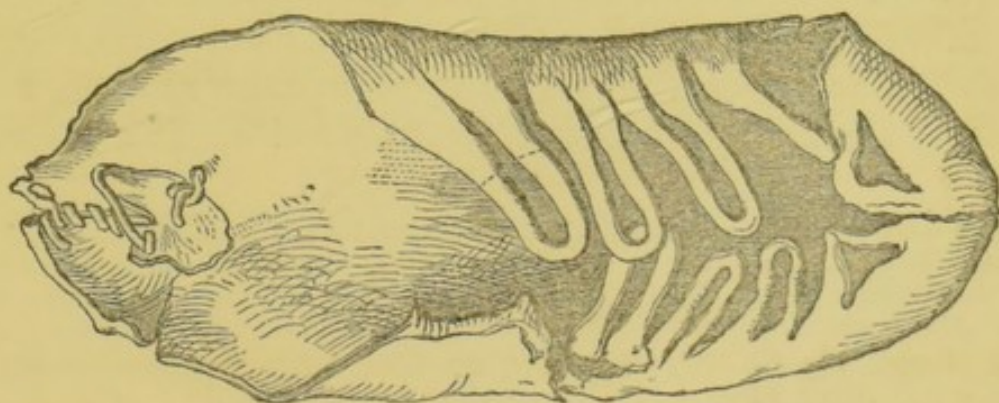


GRAVE NO. 1 OF GROUND PLAN.

Selecting, therefore, a place on the left-hand side of the line, where the dark earth dipped suddenly into the gravel to a depth of 10ft., which was clearly undisturbed on either



side, I set some men to work. In a few minutes an oaken plank was visible, and, on removing this, two other planks, at right angles to it, and respectively "halved on" to it at the corners, together with fragments of an oaken lid, the whole presenting a section of a square oaken box, full of black clay, mixed with sand and containing flints broken by the hand of man. As I carefully cleared this out, close to the east side of the chest were several fragments of roughly-tanned leather, soft and flexible, like ordinary wash-leather, and on a platform of flints a rudely-fashioned cinerary urn, containing burnt human bones, with a shallow dish or patera at its side. Both were composed of dark ware, and both were standing upright, in their natural positions. Underneath both was a layer of black vegetable matter, which probably consists of box or palm, or, possibly, of flowers. Close to them were three horn-cores, of the small domestic British short-horn—the *Bos longifrons* of the naturalists—one of which, from its size, probably belonged to a bull. A few broken bones also, of the same species, were found, and a lower jaw, containing teeth that indicated a young animal not more than two years old. Besides these also was one of the incisors of a pig, and a portion of the jaw of a horse. As we advanced with the work, coarse potsherds, one fragment of beautiful Samian ware, without figures or inscription, two round stones, one of flint the other of sandstone, were found, together with a mass of a white chalky substance. In the south-west corner was a pair of sandals, with the part corresponding to our "upper leather" curiously cut, and each composed of one piece of leather. One of these is quite perfect, and still retains the laces at the toe and heel. Neither was intended to bear nails.



SANDAL FOUND IN GRAVE NO. 1.



Having now cleared out the entire contents, we found that the chest was perfectly square,<sup>2</sup> each side, composed of two planks, being 2ft. 4in. long and 1ft. 4in. high. Each plank, in thickness 1½ inches, was hewn out of a solid block of oak with an adze, and presented no saw-marks. The chest was not covered in at the bottom with oak, but rested directly upon a layer of grey sand. The accompanying woodcut of the cist of No. 1, taken from a photograph, shows its structure and the relative position of its contents. On taking it out a section of a rude arch of unhewn stones was visible, springing from the same level as the bottom of the chest, and built to support the weight of the superincumbent earth. The top had given way, as the stones were uncemented with mortar, breaking the cinerary urn in its fall. A brilliant blue colouring matter was disseminated through the entire contents, covering the flints, pottery, sandals, and the interior of the chest, and penetrating into the tissues of the bones and teeth, in the latter of which it assumed a crystalline form. On examination it proved to be phosphate of iron, resulting from the decomposition of animal remains in contact with oxide of iron. (See woodcut, p. 4.)

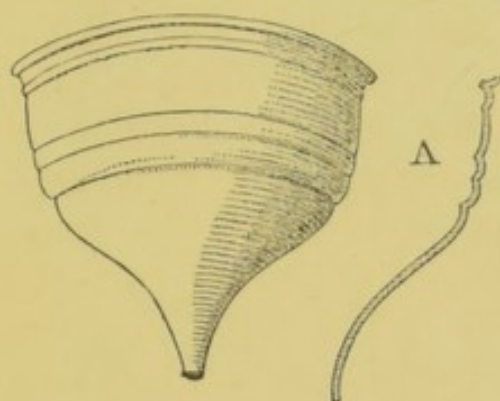
A few days after I had explored this grave, I was informed by a workman that there was a second, undisturbed, on the north side of the ballast-hole. (No. 2 of ground plan.) On going immediately to the spot, I found a square box somewhat larger (4 feet by 4) than the former, and, like it, without a bottom. Near the east side a small vessel of dark ware, and a large vase of a fine slate-coloured ware, ornamented with circles and right lines in glaze, and with beautifully-moulded lip and handle, were standing upon a platform of stones, covered, as in the former case, with a layer of vegetable matter. Close to them were three horn-cores of *Bos longifrons*, a fragment of leather, and an iron nail. The black clay, mixed with sand, contained numerous

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Roach Smith records a parallel case to this. In making a sewer in the centre of Moorgate Street, a square pit or well was discovered, with the sides composed of planks. It contained a number of vases (some figured by Mr.

Roach Smith, Cat. of Mus. of Lond. Ant. Svo. 1854. Plate v.), a coin of Allectus, an iron hook, and the iron handle of a bucket. The vases presented the appearance of having been packed in clay.—Archæologia, vol. xxvii. p. 148.



pieces of pottery and fragments of flint, and was highly charged with carbon. Being obliged to work by moonlight with a hammer, my examination of this grave was necessarily most imperfect: and, on going to the place early in the morning, I found that the contents had been removed as ballast. A wine funnel of black ware, a pear-shaped vase, a fragment of a



A MOULDING.

bent iron rod, and a bronze pin were, however, rescued. All were from the west and undisturbed side. Woodcut No. 2 of the preceding plate, shows the relative position of the contents.

A third chest that I examined had unfortunately been disturbed before I could get to the spot. From it I obtained numerous

fragments of vases, and two horn-cores of *Bos longifrons*. In place of a platform of flints, the cinerary urn, ornamented with incised zig-zags, stood upon a Roman brick (21 inches by 10 by 1.5). The chest, of similar construction as the two described above, was covered on the outside with a layer of peroxide of iron, which perhaps may indicate the former existence of a covering of iron.

A fourth also, and a fifth chest, which I examined, though not before they had been disturbed, and in great part removed by the workmen, differed in no important particular from the rest. In both there was a platform of flints. The latter of them was of larger size than the rest (6 feet by 6 by 6), and its angles were strengthened by upright and transverse oaken beams. The oak of these was sufficiently sound to make very good walking-sticks.

III.—REMAINS FOUND.—On visiting the place from time to time during the next fortnight, I obtained numerous vases from other graves, which I had not time to examine. A bronze fibula also of very simple workmanship, merely a piece of twisted bronze wire, was also found.

1. *Sandals*.—(Woodcut, p. 5.)—Of all the remains, the *sandals* found in grave No. 1 of ground-plan are the most interesting, from their wonderful preservation. They were of the same pattern, and composed each of one



piece of leather. At the toes each was fastened by a leather thong, which is visible in the wood-cut. Behind this are five strips of leather with pear-shaped holes cut<sup>3</sup> in them, and intended to be fastened over the upper part of the foot and the instep. At the heel is a large hole, with a slit behind it, which is laced up with a thong. To this portion, and the heel, a quantity of open leather work, was attached, intended to cover the ankle, and the lower part of the leg, which, unfortunately was so rotten that it fell to pieces in a day or two after its exhumation. The length of each sandal is 10 inches, the breadth 4 inches. The lower surface was completely free from all marks of wear. It is possible that these were deposited along with the ashes of the dead, from a belief similar to that prevalent among the ancient Germans and Scandinavians (Worsaae), and expressed also in a Yorkshire tradition that the soul of the deceased had "to pass through a great lande full of thornes and furzen"<sup>4</sup>—(Aubrey).

In the *debris* taken out of the other chests I detected scraps of leather which probably formed part of sandals destroyed by the carelessness of the workmen. In all the graves but the first they had removed the south side of the chest, and a portion of its contents, before I examined it. In grave No. 1, the sandals were found in the south-west corner. If, therefore, they occupied the same position in the other chests they would certainly have been destroyed. As the cinerary urns, the pateræ and the horn-cores of oxen were placed precisely in the same relative position, in all probability, the sandals of No. 1 were also present. In the stone sarcophagus at Avisford, already alluded to, they were found lying side by side in one of the corners.

2. *Pottery*.—The cinerary urn of No. 1 grave is of coarse dark ware, and of rude workmanship, and without ornament of any kind, and contained, among other calcined human bones, the distal end of a humerus. That on the contrary of No. 2 is of very elegant form, and of fine smoke-coloured

<sup>3</sup> The sandals figured by Mr. Roach Smith (Catalogue of Museum of London Antiquities, 1854. 8vo. Pl. ix.) are far more elaborately cut.

<sup>4</sup> Addison probably obtained his idea "of a huge thicket of thorns and brakes,"

"designed as a kind of fence or quickset hedge to the ghosts it enclosed," in his beautiful story of Marraton's visit to the Spirit-world, from this tradition.—See *Spectator*, 56.



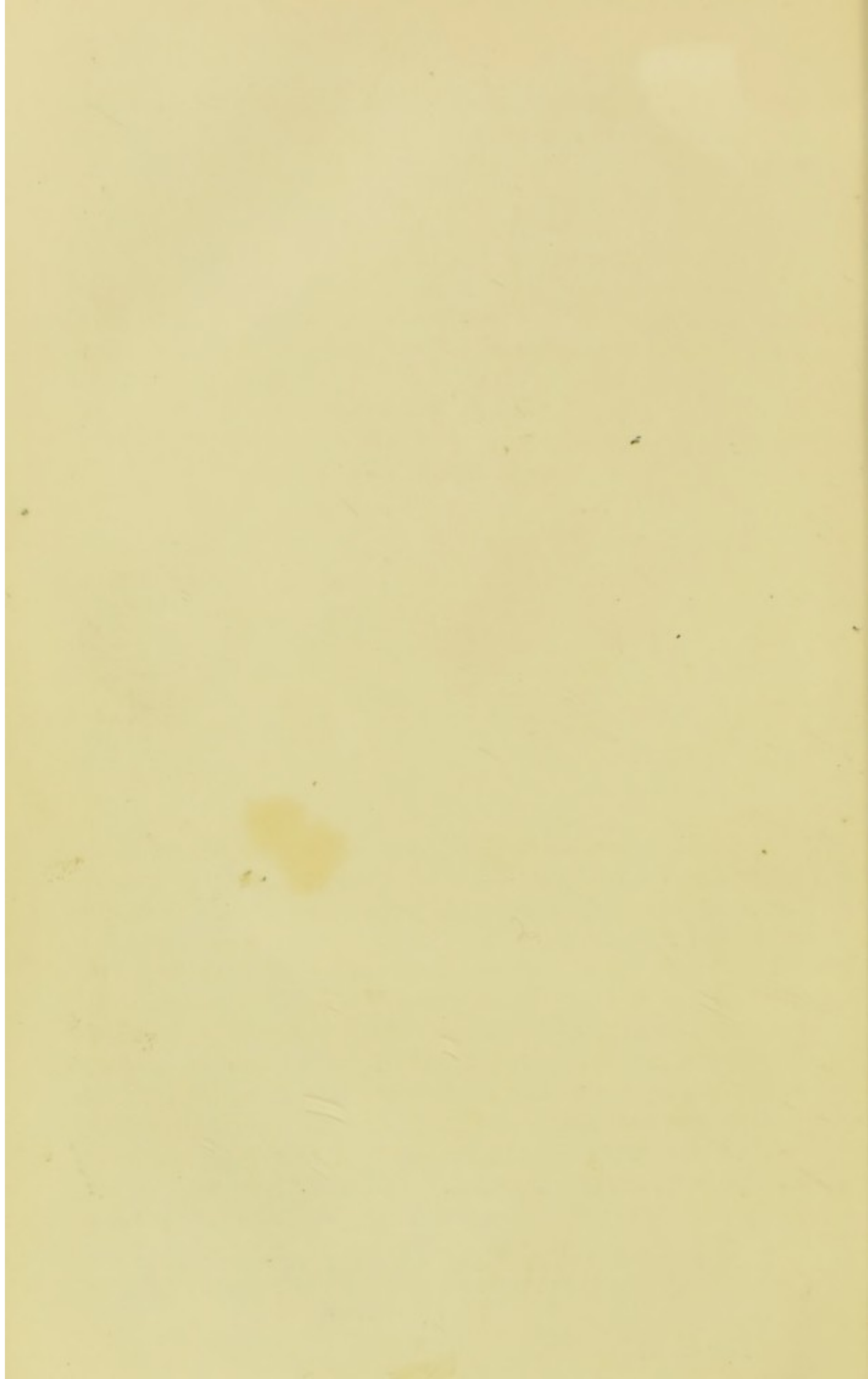


POTTERY, &c., FOUND IN GRAVE NO. 1.



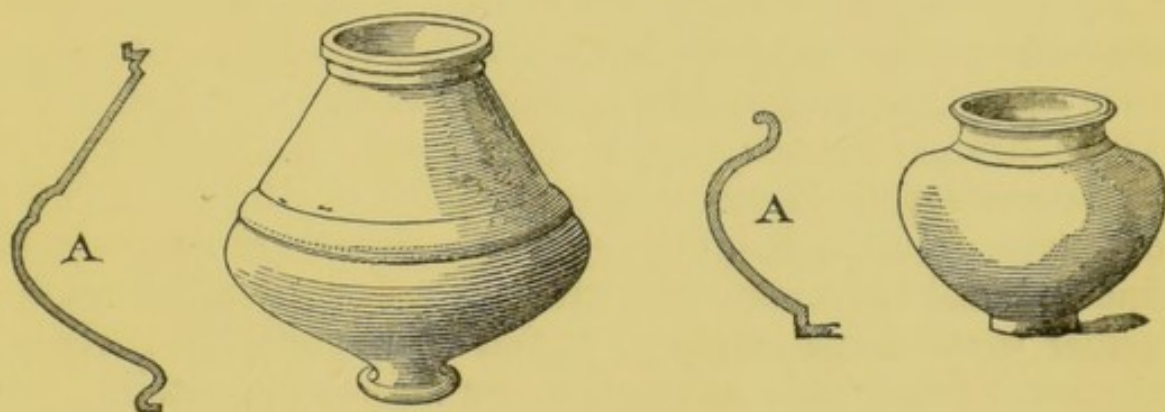
OAKEN CHEST OF GRAVE NO. 2.  
(Shewing the Urns, &c., *in situ*).





ware, with a beautifully moulded rim, and handle, and ornamented with right lines in glaze. That of No. 3, in condition fragmentary, is also of fine dark ware, and with an elegantly turned rim; it is without handles. Its bands, of incised zigzag ornamentation, are similar to those on a vase found in a cromlech at L'Ancrese in Guernsey.<sup>5</sup>

The perfect patera found in No. 1 grave, and the fragments from the others, were of fine dark, thick ware. The wine funnel (woodcut, p. 7) found in No. 2 is also of black ware, and is ornamented with mouldings. It is 5·5 in. high, and 6 wide. Of the other two vases from No. 2, one is small (3·5 in. by 4·5), the other of thick grey ware, measuring 6 in. by 6; both have a lip, and are ornamented with mouldings.



A. MOULDING.

Of the other vases, two of fine dark ware measuring respectively 3·2 by 2·7, and 6 by 7 inches are ornamented with a series of bosses arranged quincuncially in the one, vertically in the other. A vessel of fine red ware also exhibits a pattern similar to the latter of these; Mr. Roach Smith has met with the same pattern on some vases found at Upchurch.<sup>6</sup> Of fine red ware also are two vases without a moulding round the rim, the one (4 in. by 4·5) without ornament, the other adorned with two rows of small vertical incised lines.

A small vase (2·8 by 3·4) of fine dark ware, with moulded rim, shows a fine incised pattern, in right lines, identical with that figured by Mr. Roach Smith in his catalogue.<sup>7</sup> Sir Richard Deane Colt Hoare also gives drawings of similar

<sup>5</sup> See p. 84. Note of Primeval Antiquities of Denmark, by J. J. A. Worsaae, translated by W. J. Thoms, 8vo, 1849.

<sup>6</sup> Tom. Cit. P. 20.

<sup>7</sup> Tom. Cit. Pl. v., fig. 5; also p. 18.



patterns on Celtic vases of the rudest form, from barrows in Ashton Valley, near Goodford, Corton Sutton, Winterbourne Stoke, and Stonehenge. At Yarnton, in Oxfordshire, I have also met with it associated with skeletons buried in a sitting posture. I have seen it also in the ancient village of Standlake.<sup>8</sup> M. Troyon also figures a closely allied pattern, among the remains found round the pile-dwellings in the Swiss Lakes.<sup>9</sup>

Besides these which I had the good fortune to rescue from destruction, Dr. Taylor, of Pulborough, has two vases from the Hardham Cemetery, the one (14 in. by 8) of black, the other (10 by 10) of fine slate-coloured ware. Both are ornamented with rows of short vertical incised lines resembling those on the vase of red ware mentioned above. I have also seen from the same place a small black vase, with a spout-like protuberance or rudimentary handle belonging to an inn-keeper at the Three Bridges Station, and a small black vase bearing rows of the small incised lines, belonging to Mr. W. Harvey, F.S.A., of Lewes. In the Brighton museum also there is a vase of fine slate colour, ornamented with rows of vertical bosses, together with a large amphora, 5½ feet in circumference. About the latter I was able to glean a few interesting details from the workmen who discovered it at Hardham. They found it, they told me, with the mouth downwards in a hole that was "steined all round like a well." With the exception of a coin of Hadrian, and another Roman coin, it contained nothing but a quantity of dark matter, which, in all probability, consisted of the ashes of the dead. Whether it was enclosed in an oaken chest or not is open to considerable doubt, as the evidence of the men on that point was by no means consistent. Before it had been used for sepulchral purposes, it had lost its neck and handles, and a crack, which must have rendered it useless for holding wine, prevented from extending by two leaden rivets, was probably the cause of its being used to cover human ashes. This curious perversion of an amphora from its proper uses is paralleled by a similar case at Colchester, where an amphora was found with the neck sawn off and

<sup>8</sup> For a description of this village, see Proceedings of Society of Antiquaries, vol. iv. p. 93.

<sup>9</sup> *Habitations Lacustres des temps anciens et modernes*. 8vo. Pl. xiii. fig. 1.



replaced after the urn, lachrymatory, two lamps, a number of iron nails, and a coin of the "second brass," with a head of Faustina, junior, had been deposited inside.<sup>10</sup>

3. *Metallic Remains*.—Of the metallic remains, the round bent iron rod found in No. 2 more strongly resembles a portion of the handle of a bucket than anything else.<sup>11</sup> A small bronze pin, slightly broader at one end than the other, and adorned with zig-zags, probably formed part of a style. The bronze fibula has already been noticed.

4. *Organic Remains*.—The organic remains buried along with the urns, with one exception, present no features worthy of notice in this place. They formed part, in all probability, of the funeral feast, or were placed in the tomb that the soul of the deceased might not faint in its journey to the world of spirits. The occurrence of *Bos longifrons*, or the British short-horn, is what one might reasonably have expected if any remains of animals were found. In Britain, almost universally, wherever there are traces of Roman or Celt, the remains of this extinct species of ox are to be met with; and there can be no reasonable doubt of its domestication at a very early period, probably long before the Roman Invasion. Both in time and space it had a most extended range. In France it is found in great abundance associated with the remains of man, and in Switzerland it formed a considerable portion of the food of the dwellers on piles.<sup>12</sup> In England it is associated with rude pottery unturned in the lathe, which in the main is of an earlier date than the fine lathe-turned Roman pottery. Throughout France, Germany, and Switzerland, it is found in the peat, and in river-bed deposits, and universally in our own country. And, on Professor Owen's authority, it occurs in the older beds of the Newer Pliocene at Clacton.<sup>13</sup> The time of its disappearance is by no means clearly made out; but, so far as I know, it has not been found in this country associated with Saxon remains. Whether or not it be the ancestor of our domestic ox (*Bos Taurus*), or whether "the stupendous and

<sup>10</sup> See Dr. Wright's "Celt, Roman, and Saxon," p. 306.

<sup>11</sup> See Mr. Roach Smith—Tom. Cit. p. 17; and Worsaae, Tom. Cit.

<sup>12</sup> M. Troyon, Tom. Cit. See also "Fauna der Pfahlbauten," by Dr. Rüttemeyer.—*B. Brachyceros*.

<sup>13</sup> *Elephas Antiquus* (Falc.) and *Rhinoceros Megarhinus* (Kaup.) are among the mammalian remains found in that deposit, along with the Irish elk and the red deer.



formidable *Urus*," as Professor Bell suggests, be the original stock, is altogether an open question. The intimate association, however, of *Bos Longifrons* with the remains of the Romanized Britons, in their rubbish heaps, their camps, and their tombs, disproves the truth of Professor Owen's view, "that the herds of the newly-conquered regions (in Britain) were derived from the already domesticated cattle of the Roman colonists,"<sup>14</sup> or in other words that the *Coloni* brought their own breed of cattle along with them, and naturalized it in Britain, where it had been before unknown. No remains of any such breed have yet been found, and of other breeds besides *Bos longifrons*, the *Urus* has alone in one or two cases been associated with Roman remains. The blood of both these species contributes in all probability to form our domestic breed; but this has been so affected, by repeated crossings, that the original stock is quite obscured.<sup>15</sup>

IV.—MODE OF SEPULTURE.—The mode of sepulture observable in the five graves which I explored at Hardham, and confirmed by remains obtained by the workmen from other graves, seems to be, on the whole, very nearly uniform. A hole was first dug in the sandy gravel to a depth varying from 5ft. to 10ft., and lined carefully with a mixture of sand, flints, and black clay. Into this an oaken chest, without a bottom, was deposited, and surrounded on all sides by a rude masonry composed of stones, in which clay supplied the place of mortar. Then, at the bottom of the chest so deposited, a layer of clay was put, on the top of which, on the east side, was a platform of rough flints covered with leaves or flowers. On this was placed the urn, containing the ashes of the deceased, a shallow dish or patera, the relics of the funeral feast, or food placed for the dead—broken bones and horn-cores of oxen, remains of horses and of pigs. The latter, in every case, belonged to animals of a tender age. Vessels of various kinds were next put in, probably for the use of the deceased in the spirit world—funnels for his wine, ollæ, and other vases, in proportion to his wealth and the love his friends bore him, together with the fibulæ he wore, and

<sup>14</sup> See *Fossil Mammals*. 1845. 8vo. p. 500.

<sup>15</sup> The dog, cat, and sheep are similar instances of man's power in so modify-

ing the original stock, that now to attempt to identify it is merely an idle speculation.



various utensils of iron and bronze—pins and the like. At the south-west corner, also, a pair of new sandals was placed. The cover of oaken planks was then placed over the chest, and a quantity of clay placed upon it to support the rude arch, which was now built up, the earth was again thrown in, and the funereal rites were ended. The fact that the fragments of the oaken covers were in every case in contact with the urns, proves that the chests were not originally filled up to the top with the mixture of clay, sand, and flints, as they were when I examined them. Had this been the case, the covers would have been in their proper position, however much they may have been decayed, and the crown of the arch would not have fallen. The mass of clay and sand in each at the time of its discovery is derived in all probability from the interval between the cover and the crown of the arch, which, at the time of sepulture, must have been occupied by something to support the latter, built, as it was, without mortar. Each tomb had its sides facing the four points of the compass.

These details were slightly modified in two cases; in one grave a cracked amphora was inverted over the ashes of the deceased, without patera or cinerary urn; in a second, far larger than the rest, the chest was supported at the corners by stout upright and transverse beams of oak.<sup>16</sup>

V.—ROMAN CAMP.—The Roman Camp close by (see ground plan), like the Cemetery, situate on gravel and probably near the place whence the Romans obtained ballast for their road to the west, is very nearly a perfect square (140 yds. by 145 yds.) with a vallum not more than four feet high, and with each side facing the four magnetic points of the compass. It is 36ft. above the level of the River Arun. The ditch to the west is full of fragments of pottery, ashes, bones, and other things usually found in an old dust-heap.

VI.—APPROXIMATE DATE.—The only clue to the date of

<sup>16</sup> I have deposited the oaken chest found in No. 1 grave in the Brighton Museum with its entire contents—pottery, sandals, etc.—arranged in the order in which I found them. The other vases I have divided between the Museum at Brighton and Lewes. If the smell of

wine be detected in any of the vases in the former place, it must be attributed to libations poured to Bacchus in a picnic of the 19 century, and not to any traces of must that they may have contained at the time of sepulture.



the cemetery is the coin of Hadrian, found inside the amphora. It is not probably older than A.D. 172, in which year Hadrian succeeded his adopted father, Trajan, and it may be of any date down to the invasion of Aella. The presence of graves inside the camp, among which was that containing the amphora, may perhaps show that the camp was disused before the cemetery encroached upon it.

VII.—WHY ROMANO-BRITISH.—But it may be asked why call these remains Romano-British instead of Roman? Simply for this reason, that the ware, in texture and in form Roman, and with one exception turned in the lathe, exhibits patterns in right lines that are found on pottery undoubtedly Celtic. The fibulæ, the coins, and the camp are essentially Roman, while fragments of red ware, if not Samian, and imported, are very good imitations by a British workman. The red brick supporting the urn in No. 3 grave is similar to those in the Roman walls of Pevensey Castle (Anderida). Roman arms made way for Roman civilization, and the provincials, while retaining a great many of their national customs and fashions, adopted most of the useful arts of their conquerors.

VIII.—FLINT IMPLEMENTS.—Flint flakes, and rudely chipped pieces of flint, were discovered in most intimate association with the potsherds, both occurring in the dark, disturbed earth which varies from three feet to a foot in thickness throughout the section made by the railway; one small circular fragment (0·7 inches in diameter) is curiously chipped all round. Their presence may, perhaps, indicate a prior occupation of the spot by the Celts: an hypothesis which the favourable position of the isthmus—on the gravel, and within reach of water and fish, and easily defended—may perhaps justify. That flint implements, on the other hand, were used by the Romanized Britons, is proved by the discovery of flakes and other implements in the Camp at Worle Hill, near Weston super Mare, by my friend, the Rev. F. Warre.<sup>17</sup> The balance of evidence therefore is, perhaps, in favour of the flint implements here, being of the same date as the associated Romano-British pottery.

<sup>17</sup> They have been lately found in Auvergne along with Roman Remains at Gergovia, by my friend and colleague, Mr. C. Le Neve Foster, F.G.S.

I am indebted to the kindness of Mr. Figg, F.S.A., for the copy of the parish map, which forms the basis of the ground plan.



IX.—HARDHAM CHURCH.—At the north-east and south-east corners of Hardham Church, within a short distance of the camp, are Roman tiles with a waved pattern, which evidently once formed a portion of a pavement. They were probably obtained from the ruins of a Roman station or villa in the neighbourhood, which were utilized by the Norman builders of the church. The masonry of the church is indeed in great part composed of materials so derived.

X.—CONCLUSION.—In conclusion, I will only add that in my opinion there are few places in Sussex more worthy of a thorough examination than the area covered by the cemetery and camp, and especially the south-eastern portion of the latter, between the railway, and the vallum on the south. With the exception of a small ditch which yielded a quantity of Roman remains, the ground is quite undisturbed. The very situation of the isthmus, on the borders of the Silva Anderida, traversed by an important highway leading to the capital, and with a free communication with the sea by the Arun, offers peculiar advantages which could not have been overlooked by the founders of Constantinople and London; and I feel sure that a more careful examination, than I was able to give, will bring to light most important remains, at an expense comparatively trifling. It could not fall into better hands than those of the Sussex Archæological Society.

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