

**An account of the remains of a Roman villa discovered at Bignor, in ...
Sussex in ... 1811 / [Samuel Lysons].**

Contributors

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Chas. Parker
1848.

AN ACCOUNT
OF THE
REMAINS
OF
A ROMAN VILLA

DISCOVERED AT
BIGNOR,
IN THE COUNTY OF SUSSEX,
IN THE YEAR 1811, AND FOUR FOLLOWING YEARS.

LONDON:

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1815.

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LONDON:

PRINTED BY T. BARNES.



ADVERTISEMENT.

HAVING frequently heard the proprietor of the Roman remains discovered at Bignor, express a wish that he had some account of the discovery, for the accommodation of his visitors; many of whom were desirous of obtaining more information on the subject, than it was in his power to afford; and having lately communicated an account of this discovery to the Society of Antiquaries, and also had engravings on a large scale prepared from facsimile drawings of all the Mosaic pavements, for an extensive work on the Roman Antiquities of this Country, I was induced to draw up the

following brief account; to which are added copies of such parts of the plates as appeared best adapted to its illustration.

I shall be very glad if this little work should answer the purpose for which it is intended; and in any degree serve to make these curious remains better known, and more frequently visited; thereby rendering them a source of profit to their worthy and industrious proprietor, who has taken so much care for their preservation, whilst most of the remains of a similar description, found in this country, have been demolished almost as soon as they were discovered.

SAM. LYSONS.

*Record Office, Tower,
1st June, 1815.*

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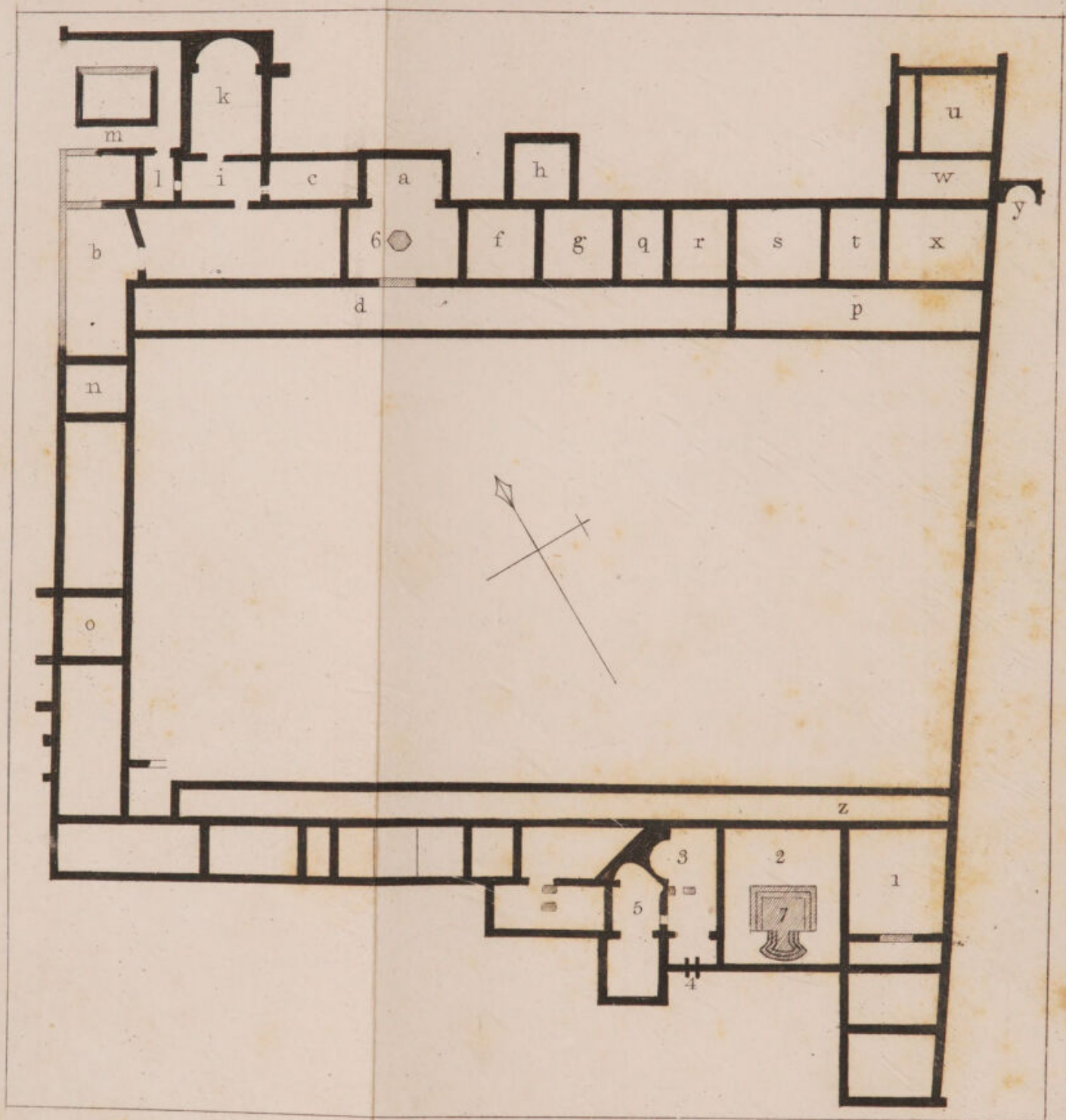
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Plan of the Remains of a Roman Villa discovered at Bignor.

Published by J. Lysons July 1856.

AN
ACCOUNT, &c.

IN the month of July, 1811, a Mosaic pavement^a was discovered by the plough, in a field called the Berry, in the parish of Bignor, in Sussex, lying about a quarter of a mile east of the church, belonging to, and in the occupation of, Mr. George Tupper of Bignor: the earth being removed, which varied in depth from one to two feet, the pavement was found to

^a The pavements used by the ancients, formed of small bits of stone, marble, or composition, have been called by various names, as *pavimentà tessellata*, *sectilia*, and *vermiculata*. The first seems to have been used when the work was composed entirely of *tessellæ* or cubes; the second, when the materials were cut into various forms, to suit the figures which were introduced; and the last, when they consisted of very

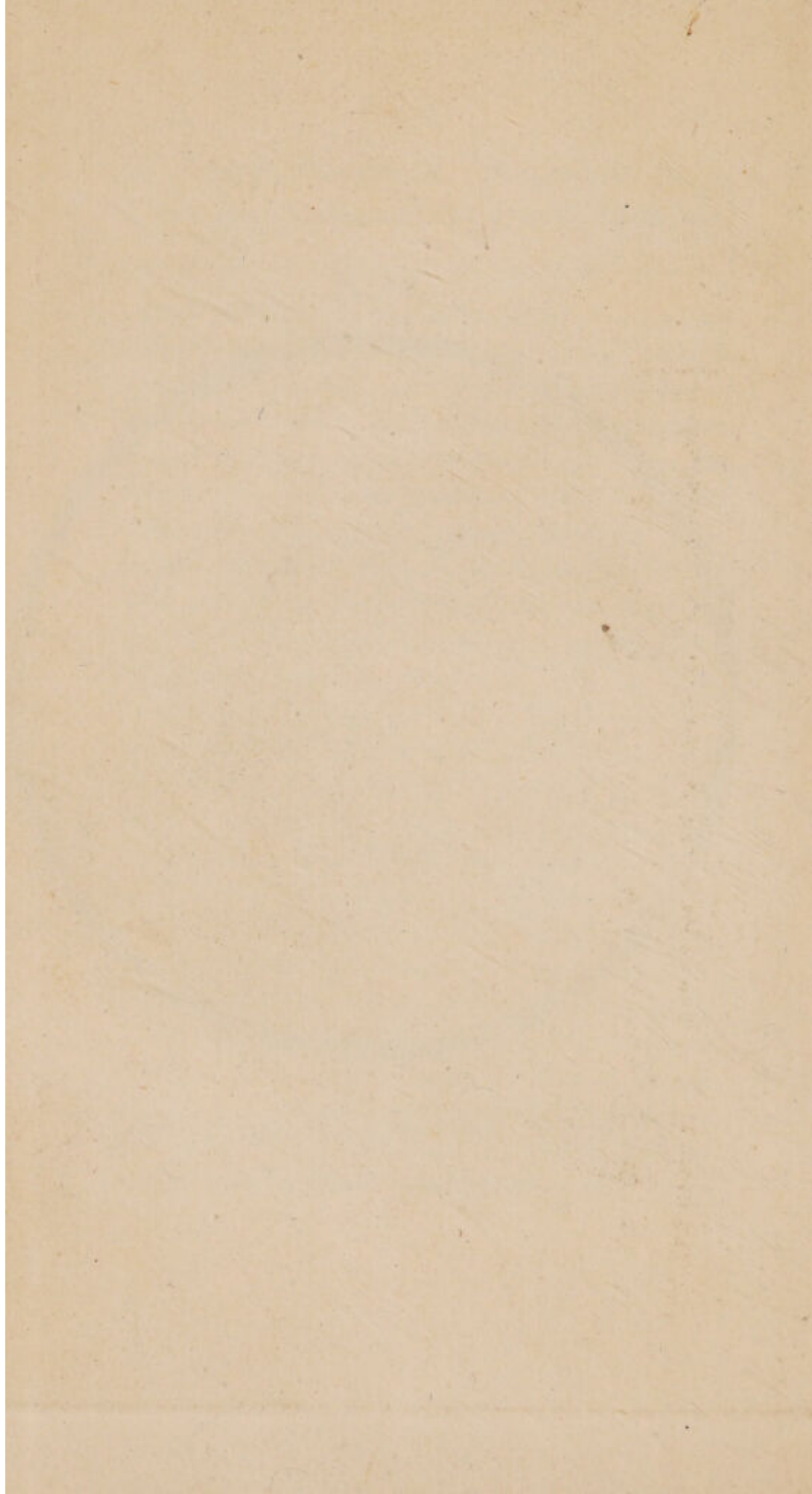
be of large dimensions. Its general design is in a good taste, and the various figures are

minute particles, which enabled the artist to produce the effect of a painting : but the most general denomination by which this kind of work has been known is that of *opus musivum*, mosaic-work. These pavements are said by Pliny to have been introduced among the Romans from Greece in the time of Sylla : they were at first only employed in their temples, but from the discoveries at Pompeii, it appears that before the time of the Emperor Titus they were frequently used in private houses. In the reign of Hadrian they appear to have been in very general use, not only in Italy, but in the provinces of the Roman empire. Many have been discovered in France, Spain, and Switzerland. But perhaps no country has afforded a greater number and variety than England, or of larger dimensions. The pavements formerly found at Littlecote in Wiltshire, and Stunsfield in Oxfordshire, and those discovered of late years at Horkstow in Lincolnshire, and near Frampton in Dorsetshire, may vie in point of size with those of the greatest celebrity on the Continent ; whilst that of the *Cavædium tetrastylon*, in the remains of the Roman Villa at Woodchester, is perhaps the largest ever discovered, except the pavement from Otricoli near Rome, now laid down in an apartment of the Vatican. Many of those found in England have been very rich in

PL.II.



*Figure of Ganymede in the Pavement
marked A in the Plan.*



PL. III.



*Figure on the Pavement
marked A. in the Plan.*



better executed than any which have been before discovered in similar remains in this island. 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; the large one is subdivided into six irregular hexagonal compartments, within which are figures of dancing nymphs much in the style of those which appear in the Roman paintings discovered in Italy; one of them has been quite destroyed, but enough remains of the other five to indicate what has been the dress and attitude.

These figures are well executed, and as well designed as the nature of the work would admit, with the exception of the lower limbs, which are incorrectly drawn:

ornaments, but the figures have generally been rudely executed, the materials of which they were formed, not having been small enough to produce the effect of painting, so much admired in the *opus vermiculatum*.

in which respect, as well as in the general style of the figures and the arrangement of the ornaments, this pavement much resembles one which was found about a century ago at Avenches in Switzerland, and which there is good reason to suppose was executed in the reign of Vespasian or Titus.

In the centre of the circular compartment is an hexagonal *piscina*, or cistern, of stone 4 feet in diameter, and 1 foot $7\frac{3}{4}$ inches deep, with a step at about half its depth. At the bottom is a round hole 3 inches in diameter, connected with a leaden pipe for carrying off the water, part of which was discovered, very entire, on the outside of the building to the southward. There was an octagonal cistern in the Avenches pavement, and these are supposed to be the only two examples of the kind which have occurred.

It appeared that the room to which this pavement belonged had been heated by an hypocaust,^a some of the flues of which having

^a The hypocaust was the most usual mode of warming the rooms in the Roman houses, particularly the baths and sudatories, by means of subterraneous flues,

given way, the surface of the pavement has been rendered uneven.

About 30 feet west of this pavement part of another was discovered which appeared, when entire, to have been 44 feet long and 17 feet wide, and to have consisted of two large square compartments: one of them includes a circle subdivided into irregular hexagons, &c. with oval compartments in the spandrils of the circle, and ornamented with figures, of which part of a boy, a dolphin, and a pheasant, with a cornucopia remained, with the letters T R in one of the angular spaces between the hexagons. The second letter seems to have been intended for a combination of E and R.

The other large compartments appear originally to have contained four octagonal divisions, each including a star, formed by two interlaced squares; within was an oc-

with funnels carried up through the walls. The fire was made in a place called the *præfurinum*, constructed for that purpose on the outside of the building, which communicated with the hypocaust within, by means of an opening usually arched.

tagon. Only one of these remained entire, containing a representation of the head of Winter, clearly indicated by the manner in which all but the face is enveloped in clothing, and by the leafless branch which accompanies it; in the other three divisions, no doubt, had been heads of the other Seasons. The borders of the several compartments in these pavements, were embellished with frets, guilloches and other Roman architectural ornaments, commonly used in works of this kind; a sort of shading was produced in them by the use of red, yellow, and white, and brown, grey, and white rows of *tesseræ* in the different braids, &c.; which colours are frequently employed alternately.^a

The *tesseræ* were of various sizes, the larger red ones for the outside work and the inferior sorts of pavement, were cubes of about an inch, and formed of red brick or of stone: those of which the ornamental parts of the pavements were composed varied in size, from cubes of half an inch down to the sixth of an inch.

In the year 1812 an investigation of these

^a See Specimens of these borders in Pl. V. p. 22.

remains was begun, and continued occasionally in the three following years, in order, by laying open the foundations of the walls, to trace the plan of the building, which appeared to have been a Roman Villa of considerable extent.

The room marked (a) in the plan, containing the Mosaic Pavement first discovered, when the remains of the walls had been traced, appeared to be 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.

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 *tesseræ*,) 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.^a It seems probable

^a In most of the remains of the Roman villas are similar deviations from regularity; and the same occur in the remains of a Roman villa discovered at Rielves in Spain, published in 1788 by Don Pedro Arnal. We need not be surprised that such instances should occur in so remote a province of the Roman empire as Britain, 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 regione Diphilus collo-*

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 decorations of the pavement; and the recess was well calculated to answer the purpose of the high table in our public halls.

The walls had been ornamented with paintings on stucco, many fragments of which were found among the rubbish. 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, 20 feet by 9 feet 9 inches, quite entire. The mosaic work consisted of two compartments, each 5 feet 4 inches square, with an oblong one between them 5 feet 4 inches by 2 feet 6 inches; the rest of the pavement being filled up with coarse red *tesseræ*. The design of the ob-

caret: eas scilicet demolietur aliquando perpendiculo et linea discet uti." Epistolæ ad Q. Fratrem, lib. iii. 1.

long compartment consisted of two scrolls of ivy leaves, &c. proceeding from a goblet surrounded by a guilloche, and a black and white indented border. 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 included a sort of star of twelve points formed of rhombs, within 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 2 feet 6 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 3 feet 3 inches and a half in width, leading into another room 22 feet by 10 feet 4 inches, paved with coarse red *tesserae*.

On the south side of the great pavement

(a) the foundation walls of a *cryptoporticus*^a of great length were discovered (d) in the plan); 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: part of its tessellated pavement, ornamented with a blue labyrinth, and having a red stripe on each side, was remaining at the west end to the extent of about 65 feet in length; the rest appeared to have been destroyed by the plough. 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: that 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. That marked (g) was nearly of the same dimensions, and had a tessellated

^a The *Cryptoporticus* was an inclosed gallery, in which the Romans took the exercise of walking within doors, as they did in their *Gestationes* in the open air. It is not noticed by Vitruvius, but is particularly mentioned by Pliny in the description of his Tusculan villa. It might however have been included by the former writer, in the general term of *Ambulationes*.

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, containing four squares composed of rhombs, and triangles, &c.

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 the 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 very fine mosaic pavement was discovered, a little below the bottom of the ditch on the north side of the field, which proved to be a parallelogram of twenty-two feet by nineteen feet ten inches, (k) with a

semicircular recess at the north end ten feet in diameter, making the whole length thirty-two feet, to which the room marked (i) appeared to have been an anti-room; the doorway between being four feet wide.

The design of this pavement consisted of a 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 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 brick tiles 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.

The triangular divisions at the four corners of the square were filled with figures of urns, with fruit and foliage, and cornucopiæ alternately.

The oblong compartment on the north side of the square one, is thirteen feet seven inches long and two feet six inches wide; it contains twelve figures of cupids or genii habited as gladiators, and exhibits 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*.^a

^a The armour worn by the *Samnites* is 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 Montfaucon in the second part of the third volume of his *Antiquité Expliquée*, Pl. CLIV.

PL. III

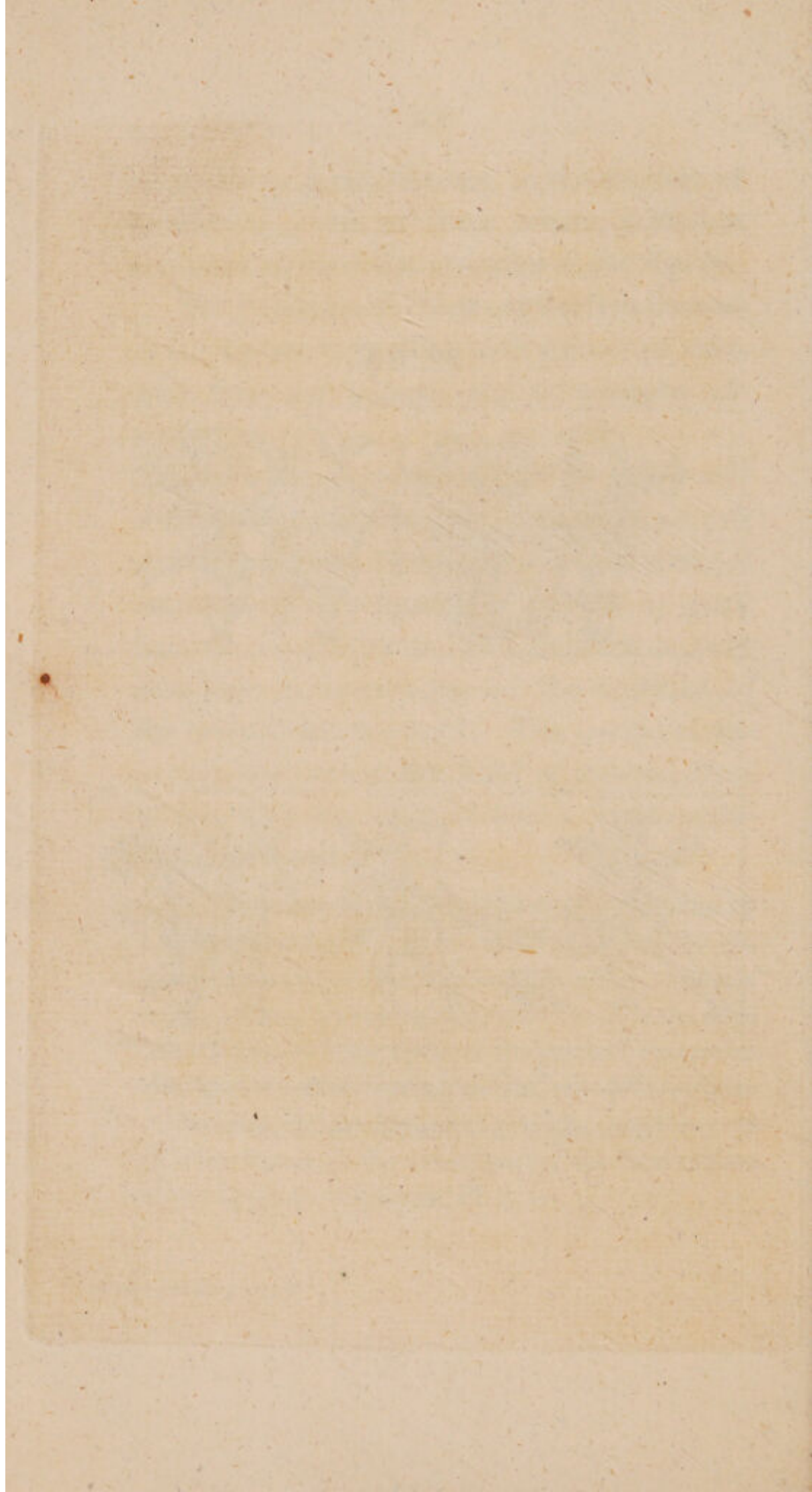
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2



*Figures of Gladiators on one of the
Mosaic Pavements at Bignor.*



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. They are all provided with a short sword, which they hold in the left hand with the trident.^a

Here also appear the *Rudarii*, or veteran gladiators, who having been presented with a rod, as a token of manumission, instructed the young beginners, and regulated the combats.

The subject of this compartment seems to have been designed to represent four different scenes, in which the same parties are engaged.

• 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.

In one they are seen preparing for the combat, in another just engaged in it; in a third the *retiarius* is wounded, and the *rudarius* is coming to his assistance; in the last he is fallen, disarmed, and wounded in the thigh.

The semicircular division at the north end of the pavement is surrounded by an elegant scroll of foliage proceeding from a goblet; and enclosing a circular compartment, within which is represented a female head ornamented with a chaplet of flowers; tresses of hair appear on the shoulders, which are naked. 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 from the circumstance of the shoulders being naked, it is most probable that it was intended for Venus.

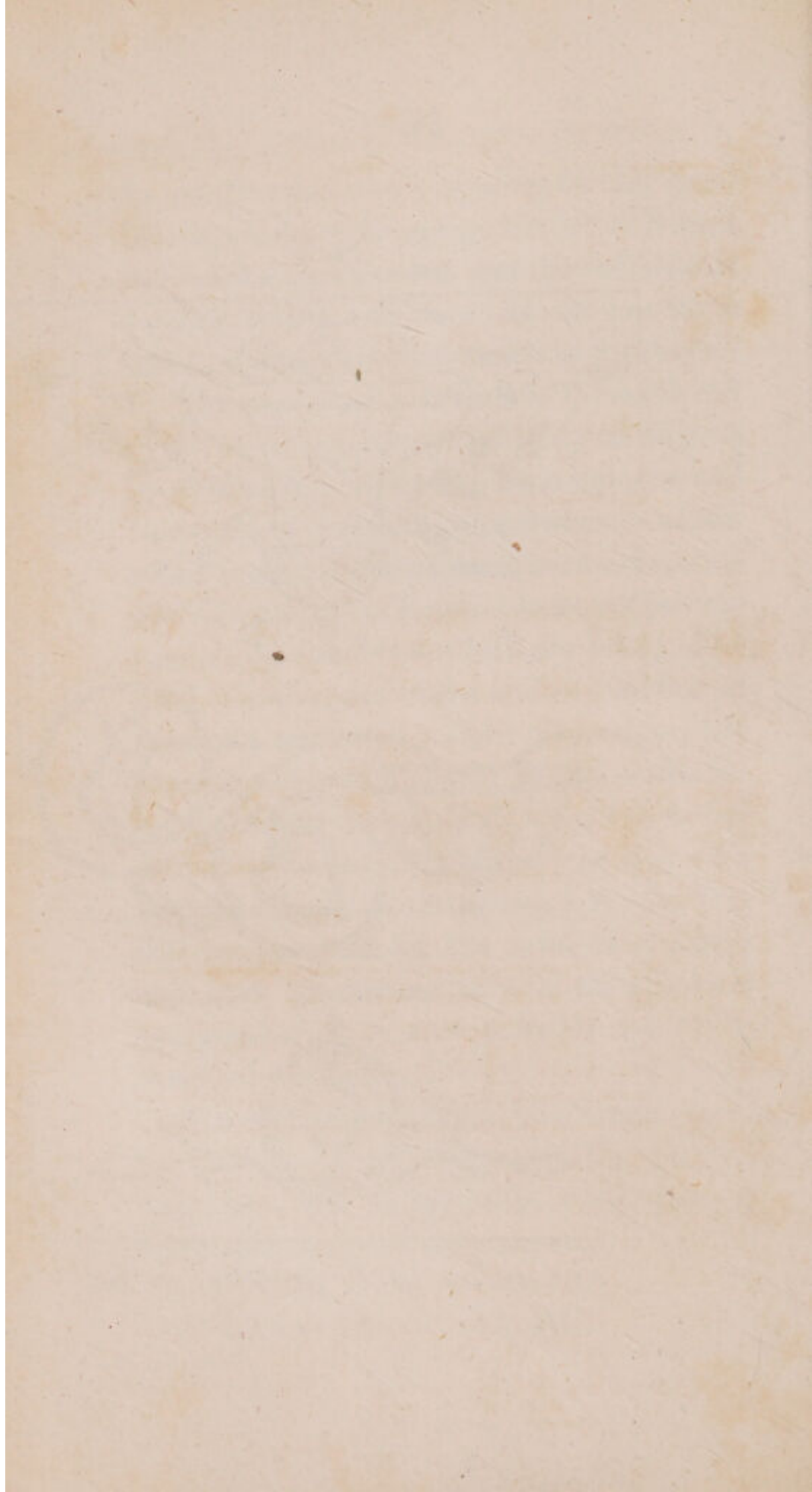
On each side of the circular compartment are cornucopiæ and festoons of foliage, with two birds, one on each side, which seem to have been designed for pheasants.

PL. V.

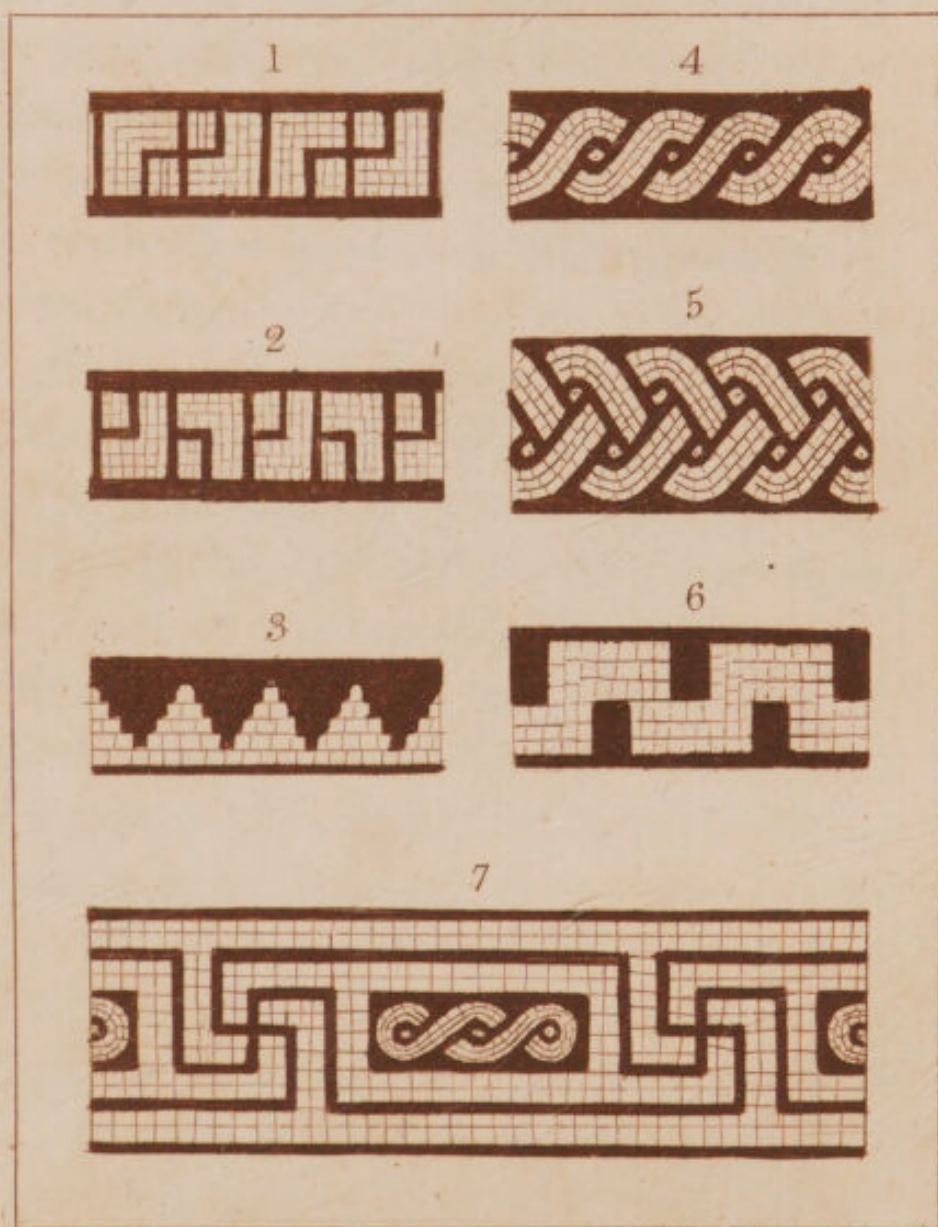


*Specimens of Ornaments in the
Mosaic Pavement at Bignor*

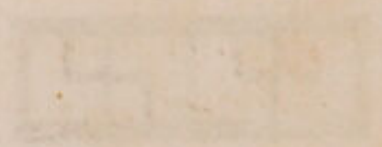
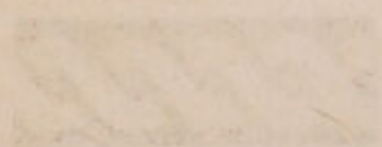
Published by J. G. Johnson, 1846.



PL.V.



*Specimens of the Borders in the
Mosaic Pavements at Bignor.*



On the west side of this room were the remains of a sort of enclosed portico marked (m) in the plan; it appeared to have had a terras floor, and probably had a range of small columns, resting at a certain height on the inner wall, one having been found three feet ten inches in height, and a considerable part of another: they were of the Doric order, but with a good deal of irregularity in the mouldings.

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 doorways, one on the east side opening into the anti-room (i), and the other on the north communicating with the portico (m.)

At the south end of the room (marked b) was a terras floor nearly two feet below the level of the pavement of that room; the walls which remained 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. The same was observed in all the other remains of rooms, where the pavement or other floor was entire, up to the wall. On the west side the greater part of the wall had been destroyed quite to the foundation; on the east side was a hearth formed of eight bricks, each about seven inches square, and a fire-place $21\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide in the front, 17 inches at the back, and eight inches deep. The fire-place was formed by two brick tiles on each side which had been cramped together with iron, and were placed in the manner of those on the sides of the stove introduced by Count Rumford. This is probably the first open fire-place of the kind discovered 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.^a

The dimensions of this room (n) were 14

^a 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

feet 6 inches by 17 feet. At the distance of 44 feet from the south wall proceeding southward, the foundation walls were traced of another room (marked o) 16 feet 5 inches by 15 feet 6 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 19 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,

or situation; and it has been much questioned 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.

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 68 feet, making the whole length of this extraordinary *ambulatio* no less than 227 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: 8 feet 1 inch by 18 feet 10 inches, 16 feet 6 inches by 18 feet 10 inches, 25 feet by 18 feet 10 inches, 16 feet 3 inches by 18 feet 10 inches, and 26 feet 6 inches by 18 feet 10 inches; and at the east end of this range of apartments were the foundation walls of two other rooms; one of them (w) 13 feet 2 inches by 24 feet, the other (u) 18 feet 3 inches by 18 feet 6 inches; and a passage (a) 18 feet 6 inches by 4 feet 1 inch, running northward, where the building appeared to have extended further, but could not be traced in that direction beyond the hedge of the Town Field. None of the seven rooms last-mentioned appear to have had any pavements. One of them (marked s in the plan), appeared to have been floored with bricks 10 inches and 3 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 2 to 3 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 (y), forming on the south side a semicircle 8 feet 10 inches in diameter.

The wall which terminated the building to the eastward was found not to stand at right angles with the *cryptoporticus*, but to run in a diagonal direction. From the south-east corner of the *cryptoporticus* this outside wall was found to run in the same direction to the southward, where it continued as a single wall, there having been no apartments on the east side of the court. Having been traced to the extent of 133 feet to the southward, a cross wall 2 feet wide occurred, and 8 feet further, another 2 feet 5 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 (z) 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, in which were remains of the baths. The room (marked 1) would have been a square of 25 feet, but that its figure is a little distorted on the east

side by the diagonal direction of the wall. It contained a mosaic pavement, the design of which 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 3 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 laid chequerwise, and next to the wall a row of bricks, each 11 inches by $15\frac{1}{2}$ inches. 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 of the same sort of irregular Doric as those before noticed. The base was $14\frac{3}{4}$ in diameter, the shaft 2 feet 2 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 4 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 30 feet by 35. The floor of this room marked (2), a great part of which remained, consisted of black and white stones, each 6 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 11 inches by $15\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Nearly in the middle of this room was a cold bath (7) 18 feet by 12, with a recess on the south side terminating in the segment of a circle, making the whole extent of the bottom of the bath 14 feet 3 inches from east to west, and 13 feet 1 inch from north to south, and of the top, 18 feet 2 inches, by 18 feet 4 inches, and 3 feet 2

inches deep from the level of the floor: it had three steps; some $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide, others 11 inches, and varying in height from 1 foot $\frac{7}{8}$ to $13\frac{1}{2}$ inches; the lowermost was only 6 inches high. The steps on the north side were covered with stones very smoothly wrought; the other parts were covered with terras laid about two inches thick on bricks. No drain was found, though no doubt there had been one; but as the floor was broken up except at the north-west corner, all traces of it had been destroyed. Many fragments of a neat cornice of stone 2 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 (3) in the plan), 34 feet by 12, with a semicircular projection 6 feet 2 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* (4) was on the outside of the wall at the south end: the piers were 2 feet 9 inches in height and 7 inches and a half square, consisting of 18 layers of bricks, with a larger one 10 inches and a half square, laid at the top and bottom. Above the piers there had been a stratum 10 inches and a half thick, composed of mortar and pounded brick, one fragment of which remained, with a coarse tessellated pavement of 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; in 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 (5) in the plan, were considerable remains of a coarse tessellated pavement, and under it was an hypocaust, which communicated with the large one above-mentioned by means of an

arch of brick, 3 feet 9 inches wide, and 3 feet 2 inches high; immediately over this arch was a doorway 2 feet 3 inches wide.

From the several remains above described, 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, no reasonable doubt 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

^a "Duas validissimas gentes, superque viginti oppida, et insulam Vectem Britanniae proximam in dedicationem redegit."

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*.^b

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

^a We learn this from the inscribed stone found in the year 1723 at Chichester, and now in the possession of the Duke of Richmond; where it appears, that by his order, a temple dedicated to Neptune and Minerva was erected at *Regnum* by the *Collegium Fabrorum*. This circumstance relating to Cogidunus 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.

parts of Europe, the age of which has been pretty satisfactorily ascertained, there appear to be probable grounds for referring them 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 emperors Vespasian and Titus. Of this pavement a particular account was published by Mr. De Schmidt, Seigneur de Rossan, in his *Receuil 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; a circumstance which does not appear to have occurred in any other work of the kind. The pavement at Avenches has figures of Bacchantes in octagonal compartments, executed exactly in the same style, and with the same defect, 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 supposed to be peculiar to these two pavements. There is also a general agreement between the style of ornament in both of them.

Another circumstance which makes it probable that these pavements were of 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 antiqui-

ty. 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.

*Distances of the Roman Villa at Bignor from the
Neighbouring Towns.*

	Miles.
From Arundel.....	6 $\frac{1}{4}$
—— Chichester by the horse road.....	11
————— by the carriage road.....	15
—— Horsham by Pulborough.....	20
Petworth.....	6

THE END.

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Wm. Parker



13 Nov. 1855

