

## CANTERBURY TILL DOMESDAY.

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To any one looking down from the higher ground which flanks Canterbury on either side, it needs no antiquarian eye to perceive that most of the site of the present city has only gradually emerged from the bed of the river, and once formed part of that great tidal estuary which (as we know from the anchor found in the marshes at Chilham, and indeed from the very aspect and level of the marshes themselves) flowed up this valley several miles higher than the spot where now stands Canterbury. He would notice also the wider flatness of the valley just at this point, implying less original depth of water, and greater adaptability for a ford: and this ford without doubt it was that first gave any importance to the situation. The principal British road which led down to it may still be traced, from the corresponding ford of the lesser Stour at Patricksbourne, forming for a long way the parish boundary between Bekesbourne and Patricksbourne, but now mostly used as an occupation way only. That this old line of road, clearly of immense age from its hollowness on hill sides, is of British origin, is evident enough from its course so near and so parallel to a Roman road upon either side of it, after the date of which two a third would never have been constructed. As it approaches Canterbury, this road is now lost. It ran through the land of the Barton, or home-farm, of St. Augustine's Abbey, and naturally fell under the powerful ban of the monks; but its original direction to a ford at this spot is unmistakeable. Having crossed to the farther or north-western side of the estuary, it would join the great British road to the west, now known as the Pilgrim's Way; while the deep old track towards the coast at Seasalter and Whitstable, which runs by the side of the present road up St. Thomas's Hill, was in all likelihood its direct continuation northwards.

Probably, however, this ford was not the most important

in the neighbourhood. The next below it would be that of Fordwich, in which has risen the island called Sturry, or the Stour Island : and this, as the last downward ford on the river, must have carried the traffic of a far larger extent of country. Nor could it have equalled in importance the next ford higher up the estuary, still marked by the old mansion of Tunford ; for this led immediately up to the grand ancient city or fortress, the banks of which still remain under the name of Bigbury, clearly the great "Oppidum," as Cæsar named such British entrenchments, of all this country side.

The near neighbourhood of this great fortification seems to preclude the idea that a city of importance could in those days have occupied any of the site of Canterbury. Cæsar describes the part of Britain which he traversed, and it must be chiefly of Kent that he is speaking, as filled with "hominum infinita multitudo creberrimaque ædificia ;"<sup>1</sup> and the scattered state of population implied by his words would lead us to suppose that the bank of a frequented ford would not be an uninhabited spot. The only remains, however, of the British period which exist, or are known to have existed, here, are the remarkable conical mounds, one of which, called the "Dane-John, or Dungeon Hill" (A), stands within the walls of the present city, having in its immediate neighbourhood, on the outside of the walls, another similar but smaller mound (B), and having had, till the building of the Chatham and Dover Station a few years ago, another (C), nearer to its own size, and about equidistant. There are legends of more such mounds,<sup>2</sup> one inside the Walls (D), above and close to the present cattle-market, and others outside ; but I can trace the latter at least to no satisfactory evidence, and am rather inclined to attribute them to the plan of Canterbury given in Somner's history of the city,<sup>3</sup> published in 1640, in which the artist certainly engraves two hills close together inside, and no less than five outside, but clearly only as a pretty conventional way of rendering hilly ground, as schoolboys put mountains in their maps, and with no regard to exact accuracy. Be

<sup>1</sup> Cæs. Bell. Gall. Lib. V.

<sup>2</sup> See Mr. Sandys' paper on this subject and the local authorities there cited, Transactions of Brit. Arch. Ass., Gloucester, 1846, page 136.

<sup>3</sup> See also Battely's edition, 1703, facing p. 1.



this as it may, it is impossible to doubt that the three mounds, one inside and two outside, which we have seen with our own eyes, are all of the same date, origin, and object; or that, this being the case, they are anterior to the date of the wall and earthen bank which have separated them. And as I shall proceed to shew that this bank, if not itself the actual rampart of the Roman city, at least occupies its site, it remains that the mounds must be of Celtic origin. This conclusion is further confirmed by the discovery, in removing the mound lately destroyed, of a bronze celt, now in the collection of Mr. Evans of Hemel Hempstead. On the object of these British earthworks, more or less numerous as they may have been, I do not feel able to give an opinion. They seem scarcely to have been in connection with the ford, or near the line of road which crossed it. Standing as they must have stood on the bank of the river, they may perhaps have afforded a defence to the river passage, and have served as a sort of outwork to Bigbury Camp above. If they can have been sepulchral, I can hear of no remains found in that which was removed indicating such a purpose. They may possibly have been connected with the Celtic worship, of which we know so little. May we not rely on some of our learned members to throw more light on their cause and origin?

So far we are dependent for our conclusions on situation and physical remains only; in coming to the period of the Roman occupation our researches are aided by written evidence, though of no very copious character. For although our city does not figure in Roman history, so far as it has descended to us, it figures four times in Roman geography; and although it seems most probable that, after the withdrawal of the Romans and the consequent expulsion of the Britons, its very name became forgotten, it could never have been possible for anyone, who approached the site with Roman information in his hand, to fail to re-identify it as "Durovernum." The words of the Itinerary of the military geographer Antoninus<sup>4</sup> are in themselves sufficient for this, who, describing in well-known passages the great road leading down to the three Kentish harbour-fortresses, and the stations placed upon it at intervals, makes this station of

<sup>4</sup> Itin. ed. Wessel, p. 463.

Durovernum the last stage in each instance before reaching the coast; his road at this point dividing itself into three, and gaining the harbour of Ritupæ in 12 miles, that of Dubræ in 14 miles, and that of Lemanæ in 16 miles. All these harbours retain their Roman names and their Roman fortresses, in Richborough, Dover, and Romney or Lymne, and their three Roman roads still remain, or can be traced, in almost as complete straight lines as when Antoninus wrote.

It is to these roads that our city owes its origin and subsequent importance; and especially to one of them—that from Richborough. The harbour of Richborough, described emphatically as “*statio tranquilla*,”<sup>5</sup> was from the first that most affected by the Romans; indeed, we never hear of an Emperor, general, or army landing at any other, and its almost exclusive use seems to have given its name to the whole coast, and to have made it a household word at Rome among poets and others.<sup>6</sup> Now it is observable that the spot selected, at which these three great roads should cross the river Stour on their way to London, is one which, while considerably out of the way from Dover and Lymne, is in the direct straight line from Richborough. This seems to justify us in the conclusion that the Richborough road was, as would be natural, the first to be constructed of the three, and that Richborough harbour is the primary origin of Canterbury. The ford being once established, the other two roads, somewhat later in date of formation, would naturally be directed at the same spot for convenience of access westwards.

The design, however, of placing here a city or a station of any size does not seem to have been formed immediately with the roads. For although the three point their straight lines exactly at the city, they do not, and clearly did not originally, meet at any one gate, nor indeed, with the exception of the central road, that from Dover, point at any gate or gates whatever. It has especially been a puzzle to local antiquaries at what point the road from Lymne, called the Stone Street, could have originally entered Canterbury. It is easy, however, to trace, by the eye and by the Ordnance Survey, that on producing the straight lines of the two lateral roads (those from Richborough and Lymne), till they

<sup>5</sup> *Amm. Marcell.* xxvii. 9.

<sup>6</sup> Even as early as Lucan (*Pharsal*, lib.

vi. 67), who died only 22 years after the commencement of the invasion of Claudius.



meet the central road (that from Dover), the three will be found to join exactly at the spot where they would together take the plunge into the ford of the river, just at what is now called Beer-cart Lane. The inference is clear, that at the construction of these three roads nothing in the nature of walls, outworks, or other incidents of a city could have interposed to prevent their free and direct access to the river's bank. The need for a "mansio" or "statio" for the troops at this spot would no doubt immediately arise; and we can well believe that in no long time the large amount of traffic concentrated here by the three roads would cause the formation of a city. Accordingly we find that the Egyptian geographer, Ptolemy,<sup>7</sup> apparently writing within a century or so of the definite occupation of Britain under Claudius, gives Darvénium (or, in his Greek, *Δαρουεννον*), with Londinium and Rutupiaë, as one of the three cities of the Cantii. This is the earliest historical mention of our city.

The other two notices by Roman writers are of less importance. The fragmentary map known as the "Tabula Peutingerii"<sup>8</sup> places at this spot its conventional device for a city or fortress, and calls it "Buroaverus," clearly a word distorted by many copyists. And its last occurrence in what may be called Roman literature is not till after the intervening period of early Saxon isolation, when in the middle of the seventh century Augustine and his co-missionaries had reopened intercourse with Rome. It is then that the anonymous geographer of Ravenna<sup>9</sup> writes it down as "Durovernum Cantiacorum," showing his knowledge, derived from this renewed intercourse, that what from his Roman learning he knew as Durovernum was now "Cantwara-burh," the borough or city of the Saxon men of Kent. That other allusions to it in early Latin authors have existed and perished, we may perhaps guess from the fact that the Saxon Latinists often write it "Dorovernis," "Dorobernia"—forms of spelling for which they may possibly have had prior authority, but which after all may be merely the result of their own caprice or carelessness.

In addition to these notices by Roman authors, there is an omission as significant as a notice. In the "Notitia Imperii," which enumerates the garrison towns of the empire,

<sup>7</sup> Lib. ii. 3.

<sup>8</sup> See Mon. Hist. Brit. Vol. I. p. xxii.

<sup>9</sup> Lib. v. 31.

and names the troops stationed at each about the end of the fourth century, the four coast-fortresses which surround Durovernum are given each its garrison : to Richborough a whole legion, but to Durovernum nothing.<sup>1</sup> It was, therefore, as we may well suppose, a "mansio," or halting-place only, for troops on the march, with an importance chiefly commercial, as the first stage on the great highway of Britain.

At the junction then of these three roads, and on the south-eastern bank of the river, was formed and fortified the Roman station and city ; and the road from Dover was the road chosen upon which, so to speak, to impale it, not only as the central road of the three, but as that which approached the bank of the river conveniently at a right angle. In searching therefore for the situation and dimensions of the Roman town, we begin by taking this road, now represented and to some extent occupied by the present Watling Street, as its central straight line, cutting the city into two equal halves, *Romano more*, and drawn direct between its entrance at the Riding Gate (E), and its exit at Beer-cart Lane (F). At and near both these spots the hard crust of the original Roman Road was very distinctly found, at some depth under the present street, during the recent works for the drainage of the town : along the rest of Watling Street there was no such crust, and it is easy to trace by the eye that the present streetway diverges considerably southward from the old straight line, regaining it, as would be necessary, near the gates. The exact situation of the gate in Beer-cart Lane has not transpired ; it must have stood at no great distance from the present river bank ; but that Riding Gate occupies the precise position of the Roman gate we know from those writers who record its two Roman arches of brick, a large and a small, still remaining in the wall ; among whom Stukely gives both a description and an engraving of them in his "Iter Curiosum."<sup>2</sup> Having gained then this central straight line, we can next point out the extreme southern limit, namely the spot where stood the ancient Worth Gate (G), which we know by description and by pictures (Stukely again furnishing both<sup>3</sup>) to have been an undoubted Roman arch, and which the late deep draining of the city proved clearly to have undoubted Roman foundations.<sup>4</sup> In

<sup>1</sup> C. 71.

<sup>2</sup> Pl. 96, p. 116.

<sup>3</sup> Id. Pl. 54, p. 115.

<sup>4</sup> See Mr. Pilbrow's "Discoveries during excavations at Canterbury." *Archæologia*, xliii., p. 158.

these two ascertained points, the centre and the southern extremity, we have data by which to determine approximately the site of the remaining fourth Roman gate, that at the city's north end ; and measurement from the centre, the same as to the south gate, will show this north gate to have stood very near the present south-west tower of the Cathedral (H).

Now having determined both Worth Gate and Riding Gate to have been Roman gates, we are irresistibly led to the inference that the wall remaining between them (E to G) is the line of the Roman wall—a line clearly drawn to accommodate itself to the position of the Dane-John Mound, and forming, as I have before suggested, an additional evidence of the earlier or Celtic origin of this and its accompanying mounds. This line of wall consists primarily of an earthen bank or rampart, still in most parts of considerable height, and, though in some parts removed, shewing evidence even there of its former existence. No removal of the bank has taken place of late years, nor have the historians of Canterbury preserved any record of Roman wall being discovered under it, as is notably the case with the similar embankment at York. But it seems pretty clear that the bank between these two gates, and, we may argue, in its farther straight continuance north-eastward, either contains, or is in itself, the wall of Roman Durovernum.

This is most curiously confirmed on going back to the site which we have determined upon as approximately that of the Roman North Gate ; for on searching near or in a line with this for any evidences of the Roman wall in which it stood, we find that when the line of city wall, traced north-eastward from Riding Gate, arrives at a spot (I), nearly opposite to the suggested North Gate, the embankment which forms its principal feature suddenly comes to a stop, and has clearly never been continued round the remainder of the present city. (This stoppage occurs in the garden of one of the residentiary houses attached to the Cathedral, now in the occupation of Mr. Rouch, a minor-canon.) The conclusion seems natural that here was the corner of the Roman wall or embankment, whichever it was ; that the onward continuation of the present city wall in a straight line is an addition later than Roman ; and that the actual Roman rampart started at an angle westwards from this point of cessation,



and ran along (I to H), near the present Cathedral, to the spot which we have fixed upon for our Roman North Gate.

Having thus conjectured the eastern portion of the site of our North Wall, it remained to look for evidence of its further course westwards, or towards the river. The first clue that I obtained was from a study of the Saxon history of the city, which, for reasons which will appear when we arrive at that period, led me to believe that the southern boundary of the Archbishop's Palace and grounds (Plan III. 5) would very probably give us the northern boundary of the Roman city. On comparison, the line thus obtained (J) was found to correspond exactly: the Palace boundary starting directly westward from the tower, the supposed site of this North Gate, though with a turn southwards unexpectedly sudden. However that this is in good truth the actual line of Roman wall, soon became most singularly confirmed during the deep drainage works before mentioned; for at the very spot (K) where the same Palace boundary abuts at its other end upon Sun Street, there was found, continuing its line onwards across Sun Street, the lower part of an enormously massive wall of Roman masonry, with the usual string courses of brick; and the same wall (for the dimensions, the masonry, and the string courses were the same), was found again, continuing the same line, a few yards further on in Guildhall Street (L). All this may be seen in the plan of Mr. Pilbrow, the engineer who conducted these works, printed with his remarks on discoveries during the drainage, in the 43rd volume of the *Archæologia*.<sup>5</sup> The same excavations had already confirmed my view that the Roman north wall could not have lain so far north as our present wall, by disclosing several urn-interments in Palace Street, far within the present North Gate, but obviously outside the Roman city.

The discovery of this piece of unmistakeably Roman wall, from its width also unmistakeably City-wall, gives fresh point to the former question, whether we may not expect some future excavation into the earthen banks on the southern and eastern sides to reveal a Roman wall in this part also. Or can we suppose one side of the city to have been fortified with earthwork only, and the other with a wall of stone? Should this prove decisively to have been the case,

<sup>5</sup> P. 151.

it would not be difficult to account for the variation. On the land side a deep ditch would of course be necessary, and the earth thrown from it may well have made what was deemed a sufficient rampart. On the bank of the estuary a ditch would be unnecessary or even impossible, and a wall of stone may have been requisite where an earthen bank must have been constantly worn away by floods and high tides. But if this theory be correct, I confess it is the only instance that I know of a Roman rampart being of stone in one part and of earth in another.

Having thus obtained the line of the north Roman wall, we can see how the level of the ground itself must have pointed to this as the early boundary. Stand in Broad Street, and notice the sudden fall northwards as soon as the embanked portion of the wall is passed. Calculate the great difference of level between the north and south sides of the Cathedral. In digging the foundations of the new north-western tower about forty years ago, the skeletons were found of a man and an ox together, appearing to shew that just here (and it is just outside the line of Roman wall) lay at some early period the boundary point between *terra firma* and dangerous swamp.

Continuing the line of wall in a south-westerly direction from the spot ascertained in Guildhall Street, the next chance of lighting upon it occurs in High Street; and here, crossing the street at right angles opposite the Fleur-de-Lis Hotel, were discovered the foundations of an ancient gateway (M). Mr. J. B. Sheppard, whose house is close by, has preserved some of the stones. A few yards inwards from this were found the wall and return wall of a large Roman building (N), built also right across the present street. This gate was clearly later than a Roman gate, not only because one would not have been required at this spot, but because the large building which stood so close in front of its site would have completely blocked it; but it evidently marks the line of Roman wall through which it was cut: and, though the line thus indicated is farther from the present bank of the river at Eastbridge than we should naturally have expected, no doubt the stream was then wider on this side than in later days, and the wall approached the bank as nearly as was found advisable. No further trustworthy evidence southwards appears of

this line of wall : it obviously ran parallel to the river bank, and contained the gate before mentioned at Beer-cart Lane ; and so rounded at the southern end to Worth Gate, probably just including the site of St. Mildred's church.

We thus gain on the whole a pretty accurate estimate of the shape and extent of Durovernum. It must have been an irregular oval—a not unusual outline for Roman walls on low and swampy ground, where the firmer soil does not readily lend itself to a square or a rectangle. The walls of Verulamium are another example, as well as those of Anderida, still remaining so perfect at Pevensey. The city's length must have been nearly exactly double its breadth, namely, from Worth Gate to the Northern Gate (G to H) about 800 yards, and from Riding Gate to the gate at the ford (E to F) about 400 yards. Through this last-mentioned gate started the great London Road, crossing the water and ascending Harbledown Hill, up which its old channel is visible behind the present row of houses. From the Riding Gate—or Gate of the Roads—the three great harbour-ways of Antoninus spread out like a fan, through swampy ground for the first few hundred yards, as the soil testifies ; and a short way out on the Richborough Road, which ran by Ivy Lane, stood the little Christian church, rededicated later by a Frankish bishop to St. Martin, the saint of the Franks<sup>6</sup> (O). The Worth Gate gave access to the road, probably originally British, which ran southwards up the right bank of the river ; and into this it is likely that much of the traffic of the Stone Street from Lymne became diverted, when the city wall interrupted its straight line. The last gate, the northern one, must have been locally one of the most important ; it led to Fordwich and so over the water to Reculver ; but along its side for at least a mile out of the city, lay the principal cemetery of the citizens, the urns of which are found in large numbers whenever the soil on its left side is disturbed. Immediately outside this gate also, perhaps attracted thither by the cemetery itself, stood that Christian church (P) which we know on the authority of Bæda himself to have been restored from its Saxon ruin by Augustine, and re-consecrated as the Metropolitan Cathedral of England.

<sup>6</sup> The statement of Beda (lib. i. c. 26), that this was its Roman dedication, is probably an assumption only.

It remains only to notice the city's Roman name, "Durovernum," a Latin pronunciation of a Celtic word, of which the first syllable, "Dur," is without any doubt the British "Dwr"—"water." The remainder, "vern" or "wern," has had various shots made at its interpretation, and the name is construed by different guessers as "the swift water," "the water of marshes," and "the water of alders." Into this point we need not follow. When we have in the first place to guess at a Celtic sound by its Roman spelling, and then to translate such a conception of the British word of the first century by the light of the modern Welsh of the nineteenth, our data for interpretation appear by no means adequate. "Wernwater" would probably be the name of the reach, or the ford (for the river itself was most likely then, as now, the "Stour"—a name common in Celtic localities), and the fact that Romans took for their city the name of the water beside which it stood, seems to confirm our supposition that the spot itself had neither importance nor name until Romans built upon it.

History and the Romans left Britain together, and it may also be said that they returned together. Our two centuries previous to the arrival of Augustine are known by but the meagrest outline, and of local detail during these years we have nothing whatever; this is partly owing to the confusion of Saxon depredation and settlement, but mainly "carent quia vate sacro." Canterbury, so little noticed historically under the first Roman régime, springs at once into the foremost place under what may be termed, so far as literature is concerned, the Roman revival. But before we enter upon this period, it may still be worth while to attempt some consideration of what must have been the condition of our city during the intermediate years of confusion and barbarism.

On the flight of the Britons from Kent ("as men fly from fire" is the graphic description of the Chronicle<sup>7</sup>), and the Saxon occupation of the district, Durovernum must have been at once abandoned by the vanquished, as seems evident from its very situation. The main road, probably the only really available road, along Kent ran through the middle of the city, and it would be impossible to hold the long narrow little kingdom with the enemy thus sticking fast in the very

<sup>7</sup> Saxon Chronicle, ad an. 478.

passage, and causing nothing less than strangulation to its movements. It is well to remember this, for it has been sometimes urged, to account for the Saxon change of name, that the word "Cantwarabyrig" implied, not the metropolis of the new settlers, but the one remaining stronghold of the Cantii, the old Romano-British inhabitants. Deserted however as it was by Britons, it seems difficult on the other hand to avoid the conclusion that it was at first left unoccupied by Saxons also, and that after that sweeping destruction which accompanied the earlier stages of their invasion, the site lay for many a year uninhabited and desolate. The reasons which appear to point to this conclusion are as follows:—

1st. The very change of name, for it must have taken place at this time. The large and indestructible features of the country, as hills, rivers, and Roman fortresses, almost always retained their British names, and of the fortresses especially it is observable that here in East Kent no other of importance underwent any radical change of name—Reculver, Richborough, Dover, and Lymne still embodying the original words by which the Romans knew them, and their sites being obviously such as would be settled in at once by the sea-faring race which had acquired them. It seems reasonable to argue that our city's change of name came from no caprice, but from the actual loss of its name, and that it lay uninhabited till the word Durovernum had become forgotten in the re-settled neighbourhood.

2ndly. There can be no more certain indication of settlements of our pagan Saxon population than their numerous cemeteries which from time to time are discovered in the country, and are especially frequent in East Kent. Now I suppose that no part of the soil in this whole district has been more thoroughly and completely turned over than that which immediately surrounds Canterbury: what with building and planting,—road-making, drain-making and brick-making,—gravel-pits, sand-pits and chalk-pits,—scarcely an acre has not been dug to such depth as must have disclosed a Saxon cemetery of any magnitude. But nothing of the kind has ever been found, and one cannot help arguing that habitation must have returned to Canterbury no very long time before Christianity had introduced its simpler style of burial.

3rdly. The remains of the Roman city entirely corroborate



this view, the lower parts of the houses being found in a very well-preserved condition, and beautiful pavements, all unworn, occasionally coming to light, seeming to shew a period of almost Pompeian burial, neglect, and overgrowth, till the restorers of the city noticed nothing of the valuable materials below. Moreover not a single street is on the site of a Roman street, remains of buildings being under them all, with the exception of Beer-cart Lane and part of Watling Street, and even here (where must always have remained the great thoroughfare of England, whether through a city or not), its original straight line is so straggled from as to shew that at one period the property flanking the street was of no more value or consideration than the waste of a country roadside.

4thly. A fourth reason seems to lie in the new name itself—Cantwarabyrig, the City of the Men of Kent. It implies a date when the Jutish conquerors had come to know their exact position in England, viz., that the whole of Kent was theirs, and that nothing more was going to be theirs; they must definitely have acquired the name among themselves and their neighbours of "the Men of Kent." It implies a deliberate choice of a capital by such a settled people, and implies also its purpose as a capital from its own first foundation, and not a gradual growth from a smaller beginning, in which case it would have already acquired a smaller name; and Saxons did not change names for a fancy or give them for anything but practical use. All this points to the restoration of Canterbury at no very early date in the settlement of the Saxon kingdom of Kent.

It is worth while here to point out that the name itself is a very remarkable one, and suggests an independence of popular spirit almost smacking of democracy. The step must have been taken under the guidance of one of their kings, and the notion of head-quarters would involve that it should become his residence, as indeed we know it did; and all analogy of history would lead us to expect that, if such a name were required, it would be taken from the king rather than the people. Can a parallel case be produced of a capital so named by a people already settled in the district?

On this subject of the change of the city's name in Saxon hands, it is observable that, throughout Saxon history, writers

in Saxon invariably use the word "Cantwarabyrig," and also that their earlier writers in Latin use one of the forms of Durovernum. The Roman word was clearly a re-importation of the priests, who would arrive, as has been said, with Roman authorities in their hands, and who in their zeal for Latin made a point of thus translating the Saxon name in their charters and writings. It was not till later that any looser custom began to creep into charters of Latinizing the Saxon word into "urbs Cantuariæ." But a singular mention of the city, by what may be called a side wind, is found in the work commonly attributed to the British author Nennius<sup>8</sup>, among a list of cities boastfully claimed as British, but at his date nearly all in Saxon possession. He calls Canterbury "Caer-Ceint," and from this our historians have asserted that the Britons knew the city by this name; but the work is not earlier than the ninth century, and may more fitly be called Welsh than British, and "Caer-Ceint" is merely the Saxon word Celticized,—apparently shewing how entirely the name Durovernum had perished even from native memory, where not prompted by renewed intercourse with Roman authorities.

Conversely there occurs one Saxon mention of the city under a different name. Two copies of the Chronicle, in mentioning the foundation of the Bishopric of Rochester under the year 604, state that Rochester is twenty-four miles from "Dorwitceastre."<sup>9</sup> No supposition however can be gained from the passage that early Saxons had preserved anything resembling the British name, for the whole entry in the Chronicle is a translation from Bæda,<sup>1</sup> not earlier than the middle of the eighth century, long before which time its use of "Cantwarabyrig" is frequent and otherwise invariable. I am inclined to think that the one scribe who thus translated Bæda (for the two copies are only one in duplicate) was in fact ignorant of the very meaning of Bæda's word, Durovernum, and, taking it probably from "Durnovaria," rendered it as Dorchester.

In conjecturing the above late date for the foundation of the Saxon capital, one may point to the evidence of tardy settling down into the boundaries of Kent, implied in Ethelbert's hostile incursion westwards in the early part of his

<sup>8</sup> *Historia Britonum* ad fin.

<sup>9</sup> *Saxon Chronicle*, ad an. 604.

<sup>1</sup> *Hist. Eccl. lib. ii., cap. 3.*

reign, his defeat by Ceawlin at Wimbledon, and the emphatic expression of the Chronicle that he was "driven back into Kent."<sup>2</sup> If this repulse definitely checked his ambition and confined his kingdom into exactly what has ever since been called Kent, one can understand that the choice of Canterbury as an abiding capital might well be the result. It will appear also, as we proceed to consider the structure of the Saxon city, that part of it at least must have been of recent foundation at the arrival of Augustine.

Many modern historians speak poetically of Canterbury as the "Capital of Hengist :"—there is no foundation whatever for this statement. It may possibly have arisen from the words of Henry of Huntingdon, "exinde regnavit Hengist et Esc filius suus in Cantuaria."<sup>3</sup> But the author is here, as mostly elsewhere, using the word "Cantuaria" to mean Kent, as a Latinized form of the Saxon "Cantwara." When he comes to speak more particularly of Canterbury, he calls it Dorobernia, like the other Latinists.

Where then were the head-quarters of the Saxons of Kent during the reigns of their four earliest kings? Looking to names and remains, it does not seem difficult to form a guess. All probabilities would point us to Richborough, the very fittest of centres for a race of sailors and pirates; and when we find its great suburb, Ash, bearing the name of the second king of Kent, and also containing the largest and richest Pagan Saxon cemetery ever discovered (as witness, among others, the collections of Bryan Faussett,<sup>4</sup> Mr. Rolfe, and Mr. Gibbs),—we cannot help acknowledging the great likelihood that here was the first capital, or quasi-capital, of our Jutish ancestors. If more were required, Faversham has another such cemetery on a large scale, which bears the significant name of the King's Field. And for a smaller centre, evidently a royal residence in Pagan days, we may take Kingston under Barham Downs, where has been found a very rich cemetery,<sup>5</sup> containing that wonderful brooch of Bryan Faussett's, now at Liverpool, which must surely have been buried with a queen.

It will be seen that in suggesting this late restoration to Canterbury very much is conjecture only, but conjecture, it is hoped, not without foundation in reason and probability; and

<sup>2</sup> Sax. Chron. ad an. 568.

<sup>3</sup> Hist. Lib. 2.

<sup>4</sup> Inventorium Sepulchrale, p. 1 *et seq.*

<sup>5</sup> Inv. Sepulch., p. 35 *et seq.*

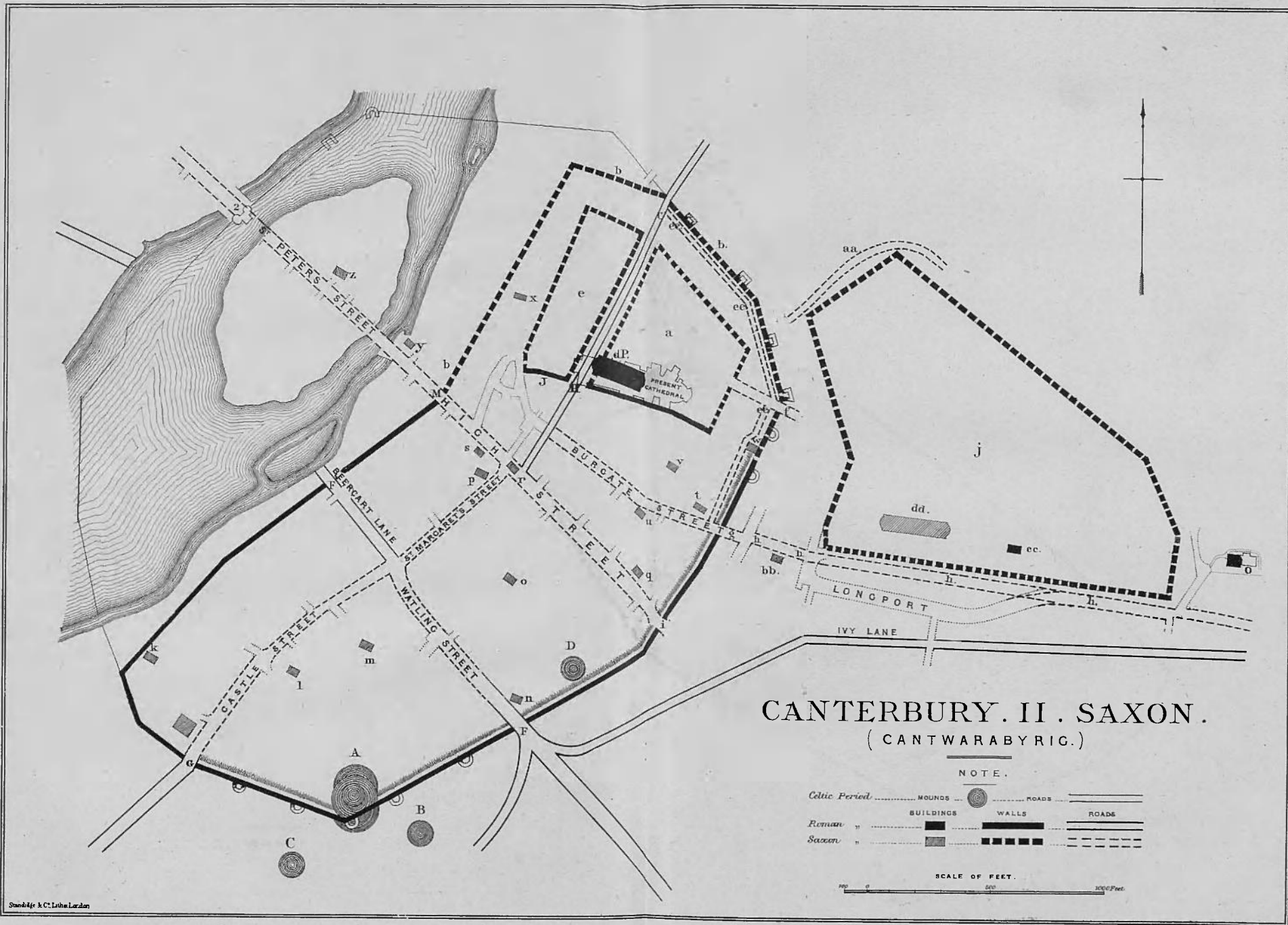
it is to conjecture that we must turn when history deserts us altogether.

The curtain rises again then upon Canterbury established as the royal capital of Ethelbert. We know where his Palace stood, for he gave it to Augustine, and the monastery of Christ Church rose on the site. Doubt has been thrown upon this surrender of the Palace, as not mentioned by Bæda, the earliest historian of these events; but Bæda's Canterbury narrative is deficient in local colouring—as we may well expect from a Northumbrian, who, giving as his Canterbury authority Albinus, Abbot of St. Augustine's, tells us that he did not learn even directly from him, but at second hand through his messenger Nothelm.<sup>6</sup> The authority is good and trustworthy, but naturally not copious in matters of site and local detail. For Ethelbert's surrender of his Palace to Augustine our authority is the "Vita Augustini,"<sup>7</sup> a work, by clear internal evidence, of the last quarter of the eighth century, as Bæda's was of the first quarter, and which, citing Bæda, cites also other authorities, to which, it says, Bæda had no access. The Palace (a) then and its surroundings were, as we learn, inside the walls, evidently added by Saxons to the north end of the Roman city; the circuit of wall had been extended to include it, the new part (b.b.b.) being unaccompanied, as we have seen, by the earthen bank which distinguishes the Roman wall; and the Roman Gate must have been pushed outwards, not exactly to the present North Gate, which is a later site, but to a spot (c) some yards to its east in the present wall, opposite to which signs of the Roman road were discovered during the recent drainage works, crossing Broad Street northwards.

Some 250 yards of outer road had thus become enclosed as City Street (H to c), and along its eastern side stood the Palace and grounds of Ethelbert (a), with the ruined Roman church (d) in one corner. On the western side of the street lay a space (e), corresponding but narrower, and it was this space, as will appear, that the King was able to make over in the first instance as a home for Augustine and his companions. That it should have been thus empty for the new comers goes not a little to show that the Saxon part of the

<sup>6</sup> Bædæ, *Hist. Eccl. Prolog.* § 2.

<sup>7</sup> *Patrologia*, vol. 150. Col. 752 B.





city, at least, must have then been of very recent foundation. It was named "Staplegate," but is, in the Latin of the Chroniclers, spelt "Stable-gate"<sup>8</sup>—an impossible Saxon name, "stable" being a Latin word. "There were they stabled," is their cant phrase, and it would seem that the habit of distorting Saxon names into Latin epigrams, with which Gregory may be almost said to have inaugurated the English Church, had descended loyally to its members. Staplegate is the invariable mediæval spelling, and was the name, no doubt, of the new Saxon gate adjacent (c)—called, most probably, in its turn from the "Staple," or market, outside it, the "maceria quæ in aquilonali parte civitatis muro adjacet," which is mentioned in a charter of the year 762.<sup>9</sup>

One of the most interesting points connected with the Royal residence on this spot lies in the name of the little gate in the new piece of wall to the eastward—Queenin-gate (f), first mentioned in the same charter of 762. The tradition which derives gate and name from Queen Bertha, seems at first sight almost too pretty and pat for belief; but when we remember that from her reign this certainly ceased to be a residence of Queens,—that we have been reviewing good reasons for supposing that it did not become so until her reign,—and that the little gate, the site of which is near the postern of the Dean and Chapter, lay on her direct route from her home to her daily devotions at St. Martin's, especially guaranteed to her by the King,—the difficulty really is to refuse our belief. Whatever amount of the city we owe to Ethelbert, it seems as if we certainly owe one gate to Bertha.

We thus gain a very accurate idea of the shape and size of Saxon Canterbury—the Roman town elongated. Other alterations of this period may be detailed: the opening of the Bur-Gate (g), now necessary from the lengthened shape, and the new piece of road (h.h.) diverting into it from St. Martin's Hill the Roman road from Richborough, the straight course of which was by Ivy Lane. This was, no doubt, the principal road into Canterbury, and required access to what had now become the principal end of the town, as seems hinted in the very name of the gate, "Bur-gate," the chief gate of the borough. Another great

<sup>8</sup> Thorn, Chron. cap. i. § 3.

<sup>9</sup> Kemble, Cod. Dip. 109 appx.

change was probably occasioned by altered level in the river bottom, giving a better ford on the route still in use down High Street, than that on the Roman Watling Street. The new western gate (M), already noticed, was then made in the Roman wall, where it crosses High Street; and a second to correspond to it eastward (i), and give a direct street through the city. The latter was Newingate, or St. George's Gate, the former was named Andrewsgate; and the coincidence of the two being named from adjoining churches—which is also the case with Burgate, occasionally called St. Michael's Gate—seems to connect all three with the date of early church-building. That this western gate was called Andrewsgate is gathered from the name being often added to buildings in the street approaching it—as St. Mary Bredman's Church, called St. Mary Andrewsgate,<sup>1</sup> the Chequer Inn, &c.

To add to the picture of the Saxon town, we may mention the market places lying outside every gate but the two river gates. The "Staple," outside Staple Gate, we have already noticed, and the same charter conveys a house, "quæ jam ad Quenegatum in *foro* posita est;"<sup>2</sup> showing a market of some sort at Queningate also. From charters and other notices we gather that the "Ritherchepe,"<sup>3</sup> or cattle market, lay between the Dover and Richborough roads, that is, outside Ridingate, Newingate, and nearly to Burgate; so that the cattle market of the present day has been merely tossed over the road from its old site into the city ditch. Lastly, outside the Worthgate was the wine market, or "Winchepe," the name of which lasts to the present day.

These seem to have been the principal secular changes in the Saxon city; those which Christianity brought with it are as distinctly traceable. First, the restoration of the Roman Church (P & d), then standing no longer outside but inside the walls, and the conversion of the Palace (a) into the monastery. Secondly, the acquisition by the monks of a large piece of land outside Queningate, for building a second monastery (j)—St. Peter's and St. Paul's, afterwards St. Augustine's—intended principally as a burying place for kings and great men. The boundaries of this donation, and also of a second and larger one including it, we gain from

<sup>1</sup> Battely's Somner, p. 164.

<sup>2</sup> Cod. Dip. 109.

<sup>3</sup> Cod. Dip. 3, 1098.

two charters<sup>4</sup>—forgeries, but certainly Saxon forgeries, of each of which it may be said that “se non e vero, e ben trovato;” and which give us an interesting notice or two incidentally. Thus the north-western boundary of the abbey is “Druting Strete (aa),” a name curious to trace through mediæval documents, gradually evolving itself into our present “Old Ruttington Lane”—perhaps the only street in England known to have kept its name for nearly 1300 years. The southern boundary in the same charter is “Via de Burgate,”—“the way out of Burgate,”—and was the little piece of road just noticed (h.h.), by which Burgate had been connected with the main Richborough Road. The number and situation of the Saxon churches too are interesting to study, especially as shewing how population must have gathered most thickly at the Royal, or later the ecclesiastical, end of the town. If we take first the Roman part of the town only, bisected equally by Watling Street, we get in its southern half three churches and no more—those of St. Mildred (k), St. Mary de Castro (l), and St. John the Poor<sup>5</sup> (m)—the two latter now long destroyed. On the Watling Street itself stood St. Edmund’s Church<sup>5</sup> (n), clearly, however, by its dedication not earlier than the ninth or tenth century. But in the northern half were no fewer than eight churches, St. Mary Bredin (o), St. Margaret (p), St. George (q), St. Andrew (r), St. Mary Andrewsgate or Breadman (s), St. Michael Burgate (t), St. Mary Magdalene (u), and the Church of the Four Martyrs (v);<sup>5</sup> while further north, in the new Saxon part, stood, besides the great Christ Church itself, St. Mary Queningate (w), and, though much later, St. Elphege (x). The churches outside the town tell the same tale. On the westward road, then raising itself from the swamps of the ford, were All Saints (y), St. Peter’s (z), and later, St. Dunstan’s. On the “Via de Burgate” rose St. Paul’s (bb), and St. Pancras’ (cc), (the latter on the site of some Roman building), in addition to St. Martin’s (O), and the great church of St. Augustine (dd). But no external church whatever stood near the southern part of the city. The number of churches probably followed the density of the population.

Of the church of the Four Martyrs we hear only from

<sup>4</sup> Cod. Dip. 2. 3.

<sup>5</sup> The exact sites of these Churches are unknown.

Bæda<sup>6</sup> in his story of a great fire in the city about the year 620, driving from the south nearly to the monastery, but stopped at this church by the prayers of Archbishop Mellitus. It was probably destroyed as the cathedral church-yard advanced to the south and swallowed it. Of another lost church, St. Mary Queningate, the site never seems to have been clearly made out; but an early charter gives it plainly,<sup>7</sup> conveying a house bounded east by the city wall, south by Queningate Church, west and north by Queningate Lane; the implied bend at this point in Queningate Lane (ee—ee), which was the street lying under the wall, fixing the spot where the cessation of the bank inside the wall necessitated such a bend in the street. The church must have stood with its east end against the wall, exactly at this cessation of the bank, and those who will visit the spot, which is in the bowling-green of the Dean and Chapter, will see its site—an otherwise unmeaning interval between the end of the bank and the beginning of its substitute, the stone walk formed on the wall itself. Historians have been unable to identify “*ecclesia in honore beatae Mariæ in occidentali parte civitatis*,” mentioned in a charter of Cenwulf of the year 804.<sup>8</sup> This is clearly St. Mary Breadman (S), now in the centre of the city owing to the extension of the wall, but then so near its western gate as to be called St. Mary Andrewsgate.

Such was the Saxon city.

The period immediately succeeding the Conquest produced considerable changes in Canterbury: first, the extension of the walls westwards, to include that part of the city called the Island; second, the erection of the castle; third, the buildings of Lanfranc connected with the cathedral.

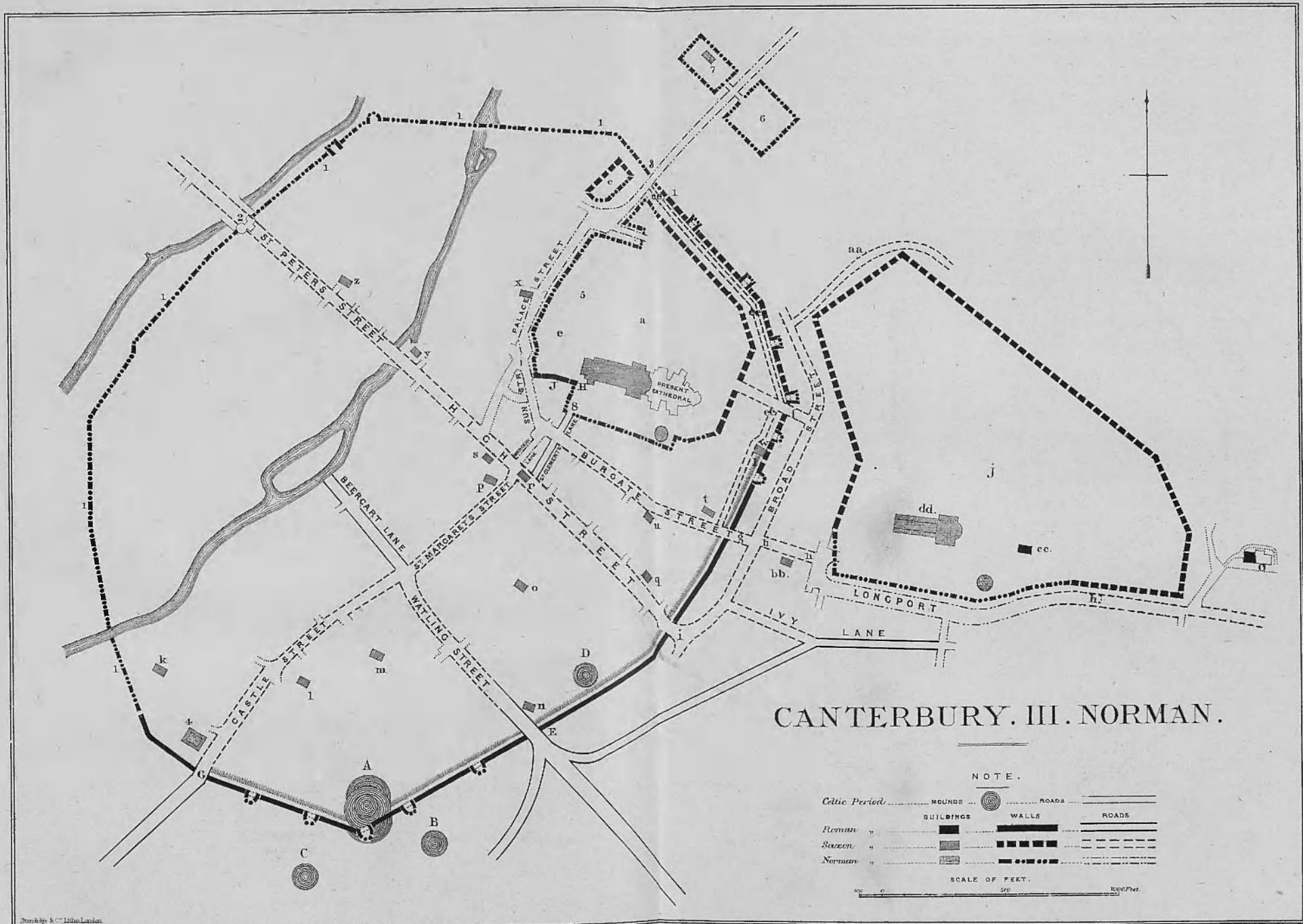
That the large new piece of city which stands in the old bed of the river, and its enclosing wall (1. 1. 1.) through which opens Westgate (2), were added at this time there seems no reason to doubt. We never hear of Westgate till after the Conquest, the Archbishop’s manor of that name being up to Domesday itself called the manor of “*Estursete* ;”<sup>9</sup> St. Mary Breadman Church was, as we have

<sup>6</sup> Hist. Eccl., lib. ii., cap. 7.

<sup>7</sup> See Battely’s Somner, p. 17.

<sup>8</sup> Cod. Dip. 188.

<sup>9</sup> MS. Domesday, Chenth, fol. 3, dors. col. 1, ad fin.





seen, St. Mary's in the west of the city; the original gates of Northgate (3) and Westgate seem clearly to have been contemporary works, from their similarity of name and from the churches built over both gateways; and the present site of Northgate is of Lanfranc's date, as will be presently seen. The dedication—Holy Cross—of that over Westgate suggests a possibility that this extension westwards was begun by King Harold during his short reign, as part of that defence of southern England to which he was applying himself,—Holy Cross being the name of his own Abbey at Waltham, and the battle-cry of himself and his men at Hastings. Domesday mentions the rent of eleven burgesses lost "in fossato civitatis"<sup>1</sup> since the time of King Edward, pointing to an addition to the fortifications at this time, in all probability this increase of the city.

As to the castle (4), it would seem that on its site some fortification had existed in pre-Norman days, the property of the Abbey of St. Augustine, no doubt necessary as a retreat within the walls during Danish invasions. Domesday tells us that the king had given the Abbot the holdings of fourteen burgesses, "pro escambio Castelli,"<sup>2</sup> in exchange for the castle,—seeming to imply one already existing. That which William erected still remains; it is one of Gundulf's, and was probably one of his finest.

But perhaps the most interesting changes of this date are those made by the great Lanfranc,—great in building as in learning,—in and around his cathedral and monastery. We know from the monk Eadmer<sup>3</sup> that he began by eradicating the very foundations of all that pre-existed. He set to work again on his own plan for his own Benedictines—a plan which involved his own residence apart from the monks, unlike previous Archbishops. He divided his home from theirs, and his manors from theirs, and created those two separate establishments which have lasted to our days. It is to his own house or palace (5), still partly remaining at the west end of the cathedral, that I wish to draw attention. On what ground did he build it, and how acquired? We have already seen that the west end of the monastic premises was bounded by the main street leading

<sup>1</sup> MS. Domesday, Chenth, fol. 2, column 1, l. 7.

1, l. 4.

<sup>2</sup> MS. Domesday, Chenth, fol. 2, column i. p. 188.

<sup>3</sup> Eadm. Vit. S. Bregwin, Ang. Sac. t.

to the Staple Gate (c) : Lanfranc must have built then on the other or western side of this street ; and how he came by the land we gather most distinctly from Domesday, which, in noticing the Archbishop's manor of Estursete just mentioned,<sup>4</sup> tells us that it had held 52 "mansuræ" inside the city, but had then only 25, the rest having been destroyed "in nova hospitacione archiepiscopi,"—"in new-housing the Archbishop." Now, the only part of the city which has ever belonged to the manor of Estursete, (or Westgate,) is Staplegate ; what remains of the borough of Staplegate still belongs to it ; and this notice in Domesday is most valuable, not only as shewing on what ground Lanfranc built his palace, but as setting before us clearly the original size of that land of Staplegate (e), which was the first Canterbury home of Augustine and his companions.

Lanfranc then it must have been, all powerful with his Norman influence, who diverted the old straight way (H to e) to its present winding course along Palace Street : probably giving the citizens a strip on its west for the accommodation, but turning the street as far away from the cathedral as he could, to obtain the larger premises for himself. It must have been at this time too, falling in with the extension of the city walls, that the Staple Gate (c) itself was removed from the line of the Roman street thus destroyed to its late site, as North Gate, on Lanfranc's new line of road ; the outer continuation of which he further inaugurated by his Priory of St. Gregory (6) on one side, and his Hospital of St. John (7), still remaining on the other.

Having thus thrown the Priory of Christ Church and a great part of Staplegate within, as we may say, one ring-fence, Lanfranc was able to extend the nave of his church considerably westward, occupying with it the width of the old street, and probably more ground still on its further side. The old line of street we know well, for he must have built his priory gateway (8) across it, when he stopped it up ; and its old exit across Broad Street I have already mentioned. The Abbey of St. Augustine's seems to have caught the idea, and to have enlarged its church-yard at this time by a similar diversion of the Burgate Road (h. h.) into Longport.

The site of this old priory gateway we also know from

<sup>4</sup> MS. Domesday, Chenth, fol. 3, in dors. col. 1, ad fin.

that marvellous twelfth-century drawing of the monastery, now in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge,<sup>5</sup> which looks from so many different points of view, and is neither a picture, nor a plan, nor what is commonly called a bird's-eye-view—though when we remember that a bird takes his eye-view in constant motion on the wing, perhaps this term is more applicable here than usually elsewhere. It is also marked in a map given by Battely,<sup>6</sup> and stood opposite St. Clement's Lane, the old Roman road through Canterbury. St. Clement's Lane emerged into the High Street, at the east end of old St. Andrew's Church (r), thus identifying St. Andrew with the western half of the town, as we know from his name given to the western gate.

It will be noticed that the old bird's-eye-view places the priory gate some little distance from the south side of the cathedral, shewing the monks, by Lanfranc's time, to have enlarged their boundaries southward beyond the line of Roman wall (I to H), which must have been the boundary of Ethelbert's donation; and we know from the charters and registers of the priory that this they were constantly and gradually doing all through the middle ages,—no doubt to increase their cemetery, and beginning from the date when Archbishop Cuthbert permitted intramural interment. Now no such cause ever existed for a corresponding southward extension of the Archbishop's palace: so long as it belonged to the monks the street divided it from their church, and when it came to the Archbishop he had no such reason to enlarge his premises, and no death-bed benefactors to enlarge them for him. In this direction indeed the monks stepped in later and overlapped the Archbishop's land, as it is to this day. It was hence that I first conjectured that the Archbishop's present southern boundary, being still that of Lanfranc, that is, still the boundary of the ground of Staplegate, would be still also the site of the Roman wall (J)—a conjecture which, as has been explained, fitted so entirely to other evidences on either side, as to form a fresh link in what I submit to be the clear proof that here ran the veritable line of Roman wall—a boundary inherited from the second century.

But with Lanfranc and Domesday I must take leave of

<sup>5</sup> See Prof. Willis's facsimile, in *Archæol. Cantiana*, vol. vii. p. 196.

<sup>6</sup> Battely's *Hist.* p. 87.

my subject, full of interest as would be its further continuation.

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REFERENCES TO THE PLANS.

I. ROMAN.

- A.—Dane-John or Donjon Mound.
- B.—Second mound still existing.
- C. D.—Mounds now destroyed.
- E.—Riding-gate.
- F.—Gate at Beer-cart Lane.
- G.—Worth-gate.
- H.—Roman North-gate.
- I.—Cessation of line of embankment.
- J.—Line of Roman wall, as shewn by the Archbishop's Palace wall.
- K.—Roman wall found in Sun Street.
- L.—Roman wall found in Guildhall Street.
- M.—Line of Roman wall shewn by Saxon gate in High Street.
- N.—Roman building in High Street.
- O.—Church, afterwards St. Martin's.
- P.—Church, afterwards the Cathedral.
- Q. Q.—Known remains of Roman buildings.

II. SAXON.

- a.—Ethelbert's Palace, given to St. Augustine.
- b. b.—Extended line of City wall.
- c.—The Saxon Staple gate.
- d.—Roman Church, near Ethelbert's palace.
- e.—Land known as Staplegate.
- f.—Queningate.
- g.—Burgate.
- h. h.—New road to St. Martin's hill.
- i.—St. George's gate.
- j.—St. Augustine's Abbey.
- k.—Church of St. Mildred.
- l.—Church of St. Mary de Castro.
- m.—Church of St. John the Poor.
- n.—Church of St. Edmund.
- o.—Church of St. Mary Bredin.
- p.—Church of St. Margaret.
- q.—Church of St. George.
- r.—Church of St. Andrew.
- s.—Church of St. Mary Andrewsgate.
- t.—Church of St. Michael.
- u.—Church of St. Mary Magdalene.
- v.—Church of The Four Martyrs.
- w.—Church of St. Mary Queningate.
- x.—Church of St. Elphege.

- y.—Church of All Saints.
- z.—Church of St. Peter.
- aa.—Droutingstrete
- bb.—Church of St. Paul.
- cc.—Church of St. Pancras.
- dd.—Church of St. Augustine.
- ee. ee.—Queningate Lane.

## III. NORMAN.

- 1.1.1.—Extended line of wall.
- 2.—Westgate.
- 3.—Northgate.
- 4.—The Castle.
- 5.—Archbishop's Palace
- 6.—Priory of St. Gregory.
- 7.—Hospital of St. John.
- 8.—Christ Church Priory Gateway.