

HAVERHILL.

OBJECTS of antiquity are somewhat rare in Haverhill, and the historical records existing respecting what have been, are few, and scattered over a long period of time. The geographical position of the locality, however, undeniably proves that this town was formerly of much greater importance than at present, being placed on the boundary line between the two heptarchical kingdoms of East Anglia (including Suffolk, Norfolk, Ely, and Cambridgeshire); and the East Saxons (including Essex, Hertfordshire, and Middlesex, &c.). This fact may probably account for the high ground near the town, called Haverhill Castle, the opposing fortress at that time being in all likelihood somewhere about Sturmer. These fortified positions being little more than raised earthen mounds, surrounded by a foss of a circular or oval form, like some now to be found in the north of England, in a good state of preservation, as Bucton and Melandra Castles. Grave doubts, however, may be reasonably entertained whether Haverhill Castle existed as such earlier than the Roman era in Britain. It is well known that many lines of Roman road have hitherto been but imperfectly traced, although the position of some known and important stations at a considerable distance from each other, fully warrant the supposition of nearly direct lines or roads from the one to the other. In many cases when the line has failed to show itself, occasional discoveries are made on, or near the line indicated, which when carefully compared with each other, leave little doubt as to the fact of the main line itself. Thus, for instance, in the excellent map published in 1848, by the government. Of the Roman roads proved and others supposed from the situation of stations and occasional discoveries, many places now of little importance, and where no remains have been found, must at one time have exhibited proofs of Roman energy and determination.

Confining myself then to this particular locality, a Roman line of road extended from Camboricum (Cambridge) to Camulodunum (Colchester), and then in an easterly direction to Harwich. A small portion only of this line has been exposed in the direction from Cambridge to Colchester, by the river Stour, but occasional discoveries have been made on the route that fully confirm the views as to the main line. Thus we have remains found at Great Wrattling, amphoræ, patera, urns, coins, and pottery, showing in all probability the site of a Roman villa, not quite on, but very near the line of road indicated. Then in the year 1758 was found a large hermetically sealed glass urn, containing a considerable number of bones, with a lachrymatory at Osterfield, now called Nosterfield End, a short distance from Haverhill, still not on, but a little distance from the main line, and probably a Roman burial place, said to be the resting place of the remains of Scapula Ostorius, at one time the Roman governor of Britain, who died A.D. 55. As far as I can learn, in neither of these places was there found any warlike instruments.

Then, on coming to Haverhill, near the town, in a supposed burial ground, are found urns, pateræ, and *spear heads*, in the year 1757. Again, on land belonging to Haverhill Place, 4 rods from "Pentlow Hock," was discovered in 1788, four large gold pieces, and imbedded in clay forty to fifty more, all Roman, the least of which weighed about one hundred grains, which were sold to an individual in this town for forty-three guineas. Some of the coins were dished, that is concave on one side, and convex on the other, like the Boadicean coins. We have then the fortified high ground called the Castle, now merely a farm, but on the exact position of the supposed line of Roman road, and shewing no proofs of the almost indestructible buildings of the Normans of later days; but indistinct earthen mounds of an oval or circular form with a foss. I may here remark that the usual form of Roman encampment was angular,

and mostly quadrangular, but I imagine in crossing our country in various directions, if a British or Saxon fortification came in contact with their line, and the place was suitable for a station, they had no hesitation in adapting the form of the previous fortification. Thus in some instances the Roman encampments are oval or round.

But to proceed south east, at Sturmer, Roman tiles are found in and about the church, and at a short distance from it, a raised mound, evidently a place of defence, though its other warlike characteristics, foss, &c., are obliterated. Proceeding onward in the same direction, we arrive at Watsoe Bridge, crossing the Stour, and where the best authorized map places a castle occupying the position of the great road. From thence to Ridgwell, where numerous proofs of Roman occupation have been discovered; from this to Camulodunum (or Colchester) is a direct line. Thus I believe we have advanced enough to enable us to form a conclusive opinion of the great line of road from Camboricum to Camulodunum and to prove that Haverhill Castle was evidently a Roman station or fortification of some magnitude, and in all probability was a place of defence at even an earlier period by the British or Saxons, and might be adopted by the Romans from the convenience of its position, and coming in contact with the line of their operations. It is also equally probable near so important a station that a Roman Commander's villa might be at Great Wratting, and a cemetery or burial place at Nosterfield, at a little greater distance from the station for sanitary reasons, of which the Romans were far from ignorant. Haverhill Castle might have been long disused when the Romans began their occupation of it, as the East Angles and East Saxons for some time before that had been merged in the one kingdom, and of course rendering the fortification useless.

Another proof of the former importance of this town is founded on the fact that two if not three churches were here at one time. When they were destroyed, or how, there is no record to show; but in 1665 a very extensive fire destroyed part of the present church, and

a large portion of the town,* and to this lamentable catastrophe we may date our inability at this time to show this meeting many of the antient features of the town, and it may have also helped to obliterate one of the churches of which we can only point out their position.† There is also a farm on the common called Chapel farm, and a place near it called the Mount, where, I believe, proofs have been shown that it was a burial place. Then again, it has been asserted, but I know not on what authority, that Haverhill was a part only of Sturmer parish (when the division took place, it is difficult to say), but, referring back to 1392, we find that the church revenues of Haverhill were given by Osbert de Baliol to Castle Acre Priory, in Norfolk, and as there is no mention made of Sturmer in that gift, we may reasonably suppose that the division took place at that period. One of the churches was called *Le Nether Kirke*—the present church. Placing all these points within our contemplation, I think it very evident that Haverhill at one time must have been of considerable importance, if not greater than at present, although most of our topographical writers, Camden, Leland, Hearne, Sams, &c., help us to no decisive information on the subject.

* In 1857, in digging the foundation of the Court-room, at a depth of about twelve feet, were found two small brick ovens, connected by a brick flue or drain. The ovens were eighteen inches in diameter, and six or seven feet apart; they were much burnt. Mr. Boreham, the proprietor, left these in their places, under the wall which divides the office from the Corn Exchange.

† In November, 1854, when digging a gateway in "Bove Town," or "Button End" Church Yard, next the cottage, many bones were found; one skeleton, of a man, was carefully uncovered. There were no remains of a coffin, but large flint stones were near the skull. In 1855, Mr. W. W. Boreham excavated the foundations of the old church, which were of the ordinary flint rubble work, about four and a half feet thick. The north wall was thirty-eight feet long: the east end, twenty feet inside, was circular. He had the whole

of the interior of this end carefully examined. Several skeletons were found, with their heads west, and in some cases bodies had been placed one above the other. Two of the top ones only, showed indications of coffins. In one instance the bottom of the grave had been plastered. On the south side, just where the circle ended, the foundation appeared thicker than usual, and in the middle of this wall, was found a skeleton in a sitting position, face looking east. The bottom of this grave was well plastered. Part of the south was and is still undisturbed. A Roman bronze summer ring was found, with some Roman and Monkish tiles, and fragments of coloured glass. This chapel existed as early as 15 Richard the Second, and belonged to Castle Acre Priory, Norfolk. Mention is also made in old rolls of "Alderton Chapel," which held lands. The chapel of Alderton is called "Lucrabilis." "Alderton street" is also spoken of.

I would now venture a few brief remarks in reference to the church, which is in the Early English, or rather Decorated style,* and appears to be the remains of a once very handsome structure. And on turning to the Visitation of William Dowsing, in 1643, under warrant of the Earl of Manchester, to destroy all the superstitious ornaments of churches; the extent to which it was carried out in this church leaves no doubt whatever, that it was very richly embellished within and without. The report is as follows:—*“Haverhill, Jan. 6, 1643. We brake down about 100 superstitious pictures, and seven fryars hugging a Nunn; and a picture of God and Christ; and diverse others very superstitious: and 200 had been broke down before I came. We took away two popish inscriptions with Ora pro nobis, and we beat down a great stoneing (?) cross on the top of the Church.”* There is now but little left to prove its former grandeur. On the top of the steeple are three figures that are worth observing. Something similar is to be found on Magdalen College, Oxford, and which are supposed by Mr. Reeks to refer to the moral lessons taught by the instructors and observances required by the good student within its walls. But I doubt if the figures here have any such explanation. I believe there were originally four,† and have reference to some passage in the Apocalypse, or the emblems of the

* The church of Haverhill, dedicated to St. Mary, according to Mr. Rickman, consists of “chancel, with south aisle; nave, with aisles; south porch and west tower. The lower part of tower, the piers of two western bays, and the eastern responds of the nave, are D., but the upper part of the tower and the rest of the building is P.; the arches and piers of this latter part have the mouldings (which are very plain) continuous, without capitals; the south porch is good; the windows have flowing tracery, under four-centred arches; the south aisle has a battlemented parapet and pinnacles; on south side is an octagonal projection for the rood-stairs; in the vestry, which is modern, is an old chest, with the linen pattern on the panels. The font is P., much mutilated and modernized; the windows have good tracery, and con-

tain portions of stained glass.”—*Parker’s Churches of Suffolk*, No. 406.

The church is now [1867] being restored. One of the partly blocked up windows was found to have been filled up with sculptured stone, apparently taken from some former building. There were several heads, niches, &c., in good preservation. On the east of the porch, and also on that side of the north door, were found niches and basins for holy water. These had been carefully built up and concealed.

† The fourth, the lion, was probably removed when the stair turret was built. This turret was taken down and re-built in 1851. Some of the materials of the old turret had been used before; remains of sculptured stones being found, some of them coloured.

four Evangelists,—1, a Lion; 2, Calf; 3, having a Man's face; 4, flying Eagle. The steeple contains five bells. Tenor G, c. 13 cwt.

- 1, 2, 3. John Darbie made me 1669, 1683, 1662.
4. Joseph Eayre, St. Neots fecit 1765. John Godfrey and Abel Bull, Churchwardens.
5. Thomas Newman, of Norwich, made me 1729. W. Wilshire and S. Bridge, Churchwardens.

The interior of the church presents little worth notice, except the quaint tablet in the chancel to the memory of John Warde. On this tablet is the following inscription:—

Quo	siquis	scivit	scituis
Aut	siquis	docuit	doctuis
At	rarus	vixit	sanctius
Et	nullus	tonuit	fortius*

Son of thunder, son of the Dove,
Full of hot zeal, full of true love,
In preaching truth, in living right,
A burning lamp, a shining light.

John Warde, after he with great evidence and power of the Spirit, and with much fruit preached the gospel at Haverhill, and Bury, in Suffolk, 25 years, was here gathered to his fathers. Susan, his widow, married Richard Rogers, that worthy pastor of Wethersfield; he left 3 sons,† Samuel, Nathan^l John, preachers, who for them and theirs wish no greater blessing than that they may continue in believing and preaching the same gospel, till the coming of Christ. Come Lord Jesus, come quickly.

Death is our entrance into life.

Watch

Warde.

There is also on a scutcheon in the chancel:—

Deo gloria.

Near this place are the remains of Mr. Thomas Hungate, son of

* Which has been thus translated by Mr. Brainsford:—

"What matters it if anyone has more knowledge,
Or if anyone has taught more learnedly,
He a man seldom found however lived more holily,
And no one thundered more courageously."

† Of these three sons, Samuel, the eldest, was born at Haverhill, and became town preacher of Ipswich, in 1604; but was silenced by an order from the Star Chamber. He has a place among Fuller's "Worthies." Nathaniel, who will be long

remembered as "the Simple Cobler of Agawam," was also born at Haverhill, and bred a lawyer, but became a preacher of the gospel, and died at Shenfield, near Brentwood, in 1653, in his 83rd year.

William, son of Ralphe, son of William, son of Robert, son of William and Alice, daughter of Sir Thos. Gower, of Stitenham, in the county of York, Kt. : he died May, 21, 1729, aged 33, and left issue by Mary his wife, daughter of Mr. Thomas Webb, William, Thomas, and John, all living ; she died February 6th, 1722, and now liveth in hope of the resurrection of the just.

The font is a very poor specimen of the Decorated style. And I may here remark that I have a collection of about 600 sketches and descriptions of early church fonts, from almost every county in England, and it has struck me as remarkable, that whilst the adjoining county of Norfolk is rich in numerous specimens of Early Norman fonts, in a very excellent state of preservation, yet, in this county, I know only of Palgrave and Ipswich, unless the mutilated specimen found at the mouth of the Orwell, may be considered as one, which is probable. The next style in point of time, the Early English, is still scarcer, as I cannot refer to one. Of the Decorated style there are a few good examples, as Sudbury, Wortham, &c. Of the latest historical style, or Perpendicular, there are many, as Blythborough, Clare, Snape, Letheringham, Melton, Otford, Worlingworth, Stoke by Nayland, Wiston, &c. The stained glass is very much mutilated.

I will now, if not trespassing too much on your time, devote a few moments to the families of distinction connected with this place. One of the earliest on record, is that of William de Haverhyll, who was Treasurer to King Henry III, and whose arms are in the west oriel of Lincoln's Inn. In 1281, Henry de Helin, or Helion, held this manor. Perhaps this fact connects itself with the Helions of Bumstead. In 1399, Osbert de Baliol bestowed the church revenues on the Priory of Castle Acre, in Norfolk. In 1403, Lord Stafford held the manor. In 1450, Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, held it. In 1464, Henry Turnor and his two wives, Margt. and Joan, are noticed as buried here. From this family sprung Sir Christopher Turnor, one of the Barons of Exchequer, and his son Sir Edward Turnor, equally eminent in law. In 1483, Henry Lord Grey held this manor with Hersham, or Horsham Hall.

In 1538, Thomas Lord Cromwell, the companion and confidante of Cardinal Wolsey, was Rector, or held the advowson of Haverhill. In 1734, the advowson was the property of George Coldham, Esq., who married into the family of the Howlands, and the daughter of these married the sixth Baronet, Sir George W. Beaumont, whose family hold the patronage at the present time. There are, also, a few individuals of note in other respects. For instance, Thomas Cobbe, butcher, a native of this town, suffered martyrdom by fire, at Thetford, in 1555, for his religious opinions. In 1577, Samuel Ward was born, one of Fuller's Worthies, of whom we have already spoken, in reference to the tablet in the church. In 1594, Samuel Fairclough was born at Haverhill, became A.M. Queen's College, Cambridge; was lecturer at Lynn, Norfolk; Rector of Barnardiston and Kedington, Suffolk; ejected for Nonconformity in 1662, and died in 1678, æt. 84. His portrait is in Clark's *Lives of Sundry Eminent Persons*. In 1706, Stephen Scandaret, a native of Haverhill, died. He was one of the silenced ministers, and of considerable celebrity.

I may add, that local tokens were issued at Haverhill in 1658, by Jno. Boram and others, and in 1794, by John Fincham. On the latter, the motto *pro bono publico*, with a seal, with crest and initials of Fincham, and on the other, a weaving loom and "Haverhill manufactory, 1794."

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