

ROMAN BUILDING AT GRATELEY.

By J. P. WILLIAMS-FREEMAN, M.D.

The plan of the Roman house at Grateley was first brought to light in 1910, when the occupier of the farm on which it is situated was removing the foundations of the walls, the flints being of some value for road-mending as well as constituting a considerable obstruction to cultivation. At that time only two small portions of the pavements were exposed—one at the corner of the corridor and the other a bit of the large floor now discovered—and it was supposed that all the rest must have been destroyed by the steam plough. Though not in time to prevent their destruction, I was able in 1910 to make a fairly accurate plan of the foundations as they were removed, and also to record by cross-bearings the exact position of the fragments of pavements. This plan was published in the Proceedings of the Field Club, vol. vi., p. 341.

In the summer of 1916 a further piece of pavement was discovered and was carefully exposed under the direction of Mr. E. Rawlence, agent to the Marquis of Winchester, the present owner. It proved to be the nearly perfect floor of the square room in the centre of the plan, and is admirably represented in the painting by Mr. Heywood Sumner, F.S.A., here reproduced. A further piece composed of plain white tesserae was partly exposed in the large room to the south, and the whole of the remains were carefully covered over and the site fenced off pending further examination. On enquiry it now appears that the steam plough, so far as this field is concerned, is a myth, so that it is quite likely that further bits of pavements, and perhaps other things of interest, may remain intact.

The house, which was of the "corridor" type common in the south of England, was, as usual, in a sunny situation and faced S.W. The whole of the walls of the corridor were exposed in

1910 with those of the three principal rooms opening out of it, and of a narrow room less than five feet wide, which is often found in such buildings, and is supposed to have contained a wooden staircase. The depth of these rooms was 17 feet, and that of the corridor eight.

The corridor or verandah of these houses is supposed to have had a dwarf wall in front which supported by means of pillars a pentice roof sloping back to the house, and as no remains of the usual short stone columns were found in this case one must suppose the supports to have been of wood. No fragments of brick or building stone (except flint) mark the site, so the walls, at any rate of the upper story, were probably of wood or of half timber with wattle and daub, and the whole appearance of the building must have been very like that of a modern two-storied house of the "bungalow" type.

Several fragments of coloured wall plaster can be picked up, but no window glass such as is common on the sites of some "villas" is to be found. The roof was of the usual pointed stone tiles, of which many fragments and some whole specimens lie about the ground.

The hypocaust has not been discovered. It may remain intact or it may have been the "pit six foot deep" said to have been found in the field some years ago.

Mr. W. J. Andrew, Secretary and Editor of the British Numismatic Society, kindly sends the following account of a coin which was found when excavating the above-mentioned Roman building, contributed by Mr. F. A. Walters, F.S.A., the well-known authority on Roman numismatics:—

Third brass coin of the Emperor Gallienus, 253—268 A.D.

Obverse : GALLIENVS AVG. Radiated head to right.

Reverse : DIANAE CONS AVG. Stag walking to left.

In exergue XII. *Cohen* No. 157.

The full reading of the reverse legend would be :

DIANAE CONSERVATRIX AVGVSTI.

The figures XII. on the exergue, which vary, are believed to refer to the currency value. No mint is referred to.

The coin is prettily patinated, and as struck, but it is quite common, and of no value except for its local interest.