

A MEDIAEVAL SITE IN SOBORTON PARISH

DURING the summer of 1923, an ancient well and traces of flint foundations were discovered in Clay's Coppice by Mr. Arthur Arnold of Wickham. He cleared the well down to a depth of 30 feet and recovered many fragments of pottery and brick, of which he showed a sample to Mr. Heywood Sumner. The latter pronounced some of the finds to be Roman and some mediaeval. There were hopes, therefore, that the site would reveal mediaeval remains on top of a Roman villa; there seemed, too, some probability that the site was the *Halla Harald* mentioned in 13th century documents. A month's digging was accordingly done by the writer in the grass field to the west of Clay's Coppice (O.S. 6in. 67 N.E.), some twenty feet from the site of the well; and though no Roman remains were found, interesting results were obtained. Two men were employed and in spite of cruel weather conditions work proceeded almost continuously from August 31st to September 30th, 1932. A considerable stretch of cobbled road was located leading from the west into what appears to be a walled farm-yard. Sections of the cobbled yard, and the very rough foundations of outbuildings were exposed. Finds included one coin on which Mr. G. Askew, F.S.A. Scot., has kindly submitted the following report: "Silver Penny of Henry I, minted at London by Wulfward, c. 1120." Many fragments of pottery were turned up, which were submitted to Mr. G. C. Dunning, F.S.A., and Mr. John Charlton, both of the London Museum; they suggested a period of 12th—14th century for the finds. It is too early to say whether the site is really that of the *Halla Harald*: further digging and a close examination of the topographic data will be necessary. Meanwhile, the site deserves further work on its own merits. It lies on the edge of the Tertiary Beds, which were originally forest-land; and it appears that trees had been rooted out immediately before the buildings were erected: thus excavation should decide for us when this forest-land was first cleared—a valuable addition to knowledge. The site is that of a single farm (*Einzelhöfe*) and it is rare to find a mediaeval farm which has not been overlaid by subsequent buildings. Finally in view of the efforts which are being made to set the ceramic chronology of mediaeval England on a firm basis, the site promises to give very valuable material. It is hoped to continue the digging this year and to publish a full report. Any subscriptions, however small, will be welcomed by the writer, c/o Messrs. Petch & Co., 42 Bedford Row, London, W.C.1.

Thanks are due to the owners of the land, the Warden and Fellows of Winchester College, their Agent Mr. Arthur Arnold, and the tenant, Mr. Stiggins, of Russel's Farm, for permission to excavate, and to Messrs. J. P. Williams-Freeman, O. G. S. Crawford, G. Askew, E. Esdaile and Commander Roberts for their useful assistance and advice.

C. E. STEVENS.