

I. *Part of a Letter from Mr John Luffkin to the Publisher, concerning some large Bones, lately found in a Gravel-pit near Colchester.*

S I R,

Reading the *Ph. Transaction* for July last, No 271. I find an account of some strange Bones found in the Grounds of Mr Sommer in *Chartham*, near *Canterbury*, in *Kent*, &c. which gives me occasion to insinuate to you the likewise finding this Summer at *Wrabness*, a small Village situate in the most Eastern parts of *Essex*, upon the River *Stowr*, near *Harmich*, diverse Bones of an extraordinary bigness, which were found at fifteen or sixteen foot beneath the surface of the Earth, in digging for Gravel to mend the Roads with, &c. the largest and most remarkable of which, was procured, and sent to me, by the learned and ingenious Mr *Rich*, Minister of the place.

We read in *Camden*, pag. 351. that in the time of King *Richard II.* and in the Reign of Queen *Eliz.* there were found in the most Eastern Promontory of *Essex*, at a place called *Cudulfness*, which I take to be *Walton*, large Teeth, and Bones of an extraordinary bulk, which were esteemed the Bones of Giants. But Mr *Childrey* in his *Britannia Baconica*, pag. 100. rather thinks them to be the Bones and Teeth of some Elephant, buried there by their Loving Masters the *Romans*.

That these were the Bones and Teeth of some Elephant, I am prone to believe; first, because they far surpass in Magnitude the Bones, &c. of the largest Creatures that we have at this day in our Island.

Secondly Because 'tis evident from *Dio Cassius*, as quoted by Mr *Camden*. See the *Romans in Britain*, and in his  
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*Britannia*, pag. 347. that abundance of Elephants were brought over into *England*, by the Emperor *Claudius*, in his Wars with the *Britains*; yea, into *Essex* itself, as appears from the same *Dio*, a little after in these words: *Claudius* having at last joyned *Plautius*, and took the command of the Army, passed the River (meaning the *Thames*) and upon a fair engagement with the Enemy, who were posted there to receive him, obtained the Victory, took *Camolodunum*, &c.

Thirdly, In comparing this Bone with the Osteology of Dr *Mullins* in his Anatomical account of the Elephant burnt at *Dublin*, &c. I find it perfectly to agree to and with the *Os humeri* thereof, not only to outward appearance or form, but to measure also; from which circumstances we may conclude, that these were the Bones, &c. of some Elephant, rather than of any other Animal.

And it does seemingly appear to me, that these Teeth and Bones mention'd by Mr *Somner*, might have been the Teeth and Bones of some Elephant, rather than of the *Hippopotamus*: and that,

First, in respect of the place; for, as Mr *Camden* says in his *Britannia*, pag. 197. speaking of *Chilham* in *Kent*, of which this *Chartham* is a neighbouring Village, situate in the same Down. and on the same River *Stowr*, that it is a current report amongst the Inhabitants that *Julius Cæsar* encamp't there, in his second Expedition against the *Britains*; and thence it was called *Julham*, as if one should say, *Julius Station* or House.

It appears further, *Britan.* p. 208. that *Rhatupia* (which whether *Richborough* or *Stoner* matters not) situate near the present *Sandwich*, was the place of *Claudius* his Landing in *Britain*; and that through this Down was his nearest passage to the *Thames* (is indisputable) whither he was going: So that 'tis highly probable, that during the stay, passing or repassing of these *Roman* Armies through these Downs, some one of their Elephants might perish or dye, and be buried there.

Secondly, By the Teeth themselves, for if you compare the Icons given by Mr *Sommer*, with the Descriptions of Dr *Mullins* ( in the aforesaid Anatomy, p. 40. ) you will find them the very same, as to breadth and depth, &c. and their being *Molares*; for, says the Dr, these eight (which were all the Elephant had besides the two Tusches) were *Molares*, for he had no *Incisores*.

Thirdly and lastly, to solve that great difficulty (which obliged this Gentleman to imagine this Down to have been an *Æstuary*, that his *Hippopotamus* might therein dig its self a Grave, otherwise how should these Bones be found at such a depth? for who with reason (says Mr *Sommer*) can imagine, that any Land Creature could ever have had (at first) so deep a burial: This indeed would have been an *Herculean* Labour.

But 'tis easily explained why these Bones should at this day be found at such depths, if we consider the Alteration or rising of the Valleys, by the continual washing down of the loose Earth or Soyl by the Rains and Snows from the adjacent Hills, and by the annual rollings of the Grass, Sedge, &c. growing upon it: for proof of which take the following instance from Dr *Plot's* Nat. Hist. of *Staffordshire*, Chap. vi. p. 48. p. 220. speaking of a Moss, &c. wherein there was found a Lump of Coyns of *Edward IV.* of *England* (supposed to be lost in a Purse or Cloath, now rotted away) at 18 foot deep, which being about 200 years since (that is, when they were found,) whoever pleases to compute it, will find this Moss grew about one foot in 11 years, or one inch *per annum* and  $\frac{1}{2}$  *proxime*. Diverse other instances of Alteration are mentioned in the same History, as in Chap. 3. par. 11, 12. and Ch. 6. par. 45, 46, 47, 48. &c. Now it will be easily granted, that if this Moss grew or advanced itself above its former surface 18 foot in 200 years, then this Vale or Down might advance itself 17 foot in almost 1700 years.

*Colchester, Sept. 15. 1701.*