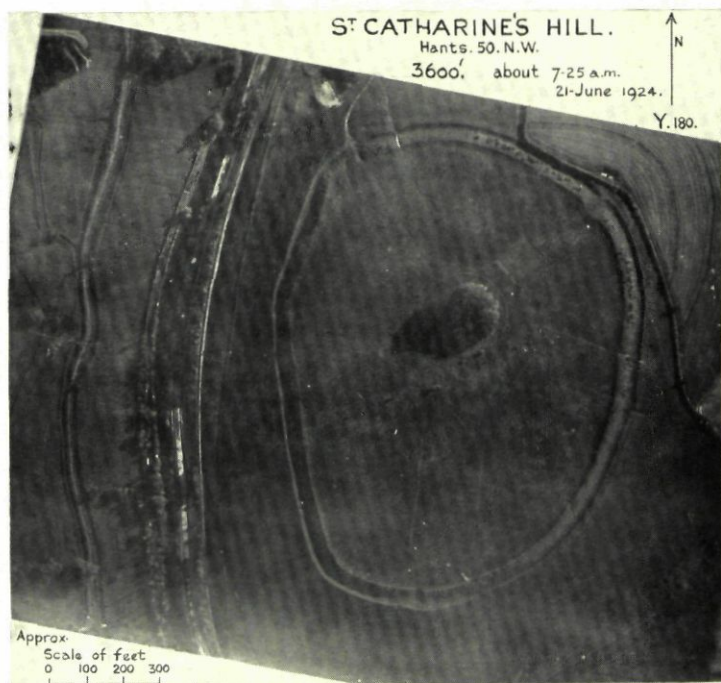


PLATE I.



1. St. Catharine's Hill from College Walk.
2. St. Catharine's Hill from the Air.

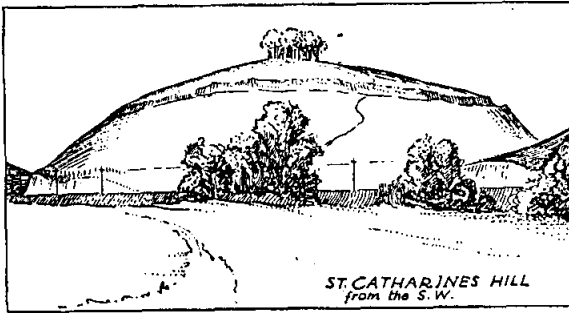


FIG. 2.

St. Catharine's Hill

INTRODUCTION

ST. CATHARINE'S HILL, in the parish of Chilcombe near Winchester in Hampshire (6-in. O.S. map ref. Hants, sheet L, N.W.), is a steep-sided hill of oval form (plate I, 2, and fig. 1), jutting out from the irregular edge of the chalk uplands, that bound the middle Itchen valley on the east. Its summit, which lies just one mile south by west of Winchester Cathedral, rises to 328 ft. above sea-level, and the fall to the Itchen water-meadows on its western side is in places as steep as 1 in 3.

The old Navigation Canal passes close to the foot of the hill, with the new Winchester—Twyford road immediately above, while nearly parallel to both of these the Didcot, Newbury, and Southampton branch of the Great Western Railway runs in a cutting which pierces the lower slope of the hill-side. The wide depression of the Chilcombe Valley, some five furlongs across and at right angles to the Itchen, separates the hill on the north from St. Giles' Hill, which overlooks the eastern end of the City of Winchester, while on the south and south-east it is cut off from the main expanse of Twyford Down by a curving and steep-sided combe; up this the boundary-ditch of the parishes of Chilcombe and Twyford runs between some old chalk-diggings and the irregular mounds which mark the common graves of the local victims of the Plague of 1666 and are known as 'Death Pits.'

At the head of thecombe the north-eastern side of the hill is connected by a narrow saddle with the eastward-running ridge, forming the culmination of Twyford Down, along which a prehistoric trackway passes towards the South Downs of Sussex; and this is also closely followed here by a Roman and a mediaeval and modern road, though these soon turn southward by way of Morestead towards Bishop's Waltham and Portsmouth Harbour. This saddle, the only link between the hill and the main chalk plateau, thus connects it directly with an important line of communication; but it is now occupied, together with most of the northern hill-side, by the Winchester Corporation Sewage Farm, and the principal modern approach is between this and the railway, by a footpath which makes the steep ascent close to the large chalk-pit which is cut into the northern face of the hill.

The clump of beech-trees at the highest point of its almost level top, and the ring of ancient earthwork around its brow, make the hill with its bold outline a striking and familiar feature of the southward view from Winchester (plate I, 1), while it would form the first natural stronghold of defence against an invader advancing up the Itchen valley from Southampton Water, which is second only to the Kentish harbours as a place of entry into England from the Continent, as geography and history alike testify.

The upper Itchen drains a wide basin in the chalk of central Hampshire, and St. Catharine's Hill, guarding the narrowest part of the valley down which, after first a northward and then a westward course, it flows southward to the sea, is under primitive conditions not only the bulwark but also the natural centre of this whole area. The importance which its successor in occupation, the City of Winchester, has had bears out the evidence of physical geography, and inevitably suggests that it was in prehistoric times likewise a capital point.

This suggestion has been amply verified by the excavations recorded in this volume. They have revealed the existence of a Settlement on the summit, open at first and then fortified by the girdle of earthwork, which lasted perhaps from the 6th to the 2nd century B.C., and thus covers the least known period of the Iron Age in this country.

The epoch of the introduction of the knowledge of iron into Britain marks the last great turning-point in her history before the Roman conquest. Before the middle of the 1st millennium

B.C. the comparative isolation of Middle Bronze Age culture was brought to an end by the beginning of a series of immigrations, which ceased only with the consolidation by Augustus of the Roman power in Gaul. They not only brought in the knowledge of iron-working, but ultimately made Southern Britain in speech and predominant race an integral part of the Celtic world of Central and Western Europe. The Celtic culture, short-lived as it was, brought Britain in the beginnings of her historic period into a Continental connexion close enough to make absorption in the Roman Empire inevitable.

It is probable that the earliest of these immigrations are attested by certain foreign types of late bronze weapons, and within the same period seems to fall the appearance of new forms of cinerary urn, those of barrel, bucket, and globular shapes. The precise ethnology, indeed, of the makers of these urns is as yet uncertain, but their culture stands close enough to that of their apparent successors for some to have considered the two identical or at least overlapping.

The arrival of the latter, whose use of iron is not open to doubt, has been generally dated near the end of the Continental Hallstatt period (round about 500 B.C.); they exhibit certain variations of culture, but the village at All Cannings Cross, Wilts, is probably typical enough, and it was these people who first settled on St. Catharine's Hill and subsequently fortified it. They can be traced also on a number of sites in the surrounding country, notably at Stanmore and Worthy Down, and probably formed a far from negligible element in the subsequent population of southern Britain, throughout most of which their culture seems to have lasted well into the ensuing period of La Tène.

In fact, the chalk country of Hampshire can hardly have been touched by further immigration till towards the end of this period, though Celtic invaders appeared as far north as Yorkshire, and there was movement into the island from the south-west. That the latter reached this region has not been attested, and while Belgic tribes were settling in south-eastern Britain from about 100 B.C., it was not till after Caesar's invasions of 55-4 that new immigrants, also apparently from Belgic Gaul, arrived west of the Sussex Weald.

The possibility of a connexion between their coming and the abrupt end of the Settlement on St. Catharine's Hill will

be discussed in due course; it is anyhow certain that the site was no longer inhabited when Belgic culture was established in the neighbourhood, and to the latter in fact belong the first appreciable traces of occupation on the site of Winchester. From now onwards population began to concentrate there in

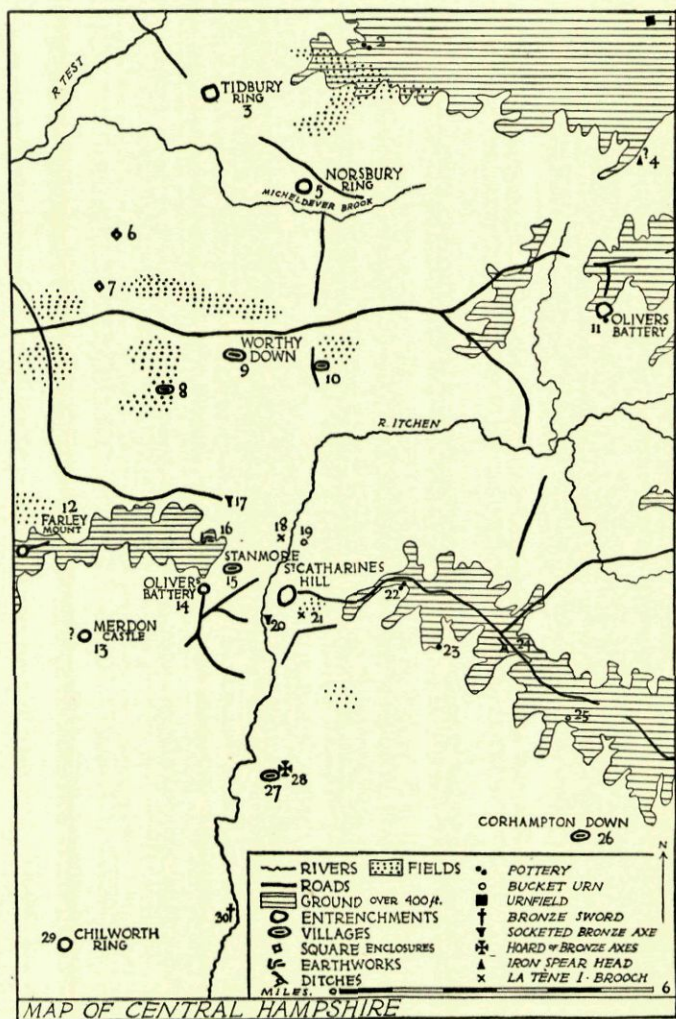


FIG. 3.

Map of Central Hampshire, showing material contemporary with the Early Settlement on St. Catharine's Hill,

the valley below, and the hill-fortress was superseded, if indeed this had not already happened.

Accordingly, the map (fig. 3),¹ which seeks to emphasize the nodal position of St. Catharine's Hill during its period of

¹ The old ROADS shown on this map are marked after Hawkes, *Old Roads in Central Hants*, H.F.C. IX pt. 3, p. 324 ff, and Burne, *Old Track from Walbury Camp to Tidbury Ring*, *ibid.* VIII pt. 1, p. 104 ff, with some modifications due to subsequent work, and additions from unpublished air-photographs by courtesy of Mr. O. G. S. Crawford. The FIELDS are also from the latter source, some being marked on the map in his *Air Survey and Archaeology*, Ordnance Survey Professional Papers, new series No. 7 (1924). The other items on the map are numbered, and the references to authorities are as follows:—

1. URNFIELD (bucket urns, late Bronze Age type), Dummer: H.F.C. V, pp. 55-6.
2. POTTERY (Hallstatt type), Roundwood nr. Micheldever, in ditch of disc-barrow with some worked flints: H.F.C. IX, pt. 2, pp. 191, 198-209. (Winchester Mus.).
3. TIDBURY RING: Williams Freeman, pp. 246, 412.
4. IRON SPEARHEAD (said to be of Early Iron Age type), nr. Preston Candover, in some connexion with an interment (indeterminate): H.F.C. II, p. 286.
5. NORSBURY RING: Williams Freeman, pp. 247, 388.
- 6, 7. SMALL SQUARE ENCLOSURES, Brockley Warren: from unpublished air-photographs through Mr. O. G. S. Crawford, who advocates a late Bronze Age date for such enclosures in *Ant. Journ.* II, No. 1, p. 27 ff.
8. BRITISH VILLAGE SITE, nr. Littleton: map in *Air Survey and Archaeology*.
9. BRITISH VILLAGE, Worthy Down: H.F.C. X, pt. 2, p. 178 ff. (finds in Winchester Mus.).
10. BRITISH VILLAGE SITE, Abbot's Worthy: map in *Air Survey and Archaeology*.
11. OLIVER'S BATTERY, Abbotstone Down: Williams Freeman, pp. 299, 392. The present writer found coarse Iron Age POTTERY in a rabbit-scraps on the earthwork in 1925.
12. CAMP, Farley Mount: Crawford, *Wessex from the Air*, pp. 102-3.
13. MERDON CASTLE (the earthwork outside the Norman Keep is perhaps British): H.F.C. I, pt. 1, p. 25; II, p. 14; Williams Freeman, pp. 255, 384.
14. OLIVER'S BATTERY, nr. Winchester: *ibid.* pp. 254, 393. See below, p. 176.
15. SETTLEMENT (Hallstatt period), Stanmore, Winchester: H.F.C. X, pt. 1, p. 63 ff (excavated, and well-preserved oven found: finds in Winchester Mus.).
16. EARTHWORKS, Teg Down: Crawford, *Wessex from the Air*, p. 110.
17. SOCKETED BRONZE AXE (late Bronze Age), WEBBE: *Ant. Journ.* IV, pt. 2, p. 151. The type, with loop on face, is certainly exotic, and probably connected with a winged type of the Swiss Lake-dwelling culture, e.g. *Brit. Mus. Bronze Age Guide*, fig. 124, right.
18. LA TENE I BROOCH, High St., Winchester: see below, pl. X and pp. 127, 182.
19. BUCKET URN (late Bronze Age type), St. Giles' Hill, Winchester: Clay. *W.A.M.* XLIII, p. 323 and pl. I (Winchester Mus.).
20. SOCKETED BRONZE AXE (late Bronze Age), nr. G.W.R. Viaduct, S. of Winchester: *P.S.A.* XXII, p. 249. This short bulbous type is exotic, and seems to be Irish (Winchester Mus.).
21. LA TENE I BROOCH, Twyford Down: see below, pl. X and p. 127 (Winchester Mus.).
22. POTTERY (Iron Age, coarse), Telegraph Hill nr. Chilcombe: unpublished (Winchester Mus.).
23. POTTERY (similar, some with finger-print ornament), 1 mile S. of Cheesefoot Head: unpublished (Winchester Mus.).
24. EARTHWORKS, Lane End Down: Crawford, *Wessex from the Air*, p. 228.
25. BUCKET URN (perhaps Hallstatt period), nr. Preshaw: *Ant. Journ.* VIII, No. 1, p. 98 (*Brit. Mus.*).
26. BRITISH VILLAGE, Corhampton Down: H.F.C. VI, pp. 253-5; *Hants Chronicle*, Apr. 18, 1908, p. 9 (excavated by Lt.-Col. Hawley).
27. BRITISH VILLAGE (pit-dwellings), Colden Common: unpublished information from Mr. O. G. S. Crawford (revealed in side of gravel-pit).
28. HOARD OF BRONZE AXES (palstaves and socketed), Colden Common: the types are late Bronze Age (Winchester Mus.).
29. CHILWORTH RING: Williams-Freeman, pp. 259, 368 (excavated in 1927 but not dated).
30. BRONZE LEAF-SHAPED SWORD (late Bronze Age), Checkenhall nr. Bishopstoke: H.F.C. III, pp. 265-6. A not very remote ancestor of Peake's type G (Hallstatt), and evidently exotic (Winchester Mus.).

occupation by giving the distribution of strictly contemporary archaeological material, marks nothing which cannot be dated before the 1st century B.C., just as it marks nothing earlier than the transition from the Bronze Age. The beginning of the Iron Age can hardly have been marked by any one sharp break in continuity, and it must have been in the period of initial transition that occupation on the hill began; consequently, the late bronze weapons and bucket urns need not be too early for inclusion with the material of the Iron Age proper—Hallstatt and later types of pottery, and La Tène I brooches of the 5th to 3rd centuries B.C.

The roads marked are trackways which do not admit of definite dates, but though doubtless often of altogether remoter origin they must have been in full use during this period. Some of the earthworks are not exactly dated, but while the small square enclosures may be suspected to be sometimes earlier than the full Iron Age, the hill-fortifications, if those on St. Catharine's Hill be typical, date nearer the end than the beginning of the period represented. The unfortified villages often continued to exist and probably grew considerably in the subsequent centuries, and the field-system associated with them, now revealed by air-photography, had perhaps not reached its fullest extent as early as this. However, the method adopted shews, as far as is possible, the place occupied by the hill settlement in the life of the contemporary countryside.

That life, indeed, inasmuch as it continued and increased under Roman rule, far outlasted the effective occupation of the Hill: Winchester as *Venta Belgarum* became the capital of the district, and the relics of this period from the older site are of the scantiest.

It remains thus without further history until the early 7th century A.D., when we find it forming part of the Manor of Chilcombe which King Kinegyls of Wessex granted for the support of the Church. The land continues to this day in Ecclesiastical hands, and in the Middle Ages the history of the site is what might be expected from its position on the outskirts of so important a religious centre as Winchester.

Before the middle of the 12th century, a small Chapel, that had been already erected on the summit at some uncertain date, probably not long before, was used to form the eastern portion of the chancel of a much larger chapel in the late Norman style, cruciform with a central tower, which was dedicated to St.

Catharine and gave her name to the hill. At the east end of this building was the dwelling of a guardian, and certain boundary ditches—there seems to have been a cemetery—seem also to belong to the lifetime of the chapel, which lasted throughout the Middle Ages till a date in the reign of Henry VIII. As will be seen, its final years present certain problems, but the destruction effected apparently between 1538 and 1540 by Sir Thomas Wriothesley, as tenant of the Manor, was almost if not quite complete, and after the chapel's disappearance the hill is next known to us in the early years of Elizabeth as the playground of the boys of Winchester College. It continued to be so used until 1868, in spite of some degree of military interruption in 1762, to which the planting of the clump of trees is ascribed, and tradition has attributed to Wykehamical hands the cutting of the well-known Labyrinth or maze just east of the clump, and of the less familiar 'Domum Cross' on the outer slope of the prehistoric ditch to the south-east. The intimate connexion with the College survives in certain modern ceremonies enacted on 'Hills' (as it is known to Wykehamical terminology), and in the enduring tradition of Wykehamical sentiment.

It was in fact among certain Old Wykehamists then resident in the University of Oxford that the project of the excavations here recorded was first formed early in 1925: the approval of the Warden and Fellows of Winchester College, and also of the Hampshire Field Club, was signified, and permission was given, with the agreement of the tenant, Mr. I. Stratton, by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners as landlords, and by the Ancient Monuments Department of H.M. Office of Works.

In two seasons of privately conducted excavations in 1925 and 1926 the site of the chapel was re-discovered and much of its remaining fabric revealed. An agreement was then made between the excavators and the Hampshire Field Club, by which a Joint Committee was set up to carry out the exploration of the Iron Age settlement as well as that of the remainder of the chapel buildings. By the generosity of the Club and of numerous subscribers, enough money was placed in the hands of Mr. S. R. Humby as Treasurer in 1927 and 1928 to enable the present writers to conduct excavations in both these seasons on a much larger scale. Their Report, here munificently published by the Club in the series of its Proceedings, embodies the results of the work of all four years, and a complete survey of the

literary and archæological evidence for the history of the Hill from the earliest period of its occupation.

The authors have collaborated as fully in compiling it as on the field of excavation. The drawings are nearly all by Mr. Stevens, and the photographs were taken by Messrs. H. W. Salmon & Son of Winchester, except plates I 1 and X 1, taken by Mr. Stevens, plates X 2 and XIII 1 by Mr. Humby, plate I 2 by the Royal Air Force, Flower Down, through Mr. O. G. S. Crawford, and plates IX 3 and 12 and XVI by Mr. C. O. Waterhouse of the British Museum and Mr. G. Chaundy of the Ashmolean:

Gratitude is due to all those who enabled the scheme of excavation to be realized, especially the authors' colleagues on the Committee, Sir Charles Close, Mr. O. G. S. Crawford, Mr. F. Warren, and Dr. J. P. Williams Freeman; also to the voluntary helpers in the first two seasons whose names appear below, and to the many subscribers to the Excavation Fund, largely Old Wykehamists, especially to an anonymous benefactor, who contributed more than a quarter of the total sum obtained (see Appendix II).

The workmen employed, who belonged to Winchester and the neighbourhood, did their part with keenness and intelligence. Acknowledgement is made in various sections of the Report to the advice and opinions of a number of authorities, and the work owes the indispensable preliminaries of publication to the Rev. F. N. Davis, Editor of these *Proceedings*. An especial debt of gratitude for his ungrudging labours in helping to compile the Index is due to the Rev. Alfred Snell.

The following assisted the authors in the work of excavation in 1925 and 1926:—Messrs. F. J. Birkbeck, G. I. F. Fiennes, E. Hepher, P. P. Hepher, M. Hope, S. R. Humby, M. S. Leigh, H. C. Lewis, K. S. P. McDowall, and C. E. Stevens.

Brief interim Reports have appeared every winter in *The Wykehamist*, and also in Vol. X, pt. 1, of these *Proceedings*, as well as in the annual Reports of the Earthworks Committee of the Congress of Archæological Societies.

The objects found have been presented, with the consent of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, to the Winchester City Museum,