

SOME EARTHWORKS IN MID-HAMPSHIRE.

By THE REV. CANON A. B. MILNER, M.A.

Tidbury Ring.

IN 1927 I was shown some fragments of Roman-British roofing tiles, potsherds, etc., which had been ploughed up on Tidbury Ring, near Bullington, Hampshire. The site is enclosed within the embankments of the ancient camp. (See Williams Freeman, *Field Archaeology*, p. 412.)

With the permission of the owner and the help of a schoolboy, Donald Falconer, of Micheldever, I did some digging on the site in the autumn. There was an abundance of roofing slabs, bricks, potsherds, painted wall-plaster, nails and all the usual debris of a Roman-British building. I was not fortunate enough to find a wall, but was rewarded with two brass coins of the reign of Constantine the Great, one in very good condition struck in London probably prior to A.D. 311.

One roofing slab, 13in. by 11in., weighs 9lbs.; another, 10in. by 6in., practically perfect, probably came from the verandah or covered way. We unearthed one fragment of carved stone, pieces of stone quern or querns, rubbers for sharpening purposes, and a number of "pot boilers"—mementoes perhaps of the original makers of the camp. The composition and shapes of the sherds point to a long-continued occupation.

In June 1929 I obtained an air photograph of the Ring. It disclosed a rectangular marking which no doubt signifies the foundations of a building about 140ft. long by 35ft. wide. The building would face south-west. My little digging unfortunately lay some 180ft. to the West. Owing to leaving the neighbourhood I have not been able to pursue investigations, but there is now no doubt that a Romano-British domestic building of some consequence existed on this site.

So far as I can discover, the only previous intimations of Roman remains on Tidbury Ring are contained in the *Victoria County History of Hampshire*, Vol. I, p. 344: "Bullington.—Minor finds at Tidbury Rings. (Ordnance maps. Gough's additions to Camden (ed. 4), 1, 192, ascribe Roman wells, squared stones and coins to Bullingham; see Warner's *Collections*, 1, 109)."

The reference in Warner's *Collections* runs: "Bullingham, four miles east of Andover; in which parish, at a place called Titbury Hill, is a square field containing, by estimation, ten acres, ditched about, in some parts deeper than others, wherein have been found some signs of wells; and about it the husbandmen have ploughed up and dug square stones and Roman coins, as is reported."

Here, Bullingham must indicate Bullington, though from Andover it is more nearly seven miles than four.

Referring to the plan of Tidbury Ring in *Field Archaeology*, the rectangular marking on the air photograph encloses the i and n and the whole tail of the g in the word "Ring" and the upper half of the letter e in the word "acres." This gives the situation of the building with sufficient accuracy, if any reader wishes to pencil it in, on the plan.

Long Barrow at Hinton Ampner.

About half a mile due north of the main gateway to Hinton Ampner House there stands a barrow. About a hundred yards south of the barrow, parallel to the barrow's axis, runs Lamborough Lane. After ploughing, the mound is a somewhat prominent landmark with its mass of chalk glittering in the sunlight. But though physically prominent, it has not figured in the annals of archaeology. This may in part be due to the local tradition that it is simply the burial place of some six hundred men who fell in the battle of Cheriton on March 29th, 1644. The fight raged hotly in the immediate neighbourhood. This legend has been generally accepted locally and consequently has lulled to slumber any awakening enquiries. But the proximity of Lamborough Lane would tend to show that the barrow existed in the days of the Saxons at any rate, if not earlier.

On the Ordnance Survey map of 1910 the spot is marked by two stars. This seems to imply the presence of two round barrows, and it was a natural conclusion that two barrows—no gap now existing between them—had coalesced into one, through the ploughing of their crests and perhaps through haphazard digging.

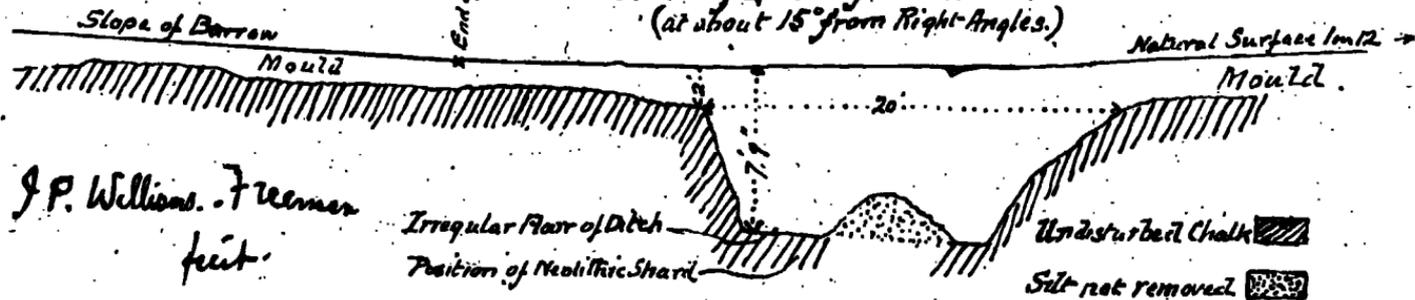
A brief inspection of the barrow in 1931 led Mr. O. G. S. Crawford to the view that the mound is a *long* barrow. He suggested that the writer should settle the question by the spade. The owner of the land, Mr. H. J. Dutton, of Hinton Ampner House, and the tenant, Mr. Charles Freeman, of Cheriton, both gave unhesitating consent to the necessary digging. Mrs. Dutton made herself responsible for half the cost of the work. Stanley Elliott and Sydney Bunce did the actual digging and wielded fork and shovel with untiring diligence and with an interested intelligence.

The barrow is about 75 yards long from rise to rise, the ridge being about 28 yards long. The east end rises about 18 inches higher than the rest of the mound. Superficially there is a slight, wide depression at the foot of the rise on each side and halfway round the ends. The axis of the barrow is nearly east and west.

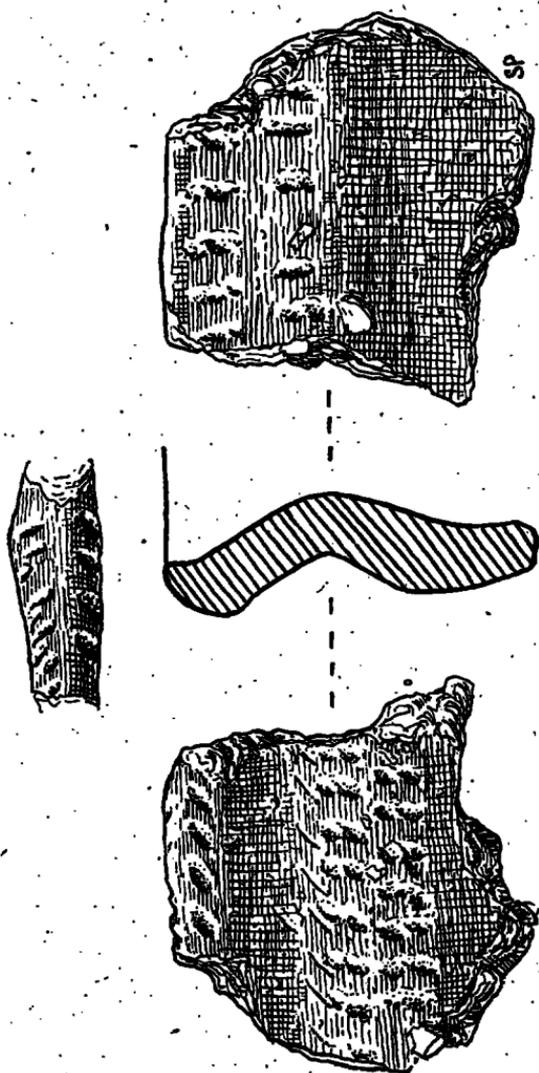
The main problem was to find the big ditch or ditches from which—if the barrow were a long one—the material of the mound was quarried. Such ditches are usually found on each side of a long barrow, rarely round the ends. With this in view, three

Lamborough Long Barrow.

Section of Quarry Ditch on North Side.
(at about 15° from Right-Angles.)



Scale: 10 ft. to 1 inch.



LAMBOROUGH LONG BARROW
 Drawing by Stuart Piggott, F.S.A.—Actual Size

trenches were cut. The first ran from the rise of the barrow in a northerly direction across the darker soil of the slight depression mentioned above. This trench revealed a big ditch 7ft. 9in. in maximum depth and 20ft. wide from lip to lip. Our trench, which was 5ft. wide, was dug down each side of the ditch to the level, undisturbed chalk at the bottom. Several flint flakes with white patination, some animal bones, two small fragments possibly human, and two small pieces of undateable pottery were found in the ditch, at a depth of 4 to 5ft.

One foot from the bottom of the ditch, at a depth of 6ft. 9in., we found a fragment of pottery of Peterborough type—a piece of the rim of a bowl of dark ware with “finger-nail markings” both on inner and outer sides. Shape and decoration are very similar to those of the Mortlake bowl shown on p. 97 of the British Museum *Guide to the Stone Age*.

At about 1ft. from the bottom there appeared a horizontal hollow space running east and west. It was large enough to admit a man's arm up to the shoulder. It yielded a few very small bones which appeared to be those of a rabbit. There were no other traces of a rabbit “berry.” The maker of this subterranean passage may have been a very ancient rabbit or he may have been of comparatively modern origin with an urge to get to the bottom of things.

To discover whether the ditch continued round the east end of the barrow or gave place to a causeway, a series of trial pits—subsequently connected up into a trench—were dug at that end. The digging was intended to be in the axis of the barrow. But there has been at some time a digging for chalk at the south of the east end. This is now ploughed in, but it pushes the apparent axis of the east slope some 12ft. north of the true axis. The trench therefore was some 12ft. north of the axis. It was 40ft. in length. Undisturbed chalk was quickly found all along its length and proved that there was no ditch.

A third trench was dug parallel to and at a distance of 10ft. north of the second trench. The ditch was in evidence again here. It was dug to a depth of 5ft., but no attempt was made to find the sides or bottom of the ditch. Two “human” flints were found here, one with white patination and considerable secondary working—a side scraper. There was also a little cache of empty land-snail shells.

A narrow experimental trench was dug from the north side into the middle of the mound in order to follow up a seam of dark earth which was disclosed in the process of digging the first trench. This dark seam ran right into the middle of the barrow at the level of the ancient undisturbed surface and is evidently the original top soil of the ditch. The first soil to be laid upon the site of the barrow would naturally be the top spit of what became a 20ft. ditch when sufficient material for the mound had been dug out of it. Except for this dark earth, the trench into the barrow revealed nothing whatever but chalk—not a bone of any sort.

Several interesting points emerge as the result of our work. The presence of such a great ditch on the north side (which postulates a corresponding ditch on the south); the absence of any ditch near the line of the east axis; the piece of Neolithic pottery from almost the bottom of the ditch, and the shape and dimensions of the mound all point to a Neolithic long barrow. It may have been newly erected at the time when Abraham was

trekking from Ur of the Chaldees (say, B.C. 2000). (Pottery of Peterborough type is ascribed to the period B.C. 2000-1750.)

A long barrow is a rare work in the Hinton Ampner neighbourhood. The nearest which have been recorded are two at Moody's Down near Sutton Scotney, one on Portsdown Hill and one South of Old Winchester Hill.

This is probably the first time the ditch of a long barrow has been excavated since Pitt-Rivers dug Worbarrow.

The name Lamborough Lane is justified as evidence of an ancient burial place. The legend of battle burial is dissolved, for there was no human or any other bone found in the mound itself. The narrow trench we dug would not have failed to find some of the six hundred had they been interred in the barrow. No doubt one of the numerous chalkpits in which the locality abounds would, ready dug, be used for this purpose.

Dr. J. P. Williams-Freeman visited the excavations three times and measured and mapped the mound, the ditch and the trenches. Mr. O. G. S. Crawford also paid two visits and gave valuable advice.

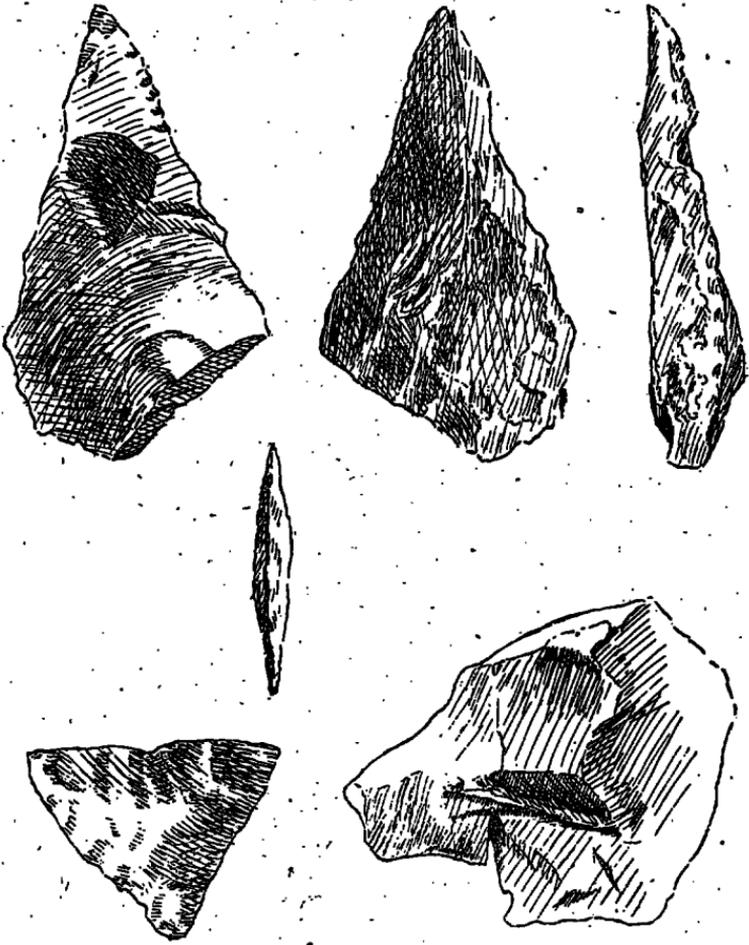
The drawing of the Neolithic sherd is by Mr. Stuart Piggott.

Hinton Ampner Barrow (No. 2).

In September 1930, Mr. S. E. Winbolt and I excavated a round barrow—one of two lying to the south of Joan's Acre Road in the parish of Hinton Ampner (see p. 250, Hampshire Field Club *Proceedings*, Vol. X, part 3). We found beneath a cairn of flints and at a depth of 3ft. below the surface of the barrow the scanty burnt remains of an infant of about 18 months old, together with a fragment of the skull of a much older person. These, together with one worked flint, had been placed in a grave measuring 2ft. 10in. by 2ft., dug in the clay of the original surface. There were no potsherds of any sort in the grave or in the material of the barrow.

At a distance of about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles in a straight line W.N.W. there lie three more barrows. They are situated immediately south of Dark Lane, a wet grassy track between high hedges—a disused by-pass between Joan's Acre Road and the road which leads to Kilmeston. These barrows lie nearly at the bottom of the field which is enclosed by Dark Lane and Kilmeston Road. One of these barrows has the appearance of being two barrows which have coalesced through ages of ploughing, but experience in the case of Lamborough long barrow (see preceding article) makes one hesitate to accept the theory. (The Ordnance Survey Office has an old map (dated 1616) on which the field containing these barrows is marked "four barrows.")

In April 1932 I began an investigation of the barrow lying to the east of this twin (?) barrow. One of the men—Merritt—who helped to excavate in 1930, had gone to his long home, so



FLINTS FROM DARK LANE BARROW
 Drawings by Miss Arkwright—Actual Sizes

Stanley Elliott alone did the actual digging—and a very good worker he is, with a keen eye for what lies about him.

The barrow is about the same size as that dug in the same valley in 1930 and is much ploughed down, having from north to south a maximum elevation of 5 ft. Reckoning from the south end of our trench—we began on the south side—the mound consists of loam lying upon a bed of flints which in turn rests upon small, dirty gravel; but at 10ft. from the centre the loam gives way to a sandy clay. At 16ft. south of the centre we came upon human bones at a depth of 6ft. 2in. from the present surface of the barrow. They lay on the chalk rubble in which a rough grave seemed to have been scraped. There was no sign of any cremation,

but there were four or five handfuls of charcoal, at intervals, a few inches above the deposit—the only evidence of any burial ritual. Dr. Williams-Freeman pronounced the bones to be fragments of a pelvis, two femora and two tibiae and some small bones of foot, all much mineralised. It was clear that the body had been buried in a contracted position. The rest of the skeleton was missing, but from the position of the leg bones I judged that the skull, if it were present at all, must lie behind the east wall of the trench. This could wait while we continued our way into the barrow. At a depth of 3ft. 6in. and 2ft. short of the centre of the barrow Elliott retrieved a very well worked triangular flint arrow-point or, possibly, chisel for use in a cleft stick. About the same place he turned up a well-made pointed arrow-head. As our trench sank deeper below the dirty gravel we came upon what appeared to be burnt material, large and small flints and gravel, of a very black colour, rising above the chalk rubble floor to a height of 2½ to 3ft. A fork inserted gently into the wall of the trench easily brought this material down. It was in great profusion about the centre of the mound, but more pronounced on the west side of the trench than on the east. We followed it through the west wall for 5ft. at an ultimate depth of 8ft. 6in. below the top of the barrow. The curious and puzzling thing about this black stuff was the entire absence of charcoal, and one wondered what had been used to make the fire. To solve the puzzle I approached Mr. F. W. Anderson, M.Sc., Lecturer in Geology at University College, Southampton. He took the trouble to visit the barrow (it was of course a pouring wet afternoon) and after examination gave it as his opinion that the dark appearance of the material was caused not by fire but by chemical stain. Analysis of some of the flints confirmed his opinion. The dark colour is due to staining by hydrated peroxide of iron with some manganese oxide, *i.e.* bog iron ore. Clearly this mass of stained material was once at the bottom of a bog or stagnant pond. One wonders how many thousands or millions of years have since elapsed to enable the water to get away and its place to be taken by two or three feet of gravel, soil and flints. Numberless barrows have been dug. Has any other been discovered upon a dried-up bog? Beneath the stained material, at a depth of 9ft., in the chalk rubble, Elliott picked up a small, roundish, greyish object with a hole through it. This little thing proved a puzzle. Was it a vertebra of a fish or was it a bead? High authority pronounced it silica, the decomposed remains of a stone bead, probably burnt. I was not satisfied with this verdict, seeing that the object lay on the bottom of a long ago dried-up bog covered with two or three feet of soil which had probably never been disturbed until Elliott drove his fork into it.

I took the thing to another authority, Mr. G. W. Willis, of the Basingstoke Museum, who identified it as a *Porosphaera Globularius*.

in a rather dilapidated condition. This verdict was confirmed independently by Mr. F. W. Anderson. Then I was content—for the bottom of a bog seemed quite a suitable resting-place for a weary, worn-out sponge.

After Mr. Anderson's visit, and without waiting for his analysis, we abandoned the stained material and followed the line of burnt clay at about 3ft. below the mound top. We came upon the burnt burial at about 8ft. 6in. beyond the conjectural centre of the barrow. The deposit lay on a bed of charcoal 2 or 3in. thick, 3ft. 3in. below the mound surface. The body had been burnt on the spot. The fragments of bone had been collected and made into what is most suitably (or unsuitably!) described as a pudding, 3 or 4 inches in height and covering a space 21in. by 10in. The term "fricassée" is perhaps the most nearly descriptive.

The larger fragments of bones and of skull and seven or eight teeth were sent to Sir Arthur Keith, who pronounced them those of a woman between 25 and 30 years of age, imperfectly cremated. The pathological process known as "lipping" was evident in the vertebrae and proved that this young woman had suffered from rheumatism. (Portions of the child's skull from Hinton Ampner barrow No. 1 showed that the infant had suffered from rickets.) Some of the bones were of small dimensions and delicate, pointing to the female sex. The skull had scarcely finished thickening and the sutures were not joined. There was no admixture of animal bones. Careful search failed to find any bronze, worked flints or potsherds in the immediate vicinity.

Three weeks after finding the leg bones of the skeleton (p. 44), I went in search of the skull and found it where I expected, behind the east wall of the trench. It lay on its right cheek, facing north-west. The upper part of the back had been crushed, presumably by the weight of earth. The finding of bones of the hand close to the chin indicated that the body had been buried with hands together up to the face. The interment had been east and west, the head to the east.

Sir Arthur Keith reported again that the bones are those of a young woman, under 30 years of age. The wisdom teeth had not long been up and these, with the rest of the teeth, were in excellent condition. The jaws and brachycephalic skull are of a form associated with Round barrows. The posterior end of the parietal bone at its junction with the occipital bone is abnormally thick, nearly $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (Thick-headedness is a family, rather than a race, trait.) Again there were no grave ornaments of any sort—no human flints, potsherds, beads, bronze or any thing whatever to provide a date, only pockets of charcoal.

It is noteworthy that this skeleton was found at a depth of 6ft. 2in. below the skirt of the mound. It was obviously not the primary interment, and a secondary interment at such depth is

unusual. Possibly the body was buried many years before the barrow was so much as thought of.

Two round barrows, then, in Joan's Acre valley, about $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles apart, give the following results :—

(1) Thoroughly burnt remains of a child of about 18 months who had suffered from rickets ; deposited in a well-made grave over which the funeral pyre had been built and burnt ; a cairn of flints erected over the grave and the whole covered with the mound. (2) An inhumation, in a contracted position, the body lying on its right side, head to the east, hands up to the chin ; remains of a young woman with a remarkably thick skull ; burial under the present skirt of the barrow at a depth of 6ft. 2in. below the surface of the mound. (3) An imperfectly burnt deposit about the middle of the barrow, 3ft. 3in. below the present surface ; the body burnt on the spot and the remains gathered together and placed on the charcoal bed, without any dug grave. A young woman who had suffered from rheumatism.

Nothing whatever was associated with these burials with the exception of a small flint knife in the child's grave. It is remarkable that no potsherds of any kind, ancient or modern, were found in the material of these mounds. Barrow No. 2 yielded, in addition to the finds already mentioned, a large number of flint flakes of poor quality.

We have therefore no evidence for date except the round barrows and the round skull. We have both inhumation and cremations, the inhumation probably ante-dating the cremations. No burials of males, unless the child were a male. Only a small flint knife in association. One is tempted in a frivolous moment to postulate a purely female settlement of nonconformist persuasion, determined to abjure both the customary scattering of sherds and other extravagant ritual deposits !!

We may date the burials in this Bronze Age barrow as roughly—the inhumation in the Early Bronze Age, say, before B.C. 1500, and the cremation in the middle or late Bronze Age, say, B.C. 1000 with a wide margin. I like to think of the thick-headed lady combing out her tresses at the time when Moses was making his first venture on the Nile (say, B.C. 1540).