

The compiler of the charter seems to have selected his discordant materials from genuine charters of various and very distant dates, and it is therefore not impossible that he found the words "cum stagnis, turbariis, *blistariis*," &c., in an authentic instrument. The word used for this purpose in such genuine records as I have seen, connected with Dartmoor, is the common one "turbaria."—"Glebaria" is employed in the same sense in some Welsh charters.

From the word *blestaria*, or *blesta*, such local names as Blisland, Bliston, and Tewan Blusty<sup>o</sup>, appear to be derived.

E. SMIRKE.

### BERKSHIRE ANTIQUITIES.

IN the course of the present year, and also two years ago, some barrows were opened in the neighbourhood of Ilsley Downs, in this county; and as a record of such proceedings is always of a certain value to antiquarians, both as a guide in future researches, and to prevent useless trouble in making them, it may not be unacceptable to the readers of the Journal, to be presented with a few particulars of what occurred.

The tumuli in question are situated in the parish of Blewbury, upon the estate of John S. Phillips, Esq., who had kindly given permission for them to be examined. There had formerly been many of these, of large dimensions, on the hill above the village; but in the progress of cultivation, the plough has passed over most of them, and two, if not more, have been completely dug down and levelled, so that hardly a trace of their site remains. One, however, of the largest and most conspicuous, called Churn Knob<sup>a</sup>, still maintains its position, partly in consequence of having been planted with fir trees about 40 years since, and forms a land-mark for many miles round, especially in coming towards Blewbury along the bottom from Kate's Gore, on which side it is seen to much advantage. Close by, and almost attached to this, is a smaller and lower barrow, now ploughed, which seemed to have been

<sup>o</sup> Tewan or Towan Blusty seems to be the old name of Newquay on the north coast, or of some place near it. See Monasticon Dioc. Exon. p. 54.

<sup>a</sup> A term applied also to Cuckamsley, both being a sort of knob or excrescence on the brow of the hills on which they respectively stand.

included originally in one fosse with the other: on this it was determined to begin.

Before going farther, it should be remarked of the Knob, that, as far as can be judged from the very indifferent growth of the trees upon it, and the appearances manifest wherever the rain has washed away the grass springing up on its sides, its summit, whatever the rest may be, is composed of chalk, in which particular, as will be presently seen, it differs much as to construction from others in the neighbourhood.

1848. Sept. 18. The small barrow, on being cut into, from the nature of its contents, seemed to present the novelty of a supplemental tumulus to the larger one. It was composed of the ordinary soil around it; and upon digging down to no great depth, there was found in the middle a conical heap of loose stones, with no deposit either above or beneath, unless the plough had swept it away; while on the north, south, and east sides, (the other was not examined,) at about two or three yards from the centre, a blackness of the soil to a considerable extent indicated the presence of decayed animal matter, perhaps as much in each case as might be produced by the decomposed bodies of small horses. Amongst this were mixed bones and teeth of horses, teeth of swine, and small bones of animals, together with many small lumps of iron<sup>b</sup>, conjectured to have belonged to harness; but there were only a few inconsiderable fragments of charcoal, and no place of cremation discoverable.

Sept. 19. The next attempt was upon the largest and most western of two barrows which stand upon the native down in the bottom between Churn and Lower Chants farms. These are so considerable in size as to be marked upon the Ordnance map. The one opened stands just 150 yards north of what is called the Devil's Ditch<sup>c</sup>, is of the bell form, mea-

<sup>b</sup> Owing to these not being affected by the magnet, they were at one time supposed to be iron pyrites, the natural produce of the chalk soil; but upon a large spear-head discovered at Wittenham being submitted to the same test, it was observed to be no more attracted than the fragments had been.

<sup>c</sup> Carefully to be distinguished from Grimsdyke. It is one of these numerous banks and ditches running over the downs, for the irregular courses of which Sir R. C. Hoare felt himself so much at a loss to account. He has noticed this one in his *Antient Wilts, Northern part*, p. 51. Taking

our stand upon the barrow, if we trace its course towards the west, which would be upon the right hand, it passes first into a ploughed field, and there goes round, not through, a yet unopened barrow, which it has been observed, these works always do. It then creeps visibly up the opposite hill below Fox barrow; from which point it forms the boundary between the parishes of Ilsley and Blewbury, as it does afterwards between those of Ilsley and Chilton; and continues along the north side of the chalk hills, (a usual course, according to Dr. Stukeley,) being in good preservation,

tures 109 feet across the top to the middle of the fosse, and may have been about 11 or 12 feet high. A section was made in this in a north-westerly direction, of the length of 56 feet, which, of course, passed the centre; and it was found to be a saving of time and trouble to form the cutting in a wedge like shape, widening from the outside, so as to allow the middle part to be better dug and searched than the rest. Beginning from the base, the workmen at first found much difficulty in getting through a bed of chalk rubble, and then chalk, which appeared to have been put together wet and pressed down: but after they had advanced rather more than half way, earth and soil only were thrown out, so that fears began to be entertained lest the tumulus should have been searched before. This seemed more probable from the occasional occurrence of small quantities of wood ashes, and bits of broken British pottery; one fragment, and one only, of pale burnt Roman ware, part of a vessel, of which a representation is given; portion of a deer's horn; teeth and bones of horses; teeth of swine, &c.

Sept. 20. However, upon the second day, in a spot which

through the parishes of East Hendred and Grove, and where it is distinctly to be seen until it crosses the Ridgeway. This it does a short distance on the east side of a public house called the White House, in the parish of Wantage; and afterwards gets into some ploughed fields and is lost. Its last direction appears to point toward Warborough, Wilts; and on Warborough plain it is said to be very fine and perfect: perhaps more careful search than has been made might discover it between that place and the parish of Wantage. It has been remarked that it forms a parish boundary in its whole course through the hundred of Compton, but no where else.

If we look to the left hand, or in a south-east direction, after mounting the opposite hill, it runs on to Thorpe down and Aston down, where it is in very good preservation, especially when sinking towards Hog-trough-bottom. Then ascending the hill, it crosses the road which leads from East Ilsley to Wallingford; and at what is called The Fair Mile, enters Unhill farm. There, after being nearly lost in the ploughed grounds, it can still be traced up to the homestead; and from thence to Unhill wood, where it is again very visible; after crossing the wood, it again appears on the down for a short distance, and taking a sudden direction towards the valley which leads

to Streatley, is there lost. In various places, branches diverge both to the right and left from the main line, and after a while re-unite with it; of which perhaps the instance most accessible to observation is one on the side of the hill before reaching Hog-trough-bottom. And hereabout the work undoubtedly bears the appearance of a road, being a flat surface between two banks of nearly equal height; whereas in other parts it is what Sir R. C. Hoare saw and described, a plain bank and ditch, the latter being on the south side.

For confirmation of the substance of much of the statement given above, I am indebted to the local knowledge of Mr. Job Lousley. It may be added, that on the portion of the Devil's Ditch thus traced, nothing is known to occur which would afford reasonable ground of conjecture as to the period or purpose of its being made. If we suppose the larger works, such as Grimsdyke and Wansdyke, (in which words, it may be observed, "dyke" seems to be used in the Dutch sense, as the *τειχος* or rampart, and not as the fosse,) to have been boundaries of kingdoms, for what were these smaller ones intended? Sir R. C. Hoare finding that by following them he generally arrived at some British village, speaks (but doubtingly, as he well may), of them as roads.

was very nearly the centre, and at eight feet below the surface, we came upon the place of cremation, still abundantly strewed with wood ashes of oak, and immediately afterwards discovered the deposit of calcined human bones. These were in considerable quantity, not secured in an urn, but placed in moist clay soil, and, judging from their absolute freedom from any admixture with it, must, when first assigned to their place of concealment, have been carefully enveloped in something which had perished, either a cloth, or, more probably, the skin of some animal; but no pin of any material could be found. Within a foot of this lay the elegantly shaped bronze instrument represented by the annexed woodcut, which was so perfect that the rivets which had fastened it to the handle still remained in the two openings, though the handle itself was gone<sup>d</sup>.

In addition to the effects produced by the action of a very strong fire, the bones appeared to have been pounded or comminuted in some way, so that no piece should remain of any length: but notwithstanding the dampness of their hiding place, they had not suffered in the slightest degree from moisture or decay, but were as fresh and perfect as when gathered from the funeral pile. It is obviously difficult to say much respecting them, but from the worn appearance of the teeth found, which were very small, and gave the idea of those of a female, the individual to whom they belonged must have been rather past the middle age. There was also the lower jaw of a child of two or three years old, and some small fragments of iron as before, mixed up with the whole. With respect to the bronze instrument, never having seen any like it, I can only offer a conjecture with much diffidence. It has exactly the make of a plumber's knife, is rather blunt at the ends, and designed to cut at the sides. It is too weak for an offensive weapon, and had it been intended for such, would assuredly, according to the usual fashion both of spear and arrow-heads, have been strengthened by a rib up the middle. Such an arrow-head of bronze, and which has also been secured by rivets, may be seen represented in Sir R. C. Hoare's *Ancient Wilts*, (southern part, plate xxxii. fig. 1,) and in this the difference will be very obvious. Something nearly of the same kind has been found in Dorsetshire, and is now deposited in the county museum at Blandford. It is figured in a subse-

<sup>d</sup> It is now deposited in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

quent page of this Journal (see Archæological Intelligence) but differs both in being wider at the base, and having a shoulder to receive the haft. If the implement in question was not an ordinary knife, and used as such<sup>e</sup>, it may perhaps have been a sacrificial instrument, employed in flaying the victim, for which its peculiar make would exactly fit it. If it were so, we have a reason why it was deposited in the barrow, as having lent its aid in removing the skin of the animal in which the bones were wrapped, and therefore, from a superstitious feeling, interred with them.

On the construction of the barrow, which was somewhat peculiar, a few words must be said. It appears to have been this. A ring or basin of chalk rubble, of about half the diameter of the present mound, was first raised on the plain surface of the down, as a preparation for the funeral pile. This was put together wet, and a good deal more chalk powdered and moistened and spread over it; which being either rammed, or trodden in, as is most probable, by naked feet, formed the kind of strong concrete, which has before been noticed as troublesome to the workmen. On the smooth surface in the middle, was spread a layer of clear, red, moist clay, about half an inch thick, (it was so found,) probably for the purpose of receiving and securing all the relics of the body; and on it the funeral pile was built. When burnt out, the bones were carefully collected together preparatory to being finally deposited by themselves; and it must have been in the course of this operation that the little heaps of wood ashes occurring from time to time on the side of the barrow, were thrown out of the central basin to clear the way. When all was properly disposed, the material employed in filling up was first the stiff clayey soil of the country, in which the bones are found embedded, and in which it is wonderful they can have been preserved at all, and then lighter mould, the parings of the down, until the tumulus was fashioned and completed; the chalk basin being left undisturbed, and rising quite up to the surface

<sup>e</sup> On the subject of the British warriors' knives, and with which it is too much to be feared they sometimes cut their enemies' throats, I do not recollect to have seen it remarked, that Agamemnon himself constantly wore one. He uses his for a dignified and holy purpose, that of cutting off wool from the heads of the victims, but it was also as a substitute for a pair of scissors, which he did not possess.

'Ατρείδης δέ, ἐρυσσάμενος χεῖρεσσι μάχαϊραν,

"Ἡ οἱ παρ' ἑξίφειος μέγα κουλὲν αἶεν ἄωρτο,  
'Αρῶν ἐκ κεφαλῶν τάμνε τρίχας' αὐτὰρ  
ἐπειτα

Κήρυκες Τρώων καὶ Ἀχαιῶν νείμαν ἀρίστοις. κ.τ.λ.—Il. γ. 271.

That μάχαιρα may signify a knife, and small one too, it is unnecessary to prove.

of the sides. So that, in the result, we have a basin fitted to receive and hold water and moisture; and not, as is usual, contrivance used to exclude it, and keep dry the relics within. That the parings of the Down had been employed for the purpose above mentioned, was apparent when we came to the floor of the barrow, where, to our surprise, we found ourselves at least eighteen inches above the level of the surrounding soil.

Sept. 19. In the course of our researches upon this mound, and when we were anxiously looking for its occupant or occupants, and to learn in what fashion they had been placed beneath it, we came upon a discovery which caused some excitement and speculation; that of the skeleton of a young and tall man, clearly no aboriginal Briton, who, from his strange position, seemed to have been deposited here by being thrust or jammed into a hole, rather than buried. It was found in the mould, on the south-east side, three or four yards from the centre, and somewhat more than one below the surface; the head towards the south-east, the body inclined to the north-west. The skull was all broken, probably by weight of earth, with the face downwards, and resting on one hand, while the other was raised upon it; the body so twisted that the hip bone had the front nearly uppermost; the knees were raised up towards the pelvis, and the legs, one of which was broken, gathered again under them. The individual had been of tall stature, for the femur measured 19 inches, and the humerus 13; and was probably not more than 20 or 21, for the epiphyses of the long bones were found separated from their shafts, in consequence of not having been consolidated with them, and the dentes sapientiæ were only just appearing. Neither trinket, weapon, or article of dress was discovered. Here then was cause for curiosity and conjecture. It might be a person unfairly dealt with; or a tramp so buried by his companions to save funeral charges; but the soundness and freshness of the bones forbad the idea that it could be one of the original occupants of the barrow. Who and what the individual was, will perhaps for ever remain unknown; but it has been thought that history may throw some light on the latter particular. For, upon reference to Sir Edward Walter's historical discourses, vol. the last, pp. 13, 14, it appears that in 1644, the garrison of Charles I. at Reading, having, with the assistance of his army, dismantled the works there, and evacuated the town, had on Saturday, May 18, their rendezvous on the Downs near

Compton ; and quartered about that place and towards Wantage, continuing about the latter town till the 24th. And at a later period in the same year, after the second battle of Newbury, which was fought on Sunday, October 27, Rushworth (vol. vi.) informs us that the Parliamentarians remained where they were, i. e., by Newbury, till Saturday, November 2, when they marched towards Oxford in pursuit of the king ; and that night their head quarters were at Compton. The next day (Sunday) they advanced towards Blewbury, and their head quarters were at Harwell ; at which place a council of war having been held, in consequence of the determination then adopted, upon the 5th their horse were drawn up on Chilton plain, and the whole army ordered to return the next day to Newbury, which was accordingly done ; some of the royal forces advancing the same night from Wallingford into the quarters from which they had removed. We have here the evidence of two different writers, that in the course of the year 1644, both the Royalist and Parliamentarian armies passed over, if they did not occupy, the very ground in which the bones were found, being the valley leading from Compton to Blewbury ; and if the description of Charles's Reading garrison, that they were "old soldiers," does not agree with the evident youth of the individual, yet it is to be recollected they had then been joined by the main army, and it might be one of these who was so unceremoniously disposed of. But as the Parliamentarians were a mixed body, and had been fighting only a few days before at Newbury, it is more probable that it was one of their number who had died of his wounds or perished from fatigue.

The adjoining large barrow on the down was opened in part some years since by Messrs. Lousley and King, who found at the time remains of animals, an arrow-head, and some trifles, and abandoned further pursuit of the work ; but the soil coating down owing to rain, after their departure, disclosed many small vessels of British pottery, which seemed to have been set in a circle. It does not appear that they penetrated to the main deposit. Three low barrows near Lower Chants and towards Compton, now ploughed over, were examined two years since, and produced British remains, viz., an urn of unbaked clay filled with the debris of animals, as teeth of horses and swine, fragments of deers' antlers and bones, a bone of a large

bird, apparently a goose<sup>f</sup>, &c. ; there was also found a bone pin.

Sept. 22. The last attempt was made upon the easternmost of the three tumuli, now ploughed over, and standing in a row on the brow of the hill overlooking Churn farm. It was 86 feet across, but little elevated, and of a regular bell shape. At a depth of 18 inches it produced simply a deposit of burnt bones, which from their delicacy seemed to be those of a female or very young person, carefully placed in the soil ; and though no place of cremation could be discovered, the construction of the barrow was precisely similar to that of the larger one. It must have belonged to the same tribe.

So far our enquiries would lead to the inference that the tumuli scattered over these Downs are British. But this is by no means the case with all of them. For, as the line of country on the hills close by, along the edge of which the old Ridgeway runs, has probably in all ages been open and free from wood, so it has ever been debatable ground. Briton, Roman, Dane, and Saxon, have possessed or disputed it in turn. At a period when most of England was a forest, the invader could only find access to the interior along the open hills, or by British trackways ; and in coming from the eastern coast, the Danes, there is every reason to suppose, made use of the old Ikenild way, which conducted them at once to the great ford of the Thames ; which when once passed, and they had gained Cuckamsley, the way up to Abury and Stonehenge was open before them, and the whole country seemed at their command. Meanwhile, the thick woods in the direction of Newbury, offered a secure retreat to the Briton, from which he could sally forth and attack his enemy upon his march ; and here one at least of his secret fastnesses may still be seen ; and other invaders having used the same policy, we find consequently in this locality, memorials not of one nation but of all. Scarcely two miles from Churn, to the south-east, may be observed on Lowbury (hlæw-bury) hill, the highest point of the whole district, the

<sup>f</sup> It is scarcely necessary to quote the well-known passage of Cæsar, on one part of the customs of the ancient Britons, Leporem, et gallinam, et anserem, gustace fas non putant ; hæc tamen alant animi voluptatis-que causa." (De Bello Gall. v. 12.) But I here refer to it for the purpose of making the observation, that in this and every other particular, in which I have been able to follow him, he is most exact

and accurate. In one of the cross barrows near Ilsley, opened in 1843, was found the skeleton of a tall and strong man, who appeared to have died from the effects of a wound inflicted by a weapon, the iron head of which still adhered to one of the vertebræ. At his feet were the bones of a hare and a duck, doubtless his pets: the bill of the latter I have seen.

traces of some building or inclosure of regular masonry, within which have been found Roman coins, pottery, tesseræ, &c., and oyster shells in quantity sufficient to have supplied fish for the appetite of Apicius himself. More distant, on the south, and lost amongst the woods of Wellhouse, a hamlet of Hamstead Norris, is Grimsbury castle, a circular camp of extraordinary strength, never, until lately, even mentioned by antiquarians; while on the north-east appears Sinodun hill, overhanging Dorchester, the ancient Dorocina; both of which latter camps, if not constructed, were certainly used and occupied by the Romans. Turning to the west, and ascending to the Ridgeway, we come, a little beyond Ilsley, to the memorial of a Saxon prince, viz., Cuckamsley, Cwicheim's hlæw or hill, which still gives name to the eminence on which it stands; and whether intended as a sepulchre, a boundary, or a beacon, is unquestionably a genuine piece of antiquity, having the privilege of being noticed in our earliest English history<sup>§</sup>. Lastly, close by Blewbury itself, and in a hamlet of it called Aston Upthorpe, is a remarkable hill called Blewburton<sup>h</sup>, the summit of which is crowned by an oval inclosure measuring 1225, by 440 feet across, which is defended by a single ditch and vallum all round; but on the west side, next Blewbury, which is that of entrance, there are six terraces (as they may be called), and on

§ See the Saxon Chron., anno 1006, where the Danes are recorded to have gone up to it from Wallingford and Cholsey, along *Æscesdun*. See also Robert of Gloucester, p. 296. Cwicheim, king of the West Saxons, was baptized at Dorchester in 636, and died the same year. In 648, Kenwal, then king, gave his relation Cuthred, Cwicheim's son, 3,000 hides of land by Ashdown, i. e. near this district. This remarkable barrow, which stands in the parish of East Hendred, is described by Sir R. C. Hoare, who saw it when perfect, to have been of the bell shape, 490 feet round, and in sloping height 77, and to have had a vallum and ditch. Of late years, it has been cut through down to the floor and lowered by the proprietor Mr. W. Allin, but without finding any thing except a few trifles, a stone bead, an iron buckle, some teeth of horses, and a large post charred, and bound round with withs of willow and hazel. If the hill was intended for a beacon, and Mr. Wise, writing in 1738, says that until lately there had stood here a post for it, this was part of the apparatus: it is exactly represented in an early edition of the map of the country

about Oxford, which from bearing the imprimatur of W. Delaune, Vice-Chancellor, must have been published between 1702 and 1705. If Cwicheim really was interred here, he would not be burnt, as a Christian; and as a Saxon, he would be laid in a cist below the surface of the soil; and since the researches have not yet proceeded so far, the discovery may still remain to be made. But circumstances render it improbable this was a place of sepulture at all. For a regular market was of old kept here, till abolished by James I. in 1620, when, in his grant to Sir Francis Moore of a weekly market in East Ilsley, he prohibits all persons from assembling at the aforesaid place called Cutchinloe, to buy, sell, exchange, or deliver corn, &c., under pain of his royal displeasure. And Dr. Hickee quotes a record of a county court holden here in the time of King Ethelred. See Mr. Wise's Letters on the White Horse.

<sup>h</sup> It is impossible that the Messrs. Lyons could have seen or heard of this singular work, for they take no notice of it; nor indeed of Grimsbury castle, which is more excusable.

the north the same. From the general regularity of the whole work, its having no opening or particular defence on the east side, which is perfectly accessible, while what have been named terraces on the west, where the ground is steep, are disposed rather for display than strength, the place looks more like the area of a destroyed Druidical temple (if stone circles really were such), than any thing else; but if the inclosure be a camp, we may venture to refer it to the Danes. Tradition asserts that it was connected with the battle of Ashdown, and that Alfred offered up his devotions in the neighbouring chapel of Aston Upthorpe, such as it was in his time, before the onset. Certain it is, that there has been hard fighting about here, as may be learnt from the numbers of skeletons which have been discovered from time to time not far off; particularly in making the new road from Blewbury to Wallingford; but having myself seen none of these, I purposely forbear making any observation upon them.

It seems not to be a just conclusion, although it is one which possibly may be drawn, that because the mode of interment which has been above described is, in the extreme, plain and simple, therefore the people using it must have been necessarily very poor and destitute. It is true, the country they inhabited was bleak and open; and being far removed from the coast they had not those opportunities of supplying themselves with trinkets, ornaments, and other things, by means of the *per mercatores commercia*, which Cæsar mentions in the case of the men of Kent. But in addition to the fact of traces of the Romans being found in all directions in the neighbourhood, the circumstance of a piece of Roman pottery being thrown out from the substance of the tumulus, (and a further search might have disclosed much more,) proves that those who raised it lived in Roman times, had seen specimens of their art, and probably also of their luxury. Again, together with the Roman pottery, were found fragments of what is called British; so that they had urns, as well as other natives, and could have secured the bones in one, had they pleased; while as far as regards the place of cremation, it was arranged with unusual and peculiar care. They must have had weapons, however plain, for their own purposes; arrow and spear heads of flint; shields; pins also of bone or bronze, and perhaps some few personal ornaments; but as none of these things have been found, the true explanation of all is,

that the simplicity of their mode of interment was the fashion or habit of the tribe.

For, as Britain in the early times was the prey of many bodies of invaders from the continent, there is no doubt that some of them remained and settled, retaining their peculiar habits and customs, which would appear in nothing more distinctly than in their funeral ceremonies. So that in barrows we have a great variety of shapes, contents, and dates ; one is British, and another Roman, a third Saxon, a fourth a cenotaph, a fifth a boundary, &c., while the whole number in the kingdom put together would supply graves only for an inconsiderable portion of the population, even in Cæsar's time, when, however, it is reported by him to have been great. It has been affirmed to me by a gentleman, a native of Germany, that in the isle of Rugen, which is understood to have been the great seat and focus of Teutonic superstition<sup>1</sup>, the barrows are always found in groups of eleven in number, a singularity for which no reason is known. And upon looking through the pages of the history of Ancient Wilts<sup>2</sup> the same thing may be observed on Salisbury plain. We find there described at Winterbourne Stoke, a group of barrows eleven in number, three of which turn out to be mere cenotaphs, surrounded and separated from all others, as it were, by an oval bank and ditch of slight elevation. Sir R. C. Hoare remarks upon them, that there is something in this case altogether peculiar. Well indeed might he say so ; but assisted by a knowledge of the fact above mentioned, we seem to gain a clue to the mystery ; and it surely is not an unfair inference to suppose that either some wanderers from the shores of the Baltic, or others who acknowledged the superstitions prevalent in the isle of Rugen, may have seized upon and consecrated this spot for their own use, by drawing a line around it, and within throwing up the invariable eleven barrows, although three of them as yet were not wanted. And with regard to the poverty of the barrows at Churn, compared with the barbaric wealth of many of those investigated by Mr. Douglas in Kent, or Sir Richard C. Hoare on the downs of Wiltshire, believing as I do, for the reasons already hinted, that it arose rather from a custom of burying nothing, than the having nothing to bury, it may not be uninteresting to illustrate this idea, by the record of an ancient people, among whom the practice actually prevailed, in committing the bodies of their friends to the

<sup>1</sup> See Cluver's *Germania*, p. 606.

<sup>2</sup> Southern part, p. 115.

flames and to the earth, of wasting and dividing the inheritance amongst themselves. The account which I am about to produce is taken from King Alfred's Saxon version of Orosius, and is given in the words of Dr. Ingram, the translator<sup>1</sup>, to whom I am indebted for reference to it. And curious though the passage be, as an authentic picture of ancient manners, yet inasmuch as the Estonians, who are spoken of, lived far remote, and nothing appears to bring the case home, perhaps the reader might not have been troubled by its transcription, did not unimpeachable evidence from another quarter, namely that of Tacitus in his work *De moribus Germanorum*, tend to establish a kind of connexion, now inexplicable, between the Æstii or Estonians and the Britons. King Alfred is describing, from the account of Wolfstan, who had seen them, the manners of the Estonians, a people inhabiting what he calls a *very extensive* country to the east of the mouth of the river Wisle or Vistula<sup>m</sup>, and the narrative proceeds to the following effect :

“There is also this custom with the Estonians, that when any one dies, the corpse continues unburnt with the relatives and friends for at least a month ; sometimes two ; and the bodies of kings and illustrious men, according to their respective wealth, lie sometimes even for half a year before the corpse is burned, and the body continues above ground in the house ; during which time drinking and sports are prolonged, till the day in which the body is consumed. Then, when it is carried to the funeral pile, the substance of the deceased, which remains after these drinking festivities and sports, is divided into five or six heaps, sometimes even more, according to the proportion of what he happens to be worth. These heaps are so disposed, that the largest heap shall be about one mile from the town ; and so gradually the smaller at lesser intervals, till all the wealth is divided, so that the least heap shall be nearest the town where the corpse lies.

“Then all those are to be summoned together who have the fleetest horses in the land, for a wager of skill, within the distance of five or six miles from these heaps ; and they all ride a race towards the substance of the deceased. Then comes the man that has the winning horse toward the first and largest heap, and so each after other, till the whole is seized upon.

<sup>1</sup> See Dr. Ingram's Inaugural Lecture on the Utility of Anglo-Saxon Literature, p. 82.

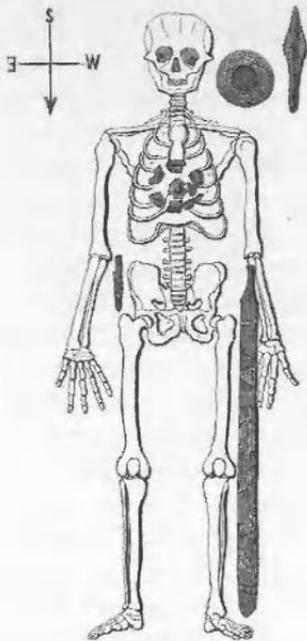
<sup>m</sup> So Tacitus calls them Æstiorum na-

tiones. The Esthonia of the maps is now called Revel, and is part of Russia in Europe.

REMAINS FOUND AT LONG WITTENHAM, BERKSHIRE.



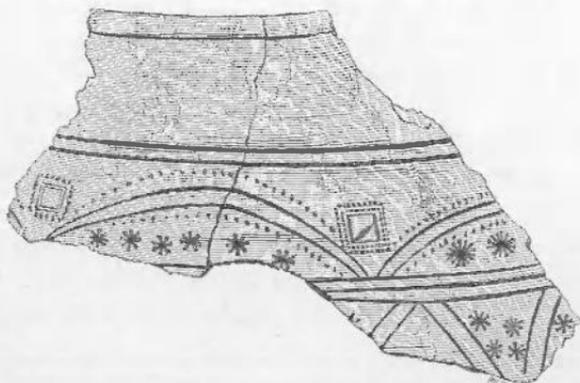
DAGGER



SKELETON, showing the position.



SILVER STUDS AND CENTRAL PORTION OF THE SHIELD.



FRAGMENT OF THE VASE.

He procures, however, the least heap who takes that which is nearest the town; and then every one rides away with his share, and keeps the whole of it. When the wealth of the deceased has been thus exhausted, then they carry out his corpse from the house, and burn it, together with his weapons and clothes; and generally they spend the whole substance by the long continuance of the body within the house, together with what they lay in heaps along the road, which the strangers run for, and take away.

“It is also an established custom with the Estonians, that the dead bodies of every tribe or family shall be burned; and if any man findeth a single bone unconsumed, they shall be fined to a considerable amount.”

The coincident testimony of Tacitus, which I now proceed to give, is most remarkable; and whether we consider the peculiar habit of gathering amber, or, what is more important, the affinity of language, goes far towards shewing that the *Æstii* were not strangers to our ancestors.

“Ergo jam dextro Suevici maris littore *Æstiorum* gentes alluuntur, quibus ritus habitusque Suevorum, lingua Britannicæ proprior. Matrem deum venerantur: insigne superstitionis, formas aprorum gestant. Id pro armis omnique tutela, securum deæ cultorem etiam inter hostes præstat. Rarus ferri, frequens fustium usus. Frumenta, cæterosque fructus patientius quam pro solita Germanorum inertia laborant. Sed et mare scrutantur, ac *soli omnium* succinum, quod ipsi Glesum vocant, inter vada atque in ipso littore legunt,” &c. &c.—Taciti Germania, cap. xlv.

I. W.

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#### DISCOVERY OF A SAXON INTERMENT AT LONG WITTENHAM.

Communicated by the Rev. James C. Clutterbuck.

AN interesting discovery has recently been made at Long Wittenham, in Berkshire, where remains have been brought to light, of a later age than the period to which the foregoing memoir relates. The following account, which has been kindly supplied by the Rev. J. C. Clutterbuck, vicar of the parish, may most appropriately be connected with the memorials of Berkshire antiquities.

“The ancient arms and remains, (of which representations are here given,) were lately dug up in this parish; I was