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point of view. I have little doubt that parallels in Celtic hagiology would be forthcoming if one had time to spend in looking for them. It must suffice for me to call your attention to the subject, and to express a hope that some one specially interested in this department of romance may be able to supply my defects.

I cannot end without expressing my thanks to the Ven. Archdeacon Seymour, Rector of Chittlehampton, who has been good enough to supply me with a statement of all that was known about St Urith in her own parish and county.

Monday, February 17, 1902.

Mr GRAY, President, in the Chair.

EXCAVATIONS IN THE WAR DITCHES NEAR CHERRY HINTON.

Professor HUGHES, before describing the results of continued excavations, acknowledged the assistance he had received from Mr Freeman, and expressed his regret that they had lost the services of Mr Kaines Smith, whose other engagement had prevented his giving much time to the work.

He then went on to report as follows: 'I have received confirmation of the local use of the name "War Ditches." Since my last report (Feb. 3) the course of the great fosse has been quite straight, pointing towards the centre of the reservoir, but now it is beginning to curve round to the east. The fosse is not here as deep by nearly 3 feet as it was proved to be where first crossed in the entrance to Mr Tebbutt's pit.

The most interesting discovery which has been made in the fosse was that of a kind of oven or fireplace which was fortunately exposed before the visit of the Society to the spot and seen by the members on the 5th.

This fireplace was made by digging a hole in the *débris* which filled the fosse and lining it with from 6 to 8 inches of

clay roughly plastered on the loose and crumbling sides. It was fired so as to harden the clay but yet not enough to convert it into a solid mass which could be removed, and from the appearance of the sides in section it seemed probable that the clay lining had been renewed from time to time and the falling sides repaired. In the lining there were some broken pieces of the long wedge-shaped bricks, and lumps of half-baked clay to 8 inches in diameter were packed into the upper part on one side. These were burnt red to a depth of $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 inches on the outside, while the inside part remained black.

Several layers of black carbonaceous humus occurring down to a much lower level indicated successive infillings of the fosse at an earlier date than the construction of the fireplace, with intervals of slow accumulation and growth of weeds. Through the upper layers the hole was dug in which this symmetrical bell-shaped chamber was formed as above described. It measured 42 inches across the top, 20 inches across the bottom, with a depth as now seen of about 41 inches; but, as the finer made-earth extended across at the level of the unfinished top as now seen, that is at about 2 feet from the surface of the ground, we cannot tell what the rim was like nor what was the original depth. It was filled with rubbish like that around it.

Its manner of occurrence furnishes an additional proof of the ancient date of the infilling of the fosse.

The pits with burnt clay, charcoal, half-baked bricks, &c., &c., which they had come upon in several places in the course of the excavations were probably remains of similar structures.

Their use was not at present clear. This one would hold water, but there is no evidence that it was used for that purpose, and the traces of burning were such as to suggest that its last use at any rate was for firing something.

Its small size and rounded base made it improbable that it could have been a potter's kiln or a limekiln. Moreover the class of pottery found about is not such as would have been made in that way, and they had found no refuse heaps composed of the inevitable wasters of a kiln.

On the whole it seemed more probable that it was an oven or cooking place of some kind, and he hoped that further

excavations might enable them to find the true explanation of these interesting remains which probably would throw much light upon the domestic life of the people who constructed and used them.

Following the fosse a few feet further they came upon a human skeleton at a depth of about 10 feet. It appeared to have suffered rough treatment, as was the case with the one found on the other side of the roadway. The skull was gone and the legs were doubled back upon the body. Whatever may be the explanation of the manner of occurrence of the skeletons, it is clear that they were not *buried* in the earth which had partly filled the fosse because the layers extended uninterruptedly over them. After being placed there they were covered by the *débris* which crumbled off the sides or was thrown in. Nor were they carried there with the material which was thrown in from the surrounding surface, for they must have been left where we find them and covered up while the ligaments and soft parts were there to keep the bones together.

Not far from this skeleton the workmen picked up some fragments of pottery near the bottom of the fosse. I did not see these got out, but from the character of the ware I feel sure that most of them had fallen in from the sides and got trodden in where the men were working. This view is confirmed by the occurrence among them of a bit of the bottom of a quite recent glass bottle, the surface of which was corroded by the action of the alkalis in the manure with which it had probably been carried on to the land. This unfortunately throws doubt on all the specimens then collected, the characters of some of which make it not improbable that they did occur at the base. It has however been proved that fragments of a rough black and red pottery with white angular chips of calcined flint do occur in the lower layers below the skeletons.

About the level of the top of the fireplace above described is the horizon whence we have obtained the greatest quantity and the finest quality of pottery. There is a large proportion of thin black, red, and white ware with bands or circles painted

on, or produced in slip in high relief, while others were ornamented with rings or triangular groups of dots, also in high relief. Seeing that there was so much pottery of the better kind, the almost entire absence of Samian is very marked and indicates that Roman art still survived, but that the importation of distinctively Roman objects had ceased.

A little further still in the direction of the reservoir at a depth of about 2 feet from the surface, that is from the same horizon as that from which most of the pottery was obtained, a plain bronze fibula¹ was found. It was unfortunately broken by the pick in getting it out and had previously lost a portion of the narrower end. The fragment was about $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches long with a square expansion at one end. This was $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch in length and $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches in breadth with a curved lunette front. The back was very thick and strongly bent. The lost part must have added from $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 inches to the length. On the under side there are two loops into which the pin must have passed, but there is no trace remaining of any spring. This fiddle-shaped brooch is not like any Roman or Saxon specimen which has so far occurred in this district, and, like the pottery, suggests that it belongs to an age when the Romanized British still kept up the general types they had learned from the Romans.

ON SOME EARTHWORKS AT BOXWORTH AND KNAPWELL.

By Professor T. MCKENNY HUGHES.

There is a look of antiquity about the parishes of Lolworth, Boxworth, and Knapwell, but there are few records or traditions to help us in making out their history. There are traces of ancient enclosures and cultivation everywhere and very old trees stand about in rows and clumps. The names are Scan-

¹ This interesting specimen will, it is hoped, be figured when the final report is made to the Society—as also the pottery, much of which is new to our district, and the ovens, which are different from anything of which I can find record.

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