

REPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS.

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REPORT

PRESENTED TO THE

**Cambridge Antiquarian Society,**

AT ITS FORTY-EIGHTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING,

MAY 21, 1888,

WITH AN ABSTRACT OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE SOCIETY  
1887—1888.

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ALSO

**Communications**

MADE TO THE SOCIETY.

No. XXX.

BEING No. 4 OF THE SIXTH VOLUME.

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# REPORT

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WITH APPENDIX.



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XXII. NOTES ON LIMBLOW HILL, NEAR ROYSTON,  
CAMBRIDGESHIRE. Communicated by Professor  
HUGHES.

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[May 21, 1888.]

ABOUT  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile W. of the Great Eastern Railway and 2 miles S.W. of Royston, on the brow of the hill which slopes down to Litlington and Bassingbourne, there is a mound rising some 18 feet above the ground with a diameter of about 42 feet, and surrounded by a ditch and bank, which have been so far modified or obliterated by recent agricultural operations that their original form and extent are not now clear. The path from Royston to Litlington passes close by it, and it has long been a favourite spot for a holiday stroll.

In summer the mound itself cannot be seen from a distance, but the clump of trees which surrounds and conceals it is conspicuous from all the broad valley W. of Royston, and from the hills above it.

The proprietor has recently commenced to remove it, and has cut a trench through it down to the level of the surrounding ground. This has enabled us to examine in detail the structure of one of these curious moated mounds, of the age and object of which so little has been ascertained.

I visited the spot with Mr Jenkinson last term, and have since sought for information on the subject from various persons resident in the district.

An examination of the interior of the mound shows that it was not composed of the material dug out of the fosse. Had that been the case, the surface soil which was first removed would have been first thrown down, and therefore formed the



base of the mound, and then the solid chalk would have been excavated and heaped up above it.

But in Limblow Hill there were from top to bottom rapid alternations of humus and chalk rubble in layers about 6 inches thick, just such as would be produced if only the surface soil and decomposed top of the chalk were scraped together and thrown on the mound. A slight rise on the outside of the fosse, where it still exists, seems to suggest that the material was thrown out from it to form a bank on the outside.

I learned that a rectangular pit four feet long and two feet deep and filled with large flints had been found at the bottom of the mound, but of this nothing was seen when we visited the place. We saw only fragments of an antler of red deer. I was unable to ascertain whether this had formed a pick, but it would be exactly the kind of instrument that might have enabled the mound-builders to loosen the surface soil and rubbly top chalk. Such a pick, made by cutting off all the points except the brow tyne, I have found in the fosse of a British camp at Parcymeirch near St Asaph, similarly constructed of the surface soil and rubbly top of the rock. Several such were dug up in the pits at Cissbury.

There is therefore much to suggest that the mound was pre-Roman, modified and used perhaps in Roman or even later times.

The name is variously given in the district: Limlow—Limblow—Linglow. The last form is interesting as there is a similar mound on the Westmorland moors<sup>1</sup> known as Lingy low.

Further enquiries have brought no information as to objects found *in* the mound. All that I could hear of occurred in the fosse or elsewhere *round* the mound, where human bones and Roman coins are recorded to have been dug up in the early part of the century. There is a note to that effect on the six-inch ordnance map.

<sup>1</sup> Near Crosby Ravensworth, Shap, Westmorland.