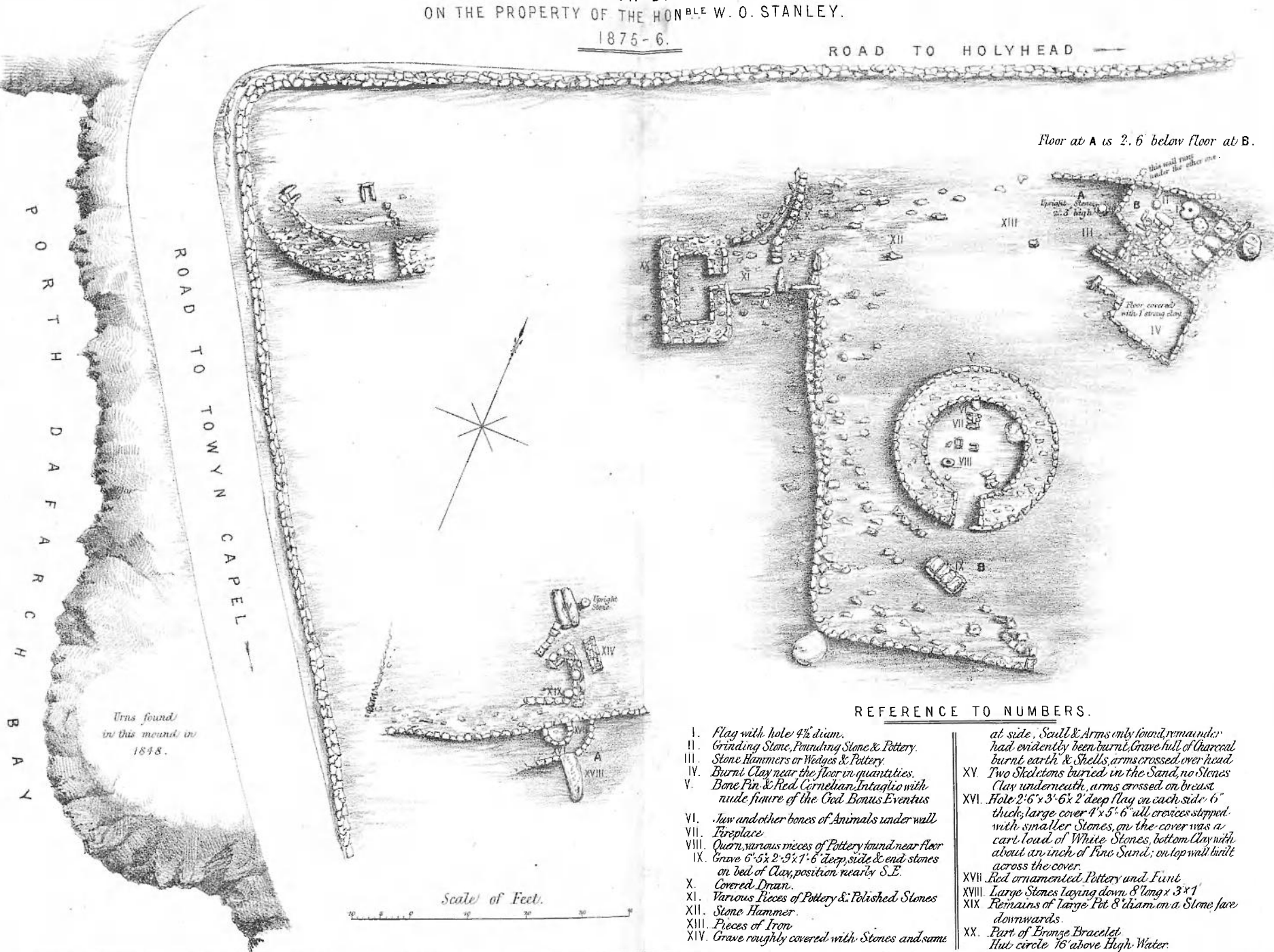


EXCAVATIONS AT PORTH DAFARCH, HOLYHEAD, ON THE PROPERTY OF THE HON^{BLE} W. O. STANLEY.

1875-6.

ROAD TO HOLYHEAD

Floor at A is 2.6' below floor at B.



REFERENCE TO NUMBERS.

- I. Flag with hole $4\frac{1}{2}$ diam.
- II. Grinding Stone, Pounding Stone & Pottery.
- III. Stone Hammers or Wedges & Pottery.
- IV. Burnt Clay near the floor in quantities.
- V. Bone Pin & Red Cornelian Intaglio with nude figure of the God Bonus Eventus
- VI. Jaw and other bones of Animals under wall
- VII. Fireplace
- VIII. Quern, various pieces of Pottery found near floor
- IX. Grave 6' 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 2' 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 1' 6" deep, side & end stones on bed of Clay, position nearly S.E.
- X. Covered Drain.
- XI. Various Pieces of Pottery & Polished Stones
- XII. Stone Hammer.
- XIII. Pieces of Iron
- XIV. Grave roughly covered with Stones and same

- at side, Skull & Arms only found, remainder had evidently been burnt, Grave full of Charcoal burnt earth & Shells, arms crossed over head.
- XV. Two Skeletons buried in the Sand, no Stones Clay underneath, arms crossed on breast
- XVI. Hole 2' 6" x 3' 6" x 2' deep, flag on each side 6" thick, large cover 4' x 5' 6" all crevices stopped with smaller Stones, on the cover was a cart load of White Stones, bottom Clay with about an inch of Fine Sand; on top wall built across the cover.
- XVII. Red ornamented Pottery and Funer
- XVIII. Large Stones laying down 8' long x 3' x 1'
- XIX. Remains of large Pot 8' diam on a Stone face downwards.
- XX. Part of Bronze Bracelet
This circle 16' above High Water.

NOTICES OF SEPULCHRAL DEPOSITS WITH CINERARY URNS
FOUND AT PORTH DAFARCH, IN HOLYHEAD ISLAND,
IN 1848; AND OF RECENT EXCAVATIONS IN THE SAND
MOUNDS ADJACENT IN 1875-6.

By the Hon. W. OWEN STANLEY, F.S.A., Lord Lieutenant of Anglesey.

I COMMENCE my account of more recent discoveries at Porth Dafarch last year by a reprint of portions of a former notice given in 1848, as they will afford great assistance to the reader of the later discoveries on the same spot.¹

In the month of October, 1848, an interment which presented some unusual circumstances in the mode of deposit, was found on the shores of the bay called Porth Dafarch, about midway between the South Stack and Towyn y Capel, on the estates of the late Lord Stanley of Alderley, now possessed by the writer of the present notice. The tenant, Thomas Jones, was collecting stones suitable for the construction of some farm buildings: on the right of the road leading down to the bay there was a small mound about 30 ft. in circumference, severed from other large mounds by the road; at this spot the tenant was removing a stone of some size, and, on this being displaced, an earthen urn, described as resembling a beehive, was discovered beneath, which mostly crumbled to pieces, a few fragments only being preserved.

It is of a very coarse light brown ware, formed by hand, without the lathe; the interior, near the mouth, as well as the exterior, ornamented with zigzag scourings. In general character it appears not dissimilar to the cinerary urns found in Wiltshire and other parts of England. It is probable that this large urn, which had been placed in an inverted position, had become decayed by moisture and proximity to the surface, the interment being less than 2 ft. beneath the

¹ For further particulars see "Arch Journ." vol. vi. p. 226. It had been intended to reproduce the illustrations

there given, but at the last moment it was found that the wood-blocks were not forthcoming.

sward. The urn had been protected by flat stones to resist the superincumbent weight.

On searching further a small urn of unusual form, and fabricated with considerable skill, was found placed within the larger urn; both contained ashes, fragments of burned bones, and sand. The smaller urn was placed in the centre, upon a flat stone, carefully protected all round by a little wall of pieces of shingle set edgeways, about 6 or 8 ins. in height, and serving to protect the deposit from the weight of the surrounding soil—the mouth of the urn, indeed, was so firmly fixed and embedded in this manner that it proved impracticable to extricate it without breaking the vessel to pieces. The exterior urn appears to have been of great size, nearly 13 ins.; the height cannot now be ascertained correctly. The strongest parts of the fragments which have been preserved measure near $\frac{7}{8}$ in. in thickness; the surface is of a dingy brown colour, extending only through a slight crust, the interior being dark black and deficient in compactness; the outer side is scored around the rim with diagonal and vertical lines, formed as if by a coarse cord upon the clay, and it is ornamented by several grooves or channels of equal width, marked with zigzag lines impressed in the same manner, and with great regularity; on the inner side the mouth of the urn is likewise ornamented with a corded pattern about $2\frac{3}{4}$ ins. deep.

The small urn, which is of a lighter colour, very compact and well formed, measures $4\frac{5}{8}$ ins. diameter at mouth, its height 3 ins., diameter at base $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches. It is marked over the entire surface, as is also the lip within, by lines scored with a fine pointed tool, and forming a succession of zigzag bands: this urn was not inverted. The urns had been placed on a flat stone forming a floor. In the preceding woodcut their proportion is shown.

A second similar deposit was brought to light adjacent to that which has been described. The outer urn had become quite decayed and crumbled into black dust; within it had been placed a small urn of still more diminutive size than the former and quite plain, without any ornamental scorings. It was fortunately preserved, and measures in height $2\frac{5}{8}$ ins., diameter of mouth $2\frac{1}{4}$ ins., diameter of widest part $3\frac{1}{2}$ ins., base $1\frac{5}{8}$ ins. Like the first, it contained ashes.

A few feet to the west of these remains a rudely formed

cist or grave, placed nearly east and west, was found formed from slates of stone set edgeways, and covered by a fifth slab of large size ;—a considerable quantity of bones were scattered around, and charcoal with appearances of fire. It is probable that the bodies may have been burned here, and the ashes gathered and placed in the urns.

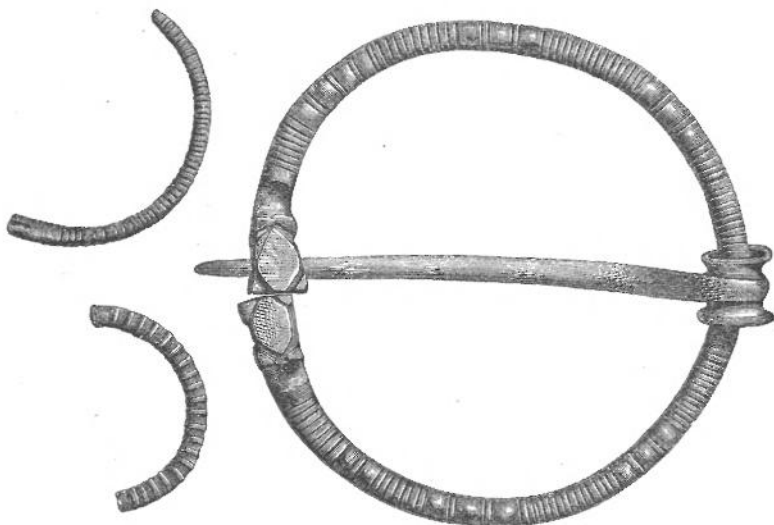
Many large stones lay in the sand around, measuring near 3 ft. square ; there was also a large stone which might have formed a *maen hir*. The sea washed the base of this tumulus, which was the natural rock, but the sea, probably, had encroached on the bay one hundred yards since the deposit of urns took place.

The general appearance of the spot and position of the tumulus are seen in the view which accompanies the memoir in vol. vi. p. 226.

In the neighbourhood of the spot, further inland, there are several green mounds which have some appearance of being sepulchral, but the sand has drifted much and formed round heaps over projections of the rock.

On the 5th of October last, 1875, having given permission to the contractors for the new dock at Holyhead to take sand from Porth Dafarch, where it had drifted against the rocks about 300 yards from the sea, and near the spot where the urns were found in 1848 at a depth of about three feet from the surface, they opened out a stratum of black burnt soil about 40 feet from the face of a large overhanging cliff, at which the sand drift ends. This stratum was at first only six inches thick, but it gradually increased to three feet in depth as it approached the rock, on which it appeared a fierce fire had been maintained for a considerable length of time, and had formed a semicircular deposit, of which it was the centre. About 20 feet on each side from the central fire, the black deposit was mixed with stones from the sea beach and charcoal, a great many bones of the primitive ox (*bos longifrons*), red deer antlers of large size, and teeth of the same animal ; also the tusk of a wild boar (the large bones were all broken, probably to extract the marrow), numerous fragments of pottery of various kinds, amongst which was one of highly ornamented Samian. A little further from the spot bearing marks of the fire, to the south, we discovered a beautiful large bronze brooch, quite perfect, of circular form, $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches in

diameter, ornamented on the front side with ribs. It much resembled the Highlander's brooch, with which he fastens his plaid. With it were portions of two smaller rings of bronze ribbed in the same manner. A bronze



Bronze brooch, and portions of rings of bronze found at Porth Dafarch.

brooch of somewhat similar form, but smaller, was found in the Roman camps at *Caer Leb*.² There were six feet of sand under the spot marked by the fire and only three above it; if we suppose the fire had been used about 1500 or 1600 years ago, and the deposit of drift sand had been regular, these six feet would denote a great antiquity.

Finding these interesting traces of an early occupation of the spot,—for the brooch is supposed by an excellent authority to be early in the Romano-British times,—determined me to commence the excavation of one of the green mounds before noticed, which had always attracted the attention of Mr. Albert Way and myself as possibly being sepulchral. We selected one of the green mounds, the centre one of three close to the road from Holyhead, and just above the mound where in 1848 the urns were discovered, as described in the commencement of this memoir. As a few large stones projected from the surface of the sward at the top of the mound, we hoped to find some sepulchral deposit. A trench

² See "*Archæologia Cambrensis*," Series 3, vol. xii., p. 214.



Bone needle, fragments of pottery, and pierced tip of deer's horn, found at Porth Dafarch.

was dug from north to south across the top of this tumulus, the large stones being removed. The uppermost one was a rough, flat stone resting upon an upright one sunk in the sand about three feet; several other large stones scattered about had apparently formed a rude cist for the protection of urns. From the disturbed state of the stones, and numerous fragments of pottery being mixed with the sand, there was little doubt in my mind that the tumulus had been opened at some former time, but by unskilful hands; the green sward was firm, so it must have been many years ago, as the drift sand takes a very long time to re-form a compact sward. The trench was about four feet wide and the same deep. The tumulus was formed of sand mixed with quantities of stones from the sea-shore. The fragments of pottery were like broken urns of various dimensions, very similar to those found at Pen y Bonc in 1869.³ From the fragments it was evident many urns must have been broken up. At the north end, where we commenced the trench, about four feet from the surface, we found ashes of human bones, just such as are found inside the urns, also human bones not so entirely burnt in the fire. There were two or three bee-hive excavations in the sand lined with flat stones placed one upon the other so as to form a dome; from one of these I took out a handful of human bones, with a portion of the jaw and teeth. They seemed to have been subjected to cremation. On throwing out the sand a bone pin or needle was obtained five inches long, marked with a lozenge pattern; it had been broken off where the hole was made to take the sinew or thread, and had probably been thrown out of the urn when the tumulus was first opened. Such needles are very frequently found deposited in or near urns, having been used probably to sew up the ashes or bones in cloth or other substance, collected after cremation from the funeral pile, to be deposited in urns or such cavities as I have just described. Many large bones of animals, mostly the ox (*bos longifrons*) or red deer, were mixed with the sand.

The tenant I employed, when sifting the sand thrown out of the trench about four feet from the surface, discovered a beautiful small red cornelian intaglio close to the spot where the bone needle was found. It was most fortunate so small an object was observed. The gem represented a naked

³ See Arch. Journ., vol. xxvi., p. 307.

figure of a youth, wreathed round the head, holding a cake in one hand, outstretched, and ears of corn in the left hand, hanging down by the side.



Intaglio found at Tommen-y-Mur, Festiniog.

Intaglio found at Porth Dafarch.

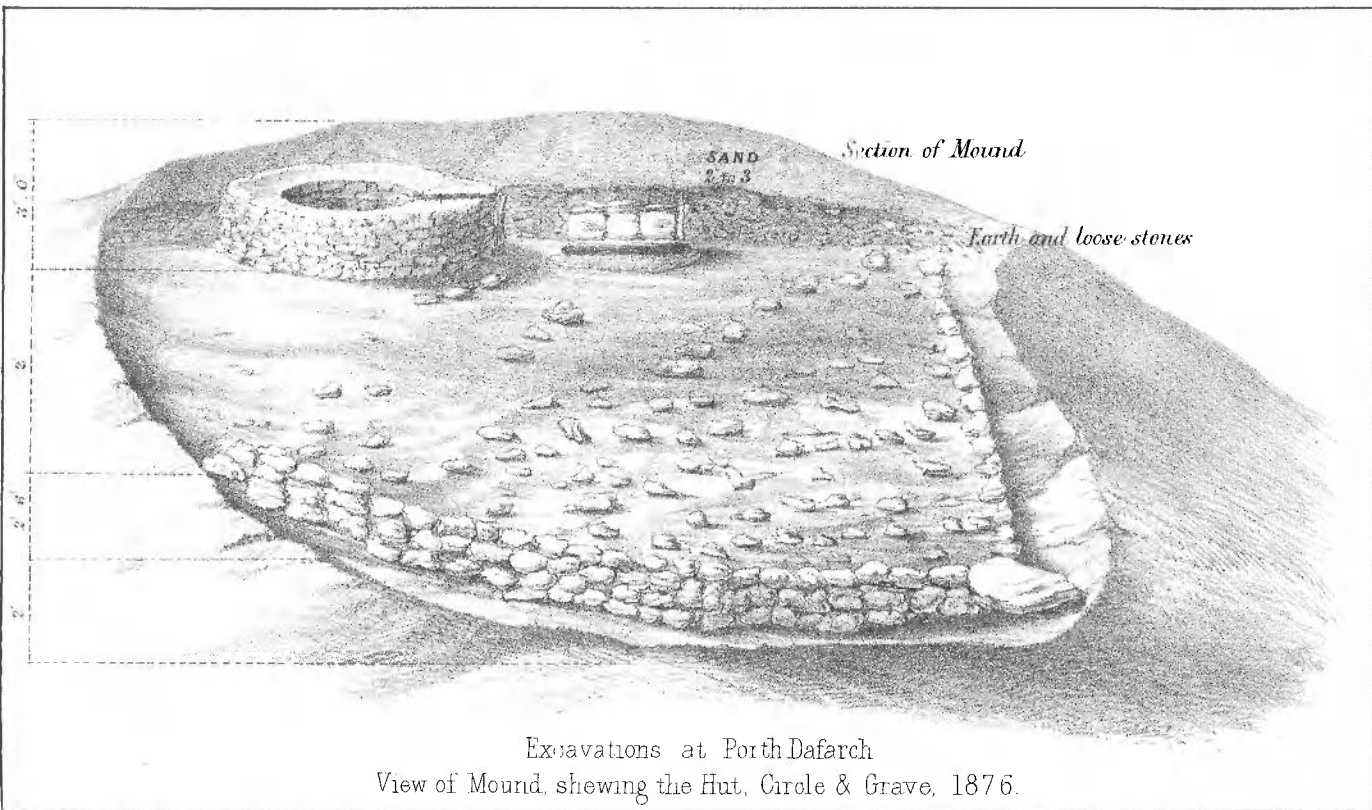
The figure is supposed to represent the god Bonus Eventus. An intaglio so much resembling it was found at Tommen y Mur, Festiniog (*Hereri Mons*) that I obtained permission from the late Mrs. Coulson to have it engraved and placed by the side of mine for the advantage of comparison, as no engraving had ever been made of it. I also give copies of letters from my cousin, the late Mr. Albert Way, to Mrs. Coulson, with remarks about the figure and intaglio, which are most applicable to the one found at Porth Dafarch. Mr. Utting, who engraved them for me, told me it could hardly be doubted but that the same hand had executed both gems.

(Copy of a letter from the late Mr. Albert Way to the late Mrs. Coulson, Billaport Hall, Market Drayton, about the gem found at Tommen-y-Mur, *Hereri Mons* of the Romans).

“ISLE OF WIGHT, *January 9, 1872.*

“DEAR MADAM,—I hope that it may be agreeable to you to hear what is said of the Tommen y Mur intaglio by my friend Mr. King, who has gained so general a reputation for his special knowledge of such subjects. He writes thus :—

“‘The gem is very interesting, as having every appearance of having been the work of a British artist ; the design of the figure, so peculiar as it is, is identical with that of the nude figures on the reverse of the coins of Carausius, and Alecto,



and on those issued later from the London Mint. As for the subject, the first glance suggests Mercury; more minute examination proves the attributes to be meant for a bunch of grapes and ears of corn. The personage can only be *Bonus Eventus*. A votive tablet to this deity associated with Fortune was found at Caerleon (see Lee's "Isca Silurum," p. 19). This image was with good reason a very popular signal device with the Romans.'

"You will probably agree with me in thinking that 'Good Luck' appears in a somewhat Mercurial character on your gem. When my friend describes this art as British, we must of course assume that he intends colonial, or such as was the produce of Britain, whether by Roman hands or otherwise under the control of Roman influence. It is striking to find how the Romans carried with them to the remotest quarters of the Empire the elegancies or refinements of life, as well as their prevailing habits of thought, manners, superstitions, and so forth.⁴

"ALBERT WAY."

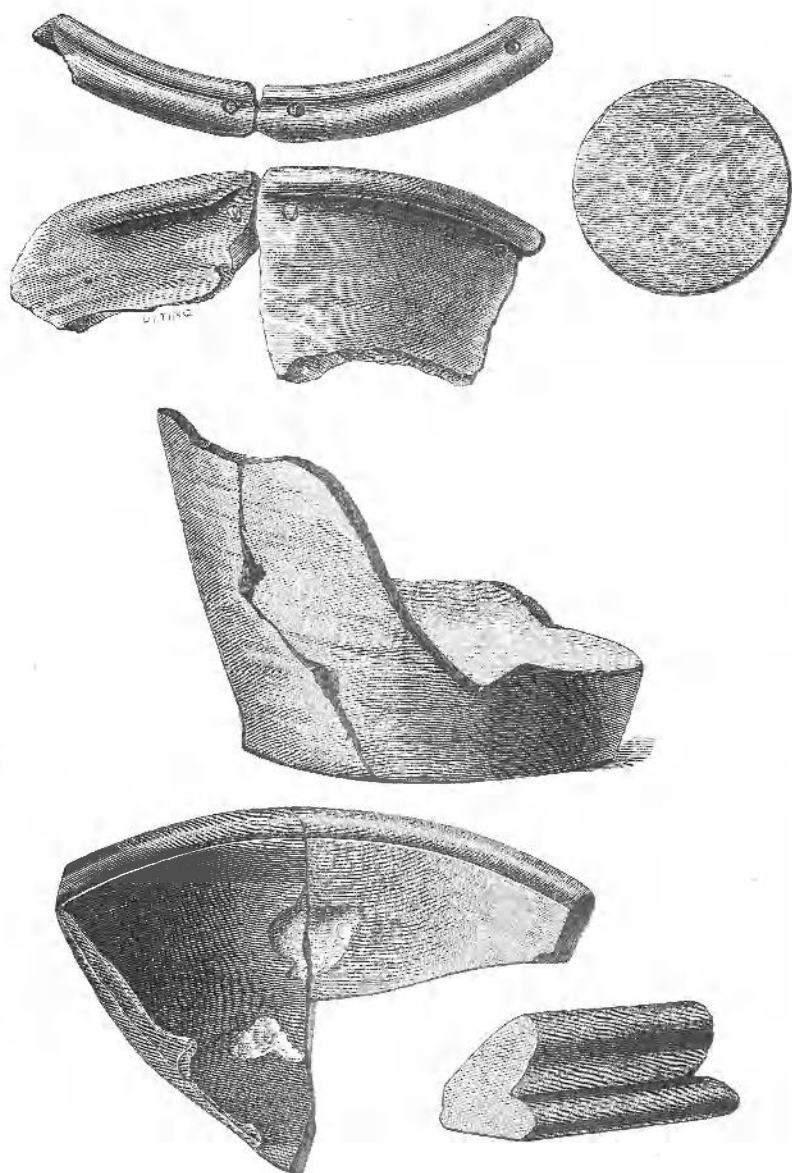
"MRS. COULSON, BILLAPORT HALL."

Greatly encouraged by finding so much of interest, and traces of urn burials so near the surface of the tumulus; on the 14th of December, 1875, we proceeded to make a systematic examination of the whole mound or tumulus. We commenced by removing the green sward on the south and west sides. At the base we found a well-built wall about 2 ft. 6 in. high of rough stones; those on the south side were larger and well-selected stones of a square form, two to three feet square. The wall appears to have been built as a support for the sandy mound; it followed

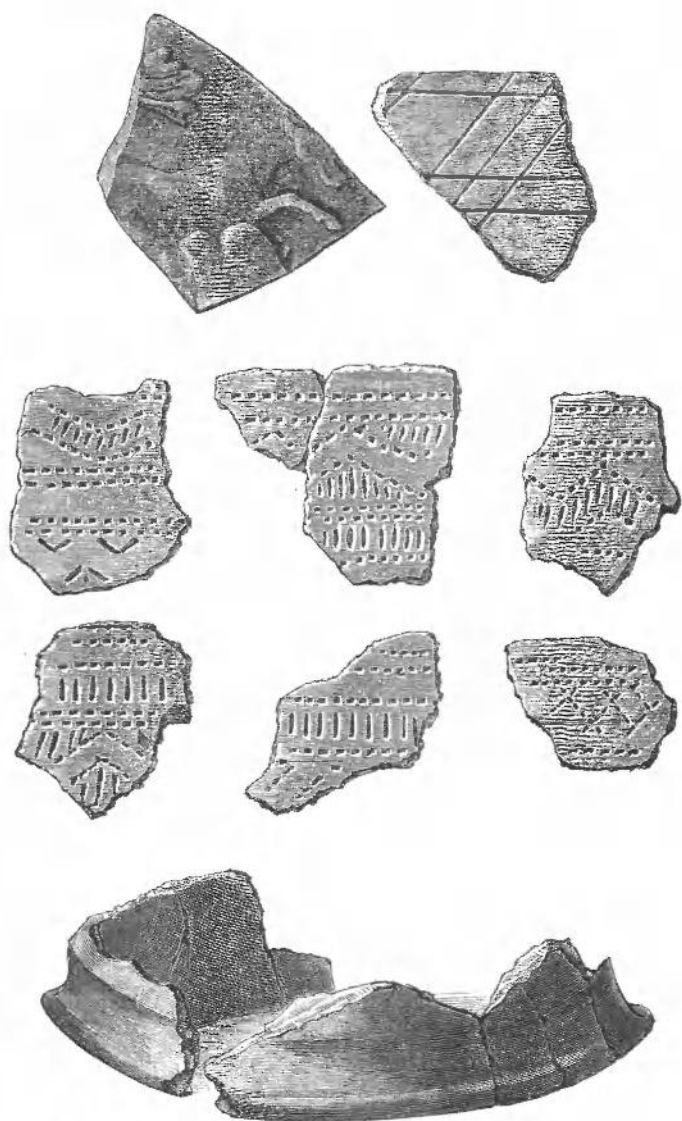
⁴ Only three intaglios are known to have been found in North Wales, the one I have just described, at Hereri Mons in 1868 (mentioned in the "Archæologia Cambrensis," 3 Series, vol. xiv., p. 476), the one at Porth Dafarch in 1875, and the one found at Dinas Duille, near Carnarvon, about 1750. Of the latter I have obtained the following account from my friend Mr. C. K. Watson, Secretary of the Society of Antiquaries:—"Mr. James Williams, No. 6, St. James's Place, exhibited to the Antiquarian Society a ring which was found about 60 years ago in the ruins of an old Roman fortification at Dinas Duille, four miles from Car-

narvon, and which he wore as a ring for the last 40 years. To which was added by way of illustration what Suetonius says in the 'Life of Galba,' 'that fortifying a town (Milan) which he had pitched upon for the seat of war, a ring was found of antique workmanship, in the stone of which was cut the goddess Victory, with a trophy' ('Suetonius a Galba,' cap. 10).—Extract of a Minute of the Society of Antiquaries, 5 Nov., 1810. I may add that the impression on the ring represents an armed figure holding in the right hand a Nike and in the left a spear with shield at the base.—C. K. WATSON, 1876."

the curve of the tumulus all round. The whole side of the hill under the turf was thickly strewed with stones placed close together, with a view probably to prevent the drift of the sand, which is very great near the sea in stormy weather. On clearing away the sand from the top of the mound, about four feet from the surface, we came upon a well-formed grave or cist made of several flat stones set edgeways. The length of the coffin was 6 ft. 5 in., by 2 ft. 6 in. wide, placed nearly E.S.E. and N.N.W. On removing the covering stones, which had been most carefully laid overlapping each other so as to prevent the sand from filling the coffin, the interior was found to be entirely filled with black earth. From the slimy appearance of the covering stones cemented together with mud, it was clear that the cist had become entirely filled with the black earth by filtration, caused by the rain percolating through the sand. The body was placed with the feet to the east. In order to examine the contents we had to take away the stones of the cist, which could not support themselves on the removal of the sand around them. A portion of the skull and the large bones of the arms and legs were alone to be found. All other bones were entirely decayed; the arms had been crossed upon the breast; underneath the body, which had been stretched out full length, was a bed of charcoal four or five inches thick, and below that a bed of clay six inches deep, then the pure sand of the tumulus. The body presented the appearance of having been partially burnt, from the absence of all the small bones and vertebræ of the back, as was very customary before cremation was entirely superseded by ordinary burial in the earth. In the "*Horæ Ferales*," p. 98, Mr. Kemble writes, "A striking instance occurs to me of an interment in which fire appears to have been introduced almost by stealth, although the bodies had evidently not been exposed to the full power of the pile. Some years ago, at Elza, near Hildesheim, a barrow was opened. Upon its basis were found six holes or kists, as they are sometimes called. Five of them were nearly filled with ashes of wood, and over each a skeleton lay at full length upon its back. The sixth hole was not so occupied, but close by it stood a small urn, and a spindle-whorl, the only implement of any kind discovered in the barrow; the base was encircled by a circle of stones. It has been conjectured that this is an interment of a



Fragments of pottery found at Porth Dafarch.



←-----7 1/4 in.----->

Fragments of Samian and other pottery found at Porth Dafarch.

transition state of Christians who had not yet entirely relinquished pagandom, or, if pagans, who, though dread of the law prevented them from raising a pile to consume the bodies entirely, had devised a plan of burning at least part of the flesh by means of fire lighted beneath the dead and fed with heather, sedge, ferns, where flames could not be seen far off. In like manner Abbé Cochet found several skeletons at Parfondeval lying upon a stratum of ashes and charcoal."

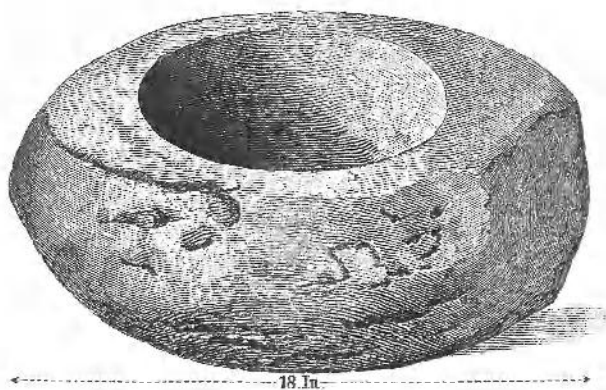
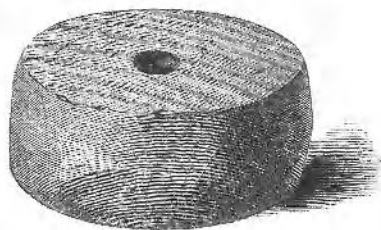
This accords precisely with what we found in the burials at Porth Dafarch, the ashes being apparently of heather, ferns, &c., not presenting the consistency of wood charcoal. This interment must have been made by excavation from the surface, as the sides of the kist could not support themselves and must have fallen to pieces without the surrounding sand acting as a support. There were no flat stones under the body ; it rested upon charcoal or other burnt substance. The next day we cleared the entire top of the mound, and to our great surprise at a few feet distance from the grave we exposed the walls of a circular hut habitation like those at Ty Mawr, described in my former account. The walls were about 3 ft. 6 in. in height and 6 ft. thick, formed of a wall of stones outside and inside filled with sand ; —small flat stones from the seashore lined the wall inside. The entrance was as usual to the south-east ; the coffin was placed right across the entrance, affording another proof that it had been made long after the hut ceased to be inhabited. The circular space inside the hut was filled with a dark, black peaty soil similar to that found in the grave. This black earth, being confined to the hut and close around it, I suspect, was from the heather turf which formed the covering of the roof having fallen down and filled the interior when the hut was destroyed. Mixed with the black soil were fragments of pottery, bones of animals, and some human bones, a stone hammer and pounding stones, and in several places little hoards of stone, beautifully polished with great care, from the size of a nut to a walnut.⁵ The pebbles were all chosen for their beauty, and are mostly agate flints such as a child would pick up when wet with the sea. In the hut was a stone mortar or quern supported on a pedestal of

⁵ These polished stones were found in the Ty Mawr huts. They were probably used to play some game.

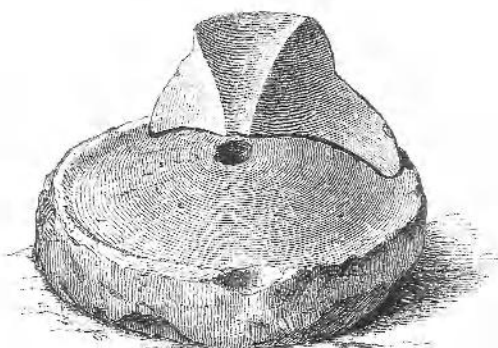
stones. This quern was filled with the black soil, and in it was a fragment of ornamental Samian pottery representing horses prancing. A stone table was built into one side of the walls of the hut supported by large stones. There was a square fireplace 2 feet square, the same we came upon when the trench was first made in the mound;—part of the floor of the hut was flagged. In the centre three stones were sunk in the floor as if to support a pole fixed by them to reach the roof, to which the rafters might be attached. This rude ruck of stones were observed in all the hut circles at Ty Mawr, from which we may presume the roofing was made of timber spars covered with sods of heather, leaving a circular hole at the top for ventilation. Two large stones were fixed in the floor, standing about two feet from it; by the marks upon them they appeared to have been used as anvils.

This most unexpected discovery that the mound was no sepulchral tumulus, but a habitation covered with the sand drift to the depth of three or four feet, changed all our previous views. It appeared that the hut was the primary establishment on the mound, built on the top with a well-formed wall round the base of the mound; that it must have been destroyed by violence, deserted for a length of time, and gradually covered with the drift sand and so formed into the grassy tumulus we first observed; and that from the nature of the tumulus, the deposit of urns and later burials in stone kists were made by various races of men, in entire ignorance that a habitation and other buildings were concealed beneath the sward.

We next proceeded to excavate on the west side, nearer the sea, what appeared to be a separate mound divided from the larger one by a hollow in which ran the protecting wall at the base of the first mound before mentioned. We soon came upon walls forming a triangular chamber, the walls of which were about three feet high; on the top of the walls were two flat stones fixed: apparently they had been used for grinding some substance, as they were smooth and polished. Inside this chamber was a grave dug in the floor, 6 ft. 4 in. by 2 ft. 6 in.; the grave was lined with small flat stones on the sides; it was placed E.S.E. and N.N.W. The skull and arm bones alone remained; the head was laid on the left side, carefully propped up with three flat stones under it. The skull was preserved perfect.

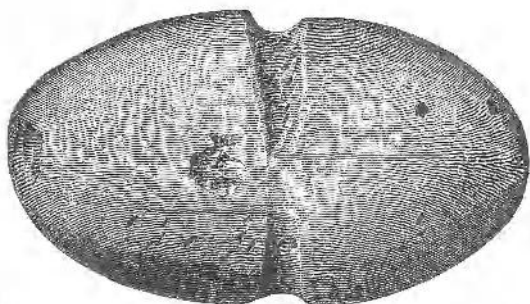


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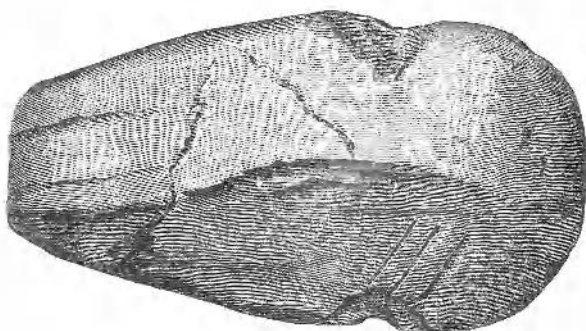


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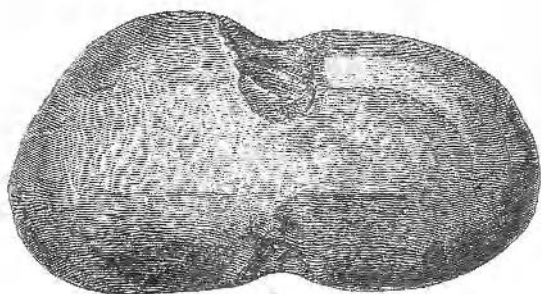
Whorl and quern found at Porth Dafarch.



←----- 6 ³/₄ In. -----→

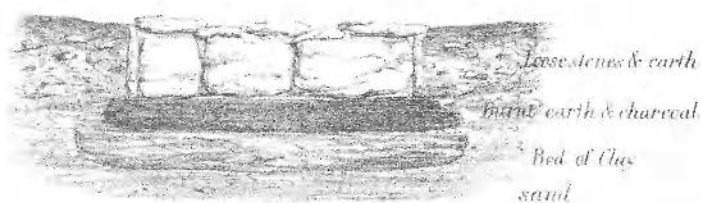


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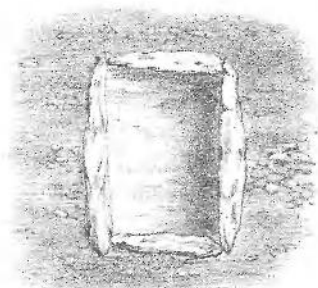


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Stone implements found at Porth Dafarch.

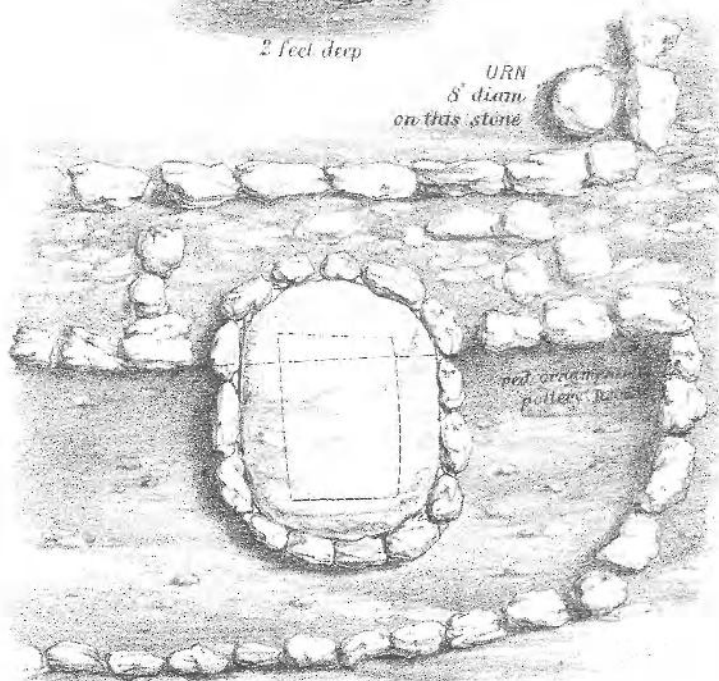


Grave at B.



2 feet deep

URN
8" diam
on this stone



Enlarged Plan of hole with cover 8" at A

ES 636 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 FEET

The body was laid east and west ; the arms were crossed over the top of the head.⁶ The grave was full of charcoal, on which the body was laid, with clay underneath, and great quantities of limpet and periwinkle shells. Within a few feet to the west were two other skeletons without any coffin laid in the sand, a flat stone under the head, the bodies placed on charcoal and clay like the others. The graves were about three or four feet from the surface. A little below these graves a large upright stone appeared, and under the wall near the sea a heap of round white quartz pebbles of the size of paving stones formed a sort of cairn. On clearing these away a large flat stone was exposed 5 ft. 4 in. by 4 ft. ; the wall was built on half of it. On taking this down and removing the stone, which required three men, as it was near nine inches thick, the covering stone was found to be placed upon a rectangular cist formed of four flat stones 2 ft. 6 in. by 3 ft. 6 in. The covering stone had been most carefully packed round with small stones, to prevent anything from falling into the cist. It was quite empty, with only a slight sprinkling of sand not half-an-inch thick ; the bottom of the cist was clay. The cist from its appearance could never have been opened since the cover was put over it. At the end of the cist was a large stone 8 ft. long by 3 ft. broad lying down, but had probably been a *maen hir* to mark the spot. Several fragments of highly ornamented pottery similar to the drinking cups found in Bronwen's urn, and in a grave at Rhosbeirio⁷ were placed at the back of a skeleton buried in a crouching form. Near to the square cist we came upon a few stones which had covered an urn, but it crumbled to pieces on the touch. The lower portions when placed together gave the diameter of the urn eight inches outside ; it was made of coarse brown clay very imperfectly baked, the exterior light brown, but black inside. The urn varied in thickness from two-thirds to three-quarters of an inch ; it was quite plain, without any scorings. The urn had been placed with the mouth downwards on a flat stone ; it had been protected by stones laid one upon the other so as to form a dome and a flat stone at the top, very similar to those found in 1848. There were no ashes or bones to be found very near the spot where

⁶ The skull was fractured as it seemed from a heavy blow.

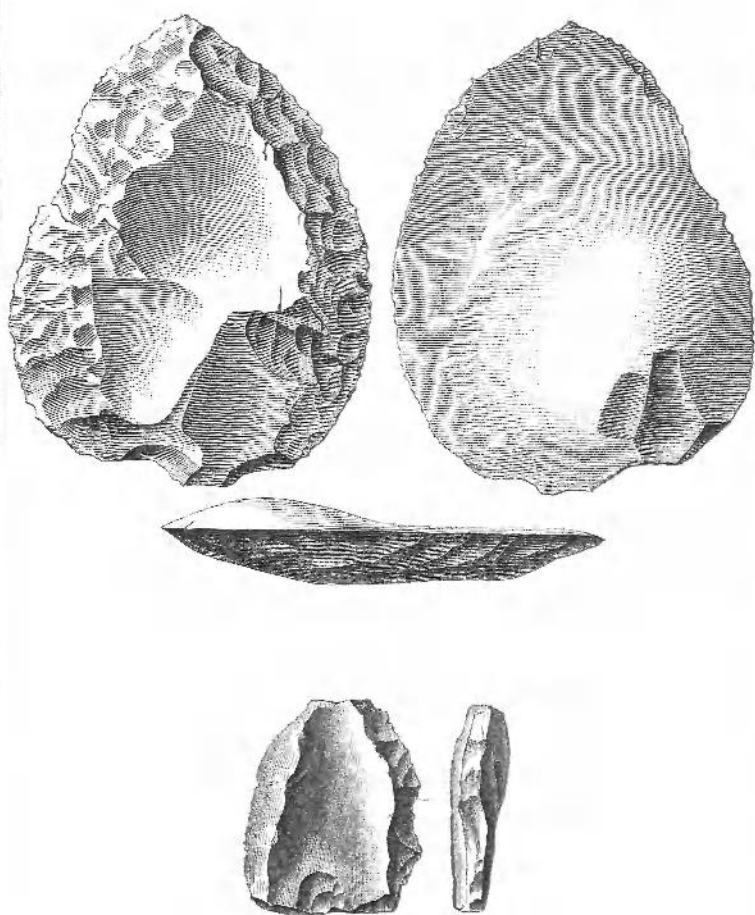
⁷ See Arch. Journ., vol. xxiv., p. 27.

this urn was found. We dug up a finely worked white flint spear-head or knife, with a sharp edge for cutting. The spot where these objects were found was not twenty yards from the place where the urns were got in 1848 and on the same level; the present road to the seashore divided them.

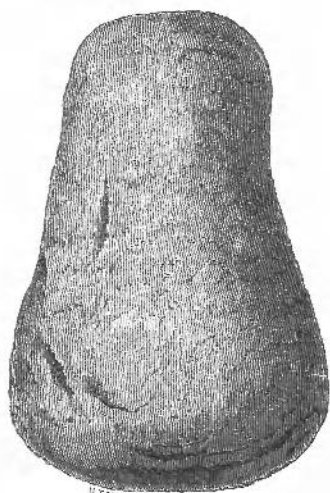
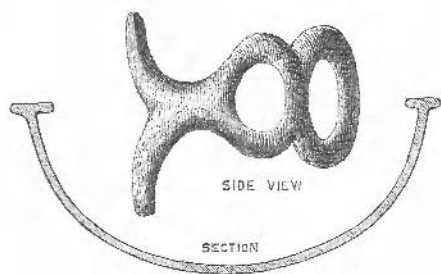
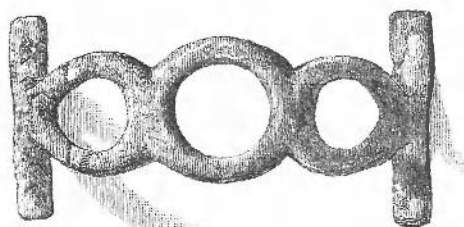
A second hut of larger dimensions than the first was excavated, near the road, of 35 ft. diameter; two fire-places in the usual form, but nothing else was discovered, and being close to the road and 12 ft. below, we could not extend our works further. Another cluster of chambers had been opened out in the first mound to the north: the principal one was flagged; one had a hole 4 in. diameter worked through it, and near to this the lower portion of a mill for grinding corn was fixed to the floor, made of grit stone; a portion of the upper stone, made of trap, was near it. Several long chambers opened out from this, flat stones 5 ft. and 8 ft. long set on edge forming the sides. There were many pounding stones (one 26 lb. weight), stone hammers, and pieces of iron much corroded, which might have been spear-heads from the shape. A singular ornament of bronze was dug up six feet below the surface—together with a flat stone deeply coloured with red hæmatite, on which it seemed to have been ground, like one discovered at Pen y Bonc. A singular conglomerate of crushed quartz and other stone seemingly cemented with red iron ore into a compact mass, which had been formed in a mould, was also dug out from these chambers. Whilst writing this account I chanced to read a paper in the Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland so applicable that it may assist us in forming our opinions on the excavations at Porth Dafarch, and the probable date of the habitation and the interments on the mound there.

In Mr. Petrie's account of the Brock of Birsay, in Orkney,^s he says:—"An examination of this structure showed that at some earlier period it had become ruinous and that in course of time the fallen stones had been overgrown with soil to a depth of several feet. The brock had thus presented the appearance of a green mound, and it was then selected as a place of interment by a people who buried their dead in stone cists and deposited bronze ornaments

^s Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, vol. viii., p. 45.



Objects of flint found at Fort Dakota.



Ornament of bronze, and pounding stone, found at Porth Dafarch.

with them. In some of the many cists placed in the brock burned bones appeared, and in one a piece of a bronze fibula was found with fragments of some other bronze objects, thus presenting the same appearance as the sepulchral deposits in the stone circles and cairns of ancient times."

I have now concluded the record of my excavations of this remarkable sand mound at Porth Dafarch, entering into considerable detail and accompanying them with a plan and engravings of the articles found. It is most difficult to attempt any formal conclusion as to dates from the very varied nature of the discoveries, some relating to the stone age, others to the bronze; the earlier urn burials must be attributed to Pagan times. The bodies buried in stone cists partially consumed by fire point to the transition age between Paganism and Christianity; these must have been made by digging from the surface of the mound. The bronze ornaments may be Roman or Celtic; for there is much similarity to those found in Ireland as well as at the Roman camp of *Caer Leb*. The *intaglio* is without doubt of Roman or Romano-British manufacture, however it may have come to the mound; the bone pin or needle will probably be of the same date or earlier.

One cannot help speculating upon the circumstances that brought together such singular records of occupation by different races of men in very early times; how such a secluded spot, so open to the furious blasts that sweep the ocean in winter months, could have been selected as a habitation; by what strange accident a Roman work of art like the *intaglio* came to be deposited in the mound, and what induced successive generations to bury their dead in such various ways in the same mound of drift sand which covered the hut circles and many chambers around them. I have already suggested that the bay may have been the resort of Irish rovers in the first or second century of the Christian era; possibly a Roman vessel coasting the shores of Anglesey may have been wrecked or plundered there, the bodies cast ashore, burned by the friends, the ashes placed in urns and here deposited, the *intaglio* also placed with the ashes. The bay is so exposed and dangerous that no ship could venture to remain there unless drawn up on the beach above high water. The earliest inhabitants of Anglesey may have selected the spot for their habitation from the

proximity to the sea, as they must have lived on the produce of the chase or on fish and shell-fish.

The stone implements are very rude, and denote no great proficiency in their manufacture, being mostly pebbles from the shore selected from their adaptation to the hand for the use required. The men were a hardy race, seeking shelter in the huts only at night or in very inclement seasons ; they mostly lived in the open air during summer time.

How are we to account for the numerous fragments of pottery ?—one piece having been mended with iron wire would prove it was rare and of value. We found the same at Pen y Bonc, as described in my former account. The pottery appears to be British or Roman ; some of the fragments of Samian are very superior of their kind. Here the important question presents itself for our consideration—Was the hut inhabited by an early race previous to the interments found in the mound ? If so, it leads us back to earlier times than the Roman occupation of Anglesey. From the peculiar position of the urn burials, so near the surface at the top of the mound and in such close proximity to the wall of the hut circle, I do not think it possible that the building could have been constructed after these interments were made in the tumulus. From every appearance I must conclude that the hut habitation was the first placed on the mound ; that it was destroyed, deserted for a long time, during which it was entirely covered with sand drift and formed into the green mound as we first saw it before our excavations, and that, presenting the appearance of a sandy tumulus, it offered peculiar facilities of urn and other interments ; and that these probably were of the Romano-British period, but were made in entire ignorance that deserted habitations were buried beneath the surface. The remains of the ancient fire-place for cooking, near which the bronze brooch was found, and the Samian pottery, show that the spot may have been the resort of Irish rovers, as the Bay of Porth Dafarch is nearest to Wicklow, in Ireland ; it would also be the best adapted for the Romans when sailing from Segontium (Carnarvon).

I have given the fullest description I could of all we brought to light in our excavations, and it must be left to more learned persons who peruse this memoir to form their own conclusions from the data given. Prof. Owen examined

the bones found, and informed me they were of *bos longifrons*, red deer, sheep or goat, wild boar, fox, and a tooth of some larger carnivorous animal. I am sorry to record that the bone pin, Samian pottery, and perforated horn (figured on pl. i.) were stolen from a box which contained them during transmission by the London and North-Western Railway. Should the articles meet the eye of any one in any private or public collection, I shall be obliged by hearing about it. The engravings will render them easy to be recognized.