

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF SOME CELTIC AND ROMAN
ANTIQUITIES WITHIN THE N.E. PART OF THE
COUNTY OF DORSET BETWEEN BOCKLEY DYKE, N.,
AND THE RIVER STOUR, S.; FROM BLANDFORD TO
WIMBORNE.¹

By DR. WAKE SMART.

Bockley or Bockerley Dyke, our northern boundary, is also a boundary between the counties of Wilts and Dorset, and I propose taking it first in review. It is an earthwork of high antiquity. In approaching Woodyates by the Western Turnpike from Salisbury, it strikes the eye stretching about three miles across a sweep of open Down; and on approaching nearer we cannot fail of being struck with its imposing size, its bold and angular course; but perhaps to get the best general view, it is necessary to take one's stand on the top of Blagden hill, over which it passes in its way from South East to South West. It begins in the brakes and plantations of Blagden hill, adjoining the Boveridge Woods. In its commencement it appears simply as a double bank and ditch of inconsiderable size, but increasing in breadth and depth for about a mile before it reaches the top of Blagden hill, from which point it suddenly assumes the grand proportions which it retains until it has passed the Down and entered the enclosures of Woodyates; from which point it soon begins to decrease, continues onward for about a mile to West Woodyates, and for some distance is almost lost in the arable land where it appears to terminate. This part of its course was without doubt formerly within the Woods of Cranborne Chase. Its whole length is from four to five miles. The dyke makes four wide angles in crossing the Down, taking this oblique path to facilitate apparently the ascent and

¹ Read in the Antiquarian Section at the Salisbury Meeting, August 3rd, 1887.

descent of the hilly ground it meets. There are four gaps through it, made, one might suppose, at later periods for the convenience and intercourse of the adjacent villages. The most Westward of these gaps, three of which are above 100 yards in length, requires more notice than the others, as the theory has been suggested that from the first the dyke was here left in an unfinished state, for the purpose of affording an easier ingress to the out-lying flocks and herds, on the alarm of an invading enemy.¹ Adjoining this interspace there is a spur or additional work of the same character, extending about 60 yards from North to South, joining the dyke, and ending abruptly in what was formerly a wood, but is now arable land. This short work seems to be of the same date as the dyke; but may be of later construction. The ditch here is on the West side. Throughout its middle course the dyke varies but little in dimension. On the South side there is no fosse, and the vallum rises from 20 to 30 feet; on the North side the vallum is very precipitous, falling 40 or 50 feet or more into a broad and deep fosse. The Western Turnpike road traverses the dyke about three-quarters of a mile from Woodyates; and at the same place the Via Iceniana, Ackling dyke, or Roman road from Old Sarum to Dorchester crosses it. These two roads, ancient and modern, make some confusion in their united passage through it; but the Roman road may be soon traced from its emergence into the arable land, and runs nearly parallel with and near the Turnpike road to Woodyates Inn, which stands on its line. Here we will leave the Roman road for the present.

I will address myself to the question which naturally arises as to the origin of this earthwork, and *in limine* wish to be understood as being utterly opposed to the Belgic theory of its construction, which I believe is generally accepted, but was not the opinion of my friend, Mr. Warne. This theory seems to me to be founded on a misconception of historical statement, for which I presume to say that the learned Dr. Stukeley is primarily responsible; but other writers since his day have followed his lead and perpetuated his error. There is no basis of proof, as I conceive, for the statement that the Belgæ ever peopled Dorset. If

¹ Mr. Warne's *Ancient Dorset*, p. 9.

we turn to Ptolemy, writing in the second century of our æra, we find him making a clear distinction between Δουσότεις and Βελγαι; the latter inhabiting part of Hants with Θυεντα, (Winchester) for their capital; the former, with their capital Δουνιον, inhabiting Dorset. This tribe was undoubtedly of an ancient Celtic stock, and must be held distinct from the Belgæ, who were a people of a latter immigration. These are said by Camden to have extended from Hants into Wiltshire and the Northern parts of Somerset; be it so or not, they are not said to have extended over Dorset, and I do not believe they did. But Stukeley, unfortunately, took it for granted, and actually parcelled out our County as he supposed it fell, by successive portions of conquest, under the victorious arms of the Belgæ, from the South of Dorset to the North of Wiltshire.¹ So far, then, I agree with Mr. Warne that Bockley dyke is not a Belgic work; but I confess to much hesitation in accepting the ingenious theory of my lamented friend when he states his "deliberate opinion that this mighty rampart owes its rise to the alarm of Cæsar's invasion of Britain."² I do not think that the evidence warrants this conclusion. There is a striking resemblance in this work to the Wansdyke, and we can hardly believe that the Wansdyke was raised under the same apprehension of impending danger. If it be so, we are compelled to assign to both these works a date not earlier than the latter part of the last century before our æra, but I apprehend that archæologists will generally agree that their antiquity is by several centuries of an earlier age. I quite agree with my friend that Bockley dyke was the work of the Celtic Durotrigian tribes; as the Wansdyke was of the earliest Celtic tribes who peopled Wiltshire. As regards the cause that may have induced the Durotriges to raise this earthwork, I must refer to a paper in the Proceedings of the Dorset Field club,³ in which I have entered more at length on that question than I can again at present. In concluding these remarks on Bockley dyke, I think we may with much plausibility assume that it was

¹ *Itinerarium Curiosum*, p. 188, 2nd Edit., 1776, Stukeley. Stonehenge, p. 4. ib. *Anc. Dorset* p. 313. *On certain ditches in Dorset called Belgic.* C.W.

² *Ancient Dorset*, p. 10.

³ A letter to the Rev. W. Barnes, B.D. on his Paper, entitled, "A Study on the Bockley or Bockerly Dyke and others in Dorset (Proceed: Field Club, vol. v., p. 41), by Dr. Wake Smart, ib., vol. vi.

originally a territorial boundary, and at the same time a defensive work, though not in the military sense of a fortification, but was primarily constructed as a protective barrier for the herds and flocks which belonged to the Durotriges, against predatory incursions and forays of neighbouring tribes; and for keeping the cattle securely within their own bounds.

A few more words on the etymology of the name may be permitted. I have no faith in a Celtic derivative, though such has been proposed, I believe; the name, in my humble opinion, is simply Anglo-Saxon, originally applied to the land through which the dyke runs, and by natural transference to the dyke itself. In the Teutonic language, *Bok*, *Bocca*, is the equivalent to *Buck*, *Bucks*, the male fallow-deer. The place-name, *Buckingham*, was anciently written *Bokenham*; and in the well-known surname, *Buckley*, we have the name, *Bockley*, formerly of this pasture or feeding-ground of herds of fallow-deer—*Bok-leag*, pure Anglo-Saxon. This tract of land was from an unknown period down to later ages, part and parcel of that extensive forest-land stretching into Wilts and Dorset, of which a large part became first known in mediæval time as Cranborne Chase.¹ In these native woods, Fallow-deer and other “beasts of venery” were preserved and fed by the early Saxons and their successors for the purpose of recreation and sport. By them I suppose that the name, *Bockley*, was given to this feeding-ground, probably much resorted to by these wild animals.

I should hardly do justice to this locality in omitting the notice of a fine British trackway which belongs more to Wilts than Dorset, yet has some claim upon us, as it runs for about a mile nearly parallel with Bockley dyke after they have entered the Woodyates enclosures. This British *via*, formed by two well-marked banks and an intervening ditch, comes from the North East in the direction of the river Avon, at ten miles distance, near the village of Odstock. It runs thence in a somewhat

¹ The earliest notice of Bockley I have met with, is contained in a Perambulation between the lands of the Abbot of Glastonbury at Damerham, Wilts, and those of the Abbot of Tewkesbury at Boveridge, Cranborne, Dorset: 31, Hen. 3., 1246. In *Monasticon. Anglic.* 1. 57,

after recounting several points of boundary, it is continued “per Longitudinem illius vie [the road to Sarum] usque ad magnum fossatum de Blakedounesdich.” —*Ex registro Glastoniensis Cænobii vocato “Secretum Abbatis” in Bibliotheca Bodl. MS. Wood 1.)*

irregular course over Odstock, Charlton and Homington Downs, and by Vernditch Chase, where it is crossed by the Roman road, and may be traced thence to a field in Middle Chase Farm where it seems to end, about half-a-mile apart from the Bockley terminus. This *via* is known as *Grimsditch*, a name savouring of Scandinavian mythology. I have been unable to trace this *via* or boundary further towards its final destination, wherever that may be.

We leave Bockley and ascend the hill to the Eastward, which soon attains its highest point of elevation in Panbarrow [Penbury] above the village of Pentridge. This highest point is under 450 feet above the sea-level; but the position gives it a very extensive and beautiful prospect, its horizon bounded by the Isle of Wight, the Hampshire coast, the Purbeck hills, and the South coast of Dorset round to the Ridgeway above Weymouth. Thence the eye may follow the Bulbarrow range, and the Wiltshire hills. To the geological student it is also an object of much interest in relation to the Chalk and Tertiary formations, but we are more concerned with its archæological relation to this district. Here may be traced the outwork of a Celtic Camp, or Hill Fort, consisting of a single vallum and ditch of inconsiderable strength, carried in a circular form from a very steep and partly artificial mount on the North around the West side; not so well marked on the South and hardly traceable on the East, but here the declivity of the ground makes it a strong position without the need of much assistance from art. The diameter of the area is about 150 yards. It is unquestionably a very ancient work, and has probably been used from the earliest times as a beacon, or signal station, in connection with many similar posts communicating with the sea-coast and the interior.¹ The evidence of ancient and early occupation both within and around the Camp is very strong. I have found a large number of worked flints on the surface, some of a very rude and others of a more artistic style of fabrication, as arrowheads, celts, knives, and other implements of anomalous and abortive forms. Several noteworthy specimens I have picked up from the camp itself, but more from the fields around.

¹ The last time was on the celebration of the Queen's Jubilee, June, 21st.

On the rise of the hill on the East there is some cultivated land, which I remember unbroken and known as Boveridge Down, where, over a space of several acres there are decided indications of Romano-British settlement. I have found there after the plough at various times, fragments of pottery from the coarse British to the highly glazed Samian, oolitic shale and tile for roofing, an imperfect green-stone celt, an iron socketed spear-head, large nails, and various debris, as horses' teeth, other animal bones, and a portion of human bone; fossil shells and petrified wood which must have been brought from Weymouth Bay, shewing a connexion with the sea-coast. I have not been successful in finding any foundations *in situ*, still I have no doubt of a settlement here of some duration, and I should be inclined to assign it to the latter troublous years of the third century, occupied perhaps as a camping ground by Allectus during his short usurpation of the Imperial Power. I have found myself a coin of Allectus and one of Victorinus here, and have had one of Maximianus brought me. It is rather striking that I have rarely found a worked flint on this land. There are indications of other Romano-British locations, but none of this extent, on the adjoining Downs. From the highest point, Penbury, and looking Westwards, at one and a-half miles' distance, we may observe two low banks running a parallel course from the South West, and losing themselves in the fields near Pentridge Church, but were perhaps originally continued half-a-mile further to the lower part of Bockley Down. These form a part of what Sir R. C. Hoare denominated a *cursus*, consisting of two parallel banks and ditches, which enclose a space of 70 or 80 yards in width, and may be traced for about three miles across the Downs to the earthworks on the elevated land in the South West, to which Sir R. C. Hoare assigned the name of Vindogladia, the Roman Station of Antoninus' Iter XV. At one point of its course, the *cursus* is crossed by the Roman road or Ackling Dyke, affording a decisive proof of the higher antiquity of the Celtic lines.

We will now return to Woodyates Inn, where we left the Roman road. For the next three-quarters of a mile it must be taken on trust, for it is hidden from sight by the

Turnpike road which has been carried along the *dorsum*; but at the XI. milestone, where the open Down succeeds the enclosures, the Roman road parts company with its companion and at a sharp angle runs on in an independent direction and straight course to Badbury Rings, at the distance of about ten miles South. The widening space formed by the ancient road and the Turnpike, incloses a large tract of the Down, which is studded with Celtic Tumuli in great variety, and overlooking all from Handley hill is a very fine specimen of the oblong, perhaps chambered Barrow, of unknown antiquity. With the exception of this one, all the rest, which are of the Bronze Age, were opened by that indefatigable explorer, Sir R. C. Hoare, or his companion and friend Mr. Cunnington; and most of their discoveries are now deposited in the Devizes Museum. These Barrows were remarkable in producing more artistic relics, as, ornaments of amber and glass, and trinkets with jet and gold, also bronze daggers, in a larger proportionate number than fall to the lot of barrow-diggers in the Southern parts of Dorset. In this respect these tumuli assimilate more to the Wiltshire Barrows about Stonehenge: whence the inference might be drawn, that the tribes living on our Woodyates Downs were in more direct intercourse with the commercial Belgæ, than was the case with the other Durotrigian tribes living further South. It cannot, however, be denied that valuable relics have been occasionally found in the Southern Barrows. It has been often mentioned as a proof of the relatively higher antiquity of these Tumuli to the Roman road, that with scant veneration, the Roman engineers carried their line, cutting off a segment of one or two of these circular enclosures, formerly called Druid barrows, but which are perhaps in reality of later date than the high conoid mounds. This interesting Celtic Cemetery receives due notice in *Ancient Wilts*, with an engraved plan in which each Tumulus is numbered with reference to its contents.¹ Near this spot the Roman road passes one of those quadrangular

¹ See also *Ancient Dorset*, p. 5. An extract from Aubrey's MSS. (*Monumenta Brit.*) supplies his conjecture that this was the scene of Boadicea's fight with the Romans, agreeing, as he says, with the

description given by Tacitus of it. In the *Celtic Tumuli of Dorset* Mr. Warne reproduces this engraving from *Ancient Wilts*, &c.

earthworks, with low bank and ditch, which are not uncommon on our Downs. This is of small size, 25 by 15 yards. We are as yet ignorant of the origin of these small enclosures; the probability is, they were used as cattle pens by the Romano-British, or later people.

The *via Iceniana*, or Ackling Dyke, in its course across this Down, presents for the most part a fine example of Roman road-making. It is a raised causeway with a rounded back and sloping sides, to throw off the rain and melted snow. The substratum is chalk with a thick covering of broken flints; and in a certain section I have noticed a superficial layer of yellow gravel, such as may be dug on Pentridge hill. The road must have been a work of much time and labour, enforced labour, no doubt with very little regard paid to "the groans of the Britons." It is much regretted that modern road-mending has done a good deal of mischief in places by pillaging the store of flints, but there are still remaining portions that have not suffered yet from the human despoiler, or from the wear and tear of Time.

After a straight course of three miles across the open Down, it reaches some elevated land, now under cultivation, formerly known as Gussage Cow Down, rendered conspicuous by an extensive series of earthworks, on which Sir R. C. Hoare bestowed the name of Vindogladia. They extend along the brow of the hill for a mile at least from East to West. It is very interesting to read Sir Richard's observations on this spot in his *Ancient Wilts* vol. 2, but they will be best understood by referring to his engraved plan of the work.¹ He says that if the history of these earthworks was not mysterious to his eyes, he had seen none of such surpassing magnitude or interest. Cultivation continued from that time until the present has done great and irreparable mischief as is usual. Sir Richard thus writes:—"How often have I reviewed with fresh delight this truly interesting ground which elucidates so strongly the manners of the primitive Britons; and with what sincere regret, on revisiting the spot in the Autumn of 1817, did I notice the encroachments of the plough on this memorable and, till lately, well preserved monument of antiquity." [*Ancient Wilts*, vol. 2.] What

¹ Reproduced in Mr. Warne's *Ancient Dorset*.

would the worthy Baronet say now, after 70 more years of continuous agrarian spoliation !

This spot being at the distance of about 16 miles from Old Sarum, and as the station in Antonine's *Iter XV.* next in sequence to *Sorbiodunum*, had not been satisfactorily identified, either with Wimborne by Camden, or with Gussage All Saints by Stukeley, no wonder that the proximity of this spot to the line of the Roman road, with the abundant indications of Romano-British settlement found here, induced the worthy Baronet to fix upon this as the true station ; which soon obtained the consensus of the archæological world. The chief site of Roman occupation is found at the Eastern end of the work, at the distance of some 300 yards from the *Via* : and here, if anywhere, the station must be placed ; the other earthworks are decidedly of an earlier date and Celtic character. On its West side, the site is approached by several British trackways ascending the hill in close contiguity, which have doubtlessly given the spot the name of "Seven ditches ;" a cross section would give that number of banks with their intervening ditches. From time immemorial the peasantry of the district have known it by that name. It is curious now to read what Aubrey has written in his usual vague style of this place.¹ "The seven ditches between Woodyates and Blandford in the County of Dorset I cannot find any account of them ; the rode from Salisbury to Blandford goes through them, &c." It will hardly be believed that this vague statement by Aubrey has given rise to the theory that there are *seven ditches in Dorset marking the successive stages of the Belgic conquest from South to North !* For instance, see Warton's *History of Kildington*, 1783,² followed by later writers. This is not archæology, — it is fiction !

But we will still follow the *Via Iceniana* running on almost without a break to Badbury Rings, six-and-a-half miles farther in its way to *Durnovaria*. Within a quarter of a mile of the camp, the Roman road appears to divide into two branches, one proceeding to the West side of the camp, the other to the East side of it. The former goes on

¹ Aubrey's MSS. *Monumenta Britannica* in Biblio. Bodl. quoted by Mr. Warne in *Ancient Dorset* : p. 311.

² "On certain ditches in Dorset called Belgic," by Mr. Warne in *Ancient Dorset*, p. 311.

in a well-known line across the river Stour, in the way to Dorchester, about 20 miles beyond, and it is this branch which is noted in Antonine's Itinerary. The latter, we now know, goes on to Poole Bay at Hamworthy, where Mr. Warne places *Morionio* of the Ravennate. For a long while this branch was known only as far as Cogdean from Hamworthy across Lytchet Heath; but in the year 1847-1848, its line was traced out from Lake Mill, one mile West of Wimborne, across the water meadows, the river Stour, and through the Park of Kingston Lacy, to Badbury.¹ There have been strange mistakes made in reference to this branch. In the old Maps of Dorset, notably Taylor's, 1765, a branch is shewn given off at a point near Wichampton Common, and continued thence across the Stour and the meadows to Cogdean. This is purely conjectural, and I regret to find that the late Rev. J. H. Austen has described a line in this direction from Cogdean to Bradford, or Broadford Down, which is near Wichampton Common.² I have been over this ground carefully, and can safely assert that there are no reliable traces of a Roman road there. Mr. Austen seems to have had no knowledge of the Eastern branch of the *Via Iceniana* at Badbury, or he could not have made such a mistake. This Eastern branch has opened up a question of the greatest interest in connexion with a discovery made during the last year, of the decided traces of a Roman road leading from Ashmore, on the border of Wilts, through a part of Gunville Parish and Eastbury Park, Tarrant Hinton, and Launceston villages, from which point Mr. Mansel-Pleydell, the respected President of the Dorset Field Club, has traced its course by Tarrant Monkton, Rawston, Hogstock, Abbeycroft Down, and Hemsworth to a point near Badbury camp, where the Eastern branch joins the *Via Iceniana*. We have thus obtained a continuous line of Roman road from Poole Bay, by Badbury, to the boundary line between Wilts and Dorset at Ashmore, and we have reason to expect and hope that further traces may be found in South Wilts,

¹ See "The Vicinal way from Badbury to Morionium on Poole Bay."—*Ancient Dorset*, p. 180.

² See *Journal of the Archaeological Institute*, vol. 4, 1867,—A paper by the

Rev. J. H. Austen, M.A., F.G.S., read by him at the Congress Meeting at Dorchester in July, 1865, entitled, "Notes on some Vestiges of Roman occupation in Dorset."

carried, perhaps, to a junction with that known line which runs from Old Sarum, through this part of Wilts to Wells and Uphill on the Bristol Channel, connecting the mining district of Mendip with the Sea coast of Hants and the Isle of Wight.¹ Our line may thus be hereafter found to extend between the Bristol Channel and Poole Bay, affording another commercial outlet for the produce of the lead mines of Mendip, and the artistic productions of Purbeck. It would also be in communication with Aquæ Solis (Bath), if not directly, yet through the Fosseway which it would cross near Shepton Mallet.²

A few words now on Badbury itself:—Without doubt it has ever been a strategic point of great importance. The *via Iceniana* runs in a straight line to it from Sorbiodunum. It stands in a commanding position; it was unquestionably a Celtic Oppidum, subsequently occupied by the Romans, and perhaps enlarged and strengthened by them; noteworthy indications of their presence have been turned up within the area of the Camp, from Aubrey's time to ours; its position is in the fork between two important lines of Roman road; taking all the facts into consideration I have presumed to offer a dissentient opinion from Sir R. C. Hoare, for it would appear very strange if a fortress of so much importance were utterly ignored in Antonine's Itinerary, and yet we must be of this opinion, if Sir Richard was right in locating the Station Vindogladia on Gussage Cow Down. I will not, however, enter at greater length into this question now, but content myself with referring to a paper in the proceedings of the Dorset Field Club.³

The Rev. J. Austen in the paper before referred to, was desirous of shewing that Sir Richard Hoare erred in placing Vindogladia on Gussage Cow Down, and attempts to award a claim of superior pretension to Broadford (or Bradford) lane end, through which the *Via Icen.* passes in its way to Badbury, at the distance of about a mile from it. To

¹ The Dorset line has been traced about 700 yards into Wilts. It is supposed to run through the vale of Wardour, but we have, as yet, no evidence of its course.

² At the 1st Meeting of the Dorset Field Club at Dorchester, on June 10, 1887, the President read a brief notice of

this Roman road from Badbury, which he will give at greater length further on in the session.

³ *Some observations on Iter XV of the Itinerary of Antoninus; on Vindogladia; and a plea for Badbury*; by Dr. Wake Smart. Proceedings of the Dorset Field Club, p. 122. Vol. iv. 1883.

prove his case he brings four branch roads from distant parts and different directions to a common point of junction with the *Via Icen*: at Bradford. No one I think can read his paper without seeing that these branch roads are all more or less hypothetical, that not one of them is traced to a junction; and in fact that the evidence adduced to prove the existence of a station at Bradford simply amounts to a negation. No traces of Roman occupation have ever been found, so far as we know, at Bradford. We must be of the opinion that Mr. Austen's theory failed in the attack on Sir Richard's position, although we may still have some doubt of its impregnability.

I must do Mr. Austen the justice of saying that he, in this paper, gave the first intimation of a Roman road in the North West part of Dorset. He says, "it comes up Donhead Hollow on the North side of the Wiltshire Hills, from the vale of Wardour. . . . After passing Phelps' Cottage turnpike-gate it follows its independent course in a southerly direction; crosses Woodley Down, . . . and passing through the Wiltshire copses enters Dorsetshire; crosses the recently cultivated Ashmore fields, enters again the Chasewoods, and may be traced about a mile further; its direction, passing near Bartonfield, the supposed Tarentum, is towards Broadford. And tracing back its direction northward it will be seen to be towards Bath." This is valuable testimony, but Mr. Austen had manifestly no evidence of further traces either to Badbury, or to his conjectural station at Bradford.

In the same paper Mr. Austen gives very interesting details of his exploration of a Romano-British settlement on Woodcotes Common, in the parish of Handley. This has been thoroughly worked out, with great skill and success, by General Pitt-Rivers, who fully confirms the opinion of Mr. Austen of this having been the site of Romano-British occupation. The General discovered large quantities of pottery; iron, bronze and bone relics, coins, &c., which are deposited in his Museum at Farnham, with an admirable model of the ground in which they were discovered.

In the year 1831 the foundations of a Roman villa, with several rooms, were accidentally discovered on Hemsworth farm in Wichhampton parish. This spot is

near the Roman road which we now know exists between Ashmore and Badbury. The site of this villa was not systematically excavated, and after exciting a good deal of curiosity, with much inconvenience to the tenant, after some while was covered up and buried. I saw one of the pavements which had the figure of the Dolphin, surrounded by an ornamental border, all in coloured tesserae.

In 1845 the site of another Roman villa was discovered in Barton field, in the parish of Tarrant Hinton. The debris extended over several acres, and the late Mr. Shipp, of Blandford, to whom the exploration was due, unearthed the remains of a mosaic pavement, with painted stucco, Roman ware, iron nails, bones, &c., and three coins of the Lower Empire. The site of this villa is about half-a-mile South of the Roman road from Badbury.¹

On Eastbury Down, which adjoins the enclosures of Tarrant Hinton on the North, there are extensive indications of ancient settlement, probably Romano-British, which have not yet yielded up their secret to antiquarian research. This site skirts the Roman road from Badbury which runs through Eastbury Park into the fields of Tarrant Hinton. Several fine specimens of the Long Barrow are prominent objects in this neighbourhood, on the Downs of Pimperne, Gunville, Chettle, and Blandford, all of which remain intact.

On Blandford Race-Down there is an extensive series of earthworks, second only to those on Gussage Down, which denote the existence of an important Celtic settlement. And this is confirmed by other evidence. At Tarrant Monkton, a village near at hand, the plough turned up a number of Celtic ornaments and weapons, which are now in Mr. Durden's Museum. There were six bronze torques, two armlets, bronze celts and swords, fibulae, iron spear-heads, celts, and arrow heads of flints,

¹ See Volume of the Second Congress of the British Archaeological Association at Winchester, 1846, *British Tarrant or Roman Tarentum*, by William Shipp. Also see 3d edit. of Hutchins' History of Dorset, vol. iv. In respect to the small stream which rises near the site and flows through several villages to its con-

fluence with the Stour at Tarrant Crawford, it has been imagined that, in the name of Tarrant may be heard an echo of *Tarentum* in Italy; but we know that vocal sounds are apt to be misleading, especially when they take a *syllabic* form.

glass beads, and worked pieces of Kimmeridge shale.¹ Mr. Warne records the discovery on Launceston Down, which is not far off, of a large number of cists dug in the chalk, of shallow depth, containing bones and ashes, and covered with a layer of flints. This he terms the Celtic "Sepulchralia," there having been no raised mound to mark the interments.² There are many tumuli of the usual kind on Blandford Race-Down, some of which have been explored by Mr. Warne, and others by Messrs. Shipp and Austen.³

On the South side of this Down, above the village of Tangton, is a very remarkable earthwork or camp, called Buzbury. It is more elliptical than circular, and consists mainly of one vallum and fosse which overlap at one end of the camp. But I must refer to Mr. Warne's description for an accurate account of it.⁴ It seems to be connected by trackways with the adjacent Downs and settlements. The name alone is curious, and if any dependence may be placed in our etymological derivatives, they would at once suggest the idea of this having been a depôt, refuge, or emporium, of the cattle of the district. *Boys, Bos, Buz*, = meat and eating, (Borlase, Cornu : Brit : Vocab.) *Burwys* = kine, bullock, (Welch). *Bous*, = *Boz* = ox. (Gr. and Lat.) Cæsar writes—"Pecorum magnus numerus. . . . interiores lacte et carne vivunt." (De B. G. lib. v.). I will now bring this rambling excursion to a close by taking the road from Wimborne to Cranbourne, and jotting down a few notes by the way.

Soon after passing Horton Inn we notice a fine tumulus or two by the roadside, and at the farm one mile on, we traverse, unconsciously perhaps, a circular Celtic earthwork or oppidum, of which a segment only remains, hidden by trees and farm buildings ; the vallum high and broad ; in other parts of its circuit obliterated by cultivation and the turnpike road, but it may be traced, shewing the area to be of very considerable diameter. This was, I

¹ See Hutchins' Dorset 3d edit: Vol. 3. p. 576—Pl.

² *The Celtic Tumuli of Dorset*, by G. Warne, F.S.A., p. 57.

³ *ib.*—see Pl. figures of Urns. A very remarkable tumulus at Badbury was explored by Mr. Austen. The interments

consisting of urns, skeletons, and cists, were enclosed by a wall of large sandstones uncemented. No weapons or ornaments. See *Journ. Arch. Institute*. Vol 3. Austen : also Warne's *Celtic Tum.*

⁴ *Ancient Dorset*, p. 43, plan. p. 34.

apprehend, the site of dwellings. A little farther on, we see on our left hand Knolton church, a picturesque ivy-mantled ruin, which stands within the area of another smaller Celtic circular earthwork, that remains to this day perfect and inviolate with its coating of greensward. In the same field, more to the West, there are distinct traces of two other smaller circles, which have not received the same protection as their neighbour. These earthworks are too remarkable to be lightly passed by, for the thought naturally arises that in them we probably contemplate memorials of the religious, civil, and social customs of our ancestors living in a primæval age.¹ Here there is a very large tumulus, unhappily planted, and several more of large size may be seen in Lord Shaftesbury's Park. One cannot but be struck also with a group of very old yews, which are in perfect keeping with the other ancient remains.

Approaching Cranborne we perceive at the distance of half-a-mile South East the ancient Castle, an earthwork which, so far as we know, never aspired to the dignity of a more imposing structure. It covers about $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres of a ridge of elevated ground, of which the extreme end has been rounded off by escarpment, and with another mound superimposed, forms a lofty keep commanding the country around. The East side is defended by a very strong vallum with a deep and broad ditch thrown in a semi-circular form around an area of small dimensions, to which the approach is from the South West, made by filling up the ditch and rounding off the ends of the vallum on both sides of the entrance, so forming mounds of which the one on the East side is the higher. There is a small swampy spot on the North, just outside the area, which is called the well. It is an interesting earthwork without a trace of building on any part. I have been accustomed to regard it as the ground-work of a Saxon Castle, notably bearing considerable resemblance to that of Laughton-en-le-Morthem in Yorkshire, which is undeniably Saxon, and is called Edwin's Hall.² But my friend, the late Rev. W. Barnes, took a different view, and saw in

¹ See Ancient Dorset, p. 101. with Pl.
- In the Journal of Brit. Archæol.
Assn., 1884, p. 401. The late Mr. Daniel
H. Haigh, of Leeds, notices this as "a

high circular mound standing between
the extremities of a crescent shaped rampart
of earth." See also Journal of B.
A. A., 1874, Sept.

the Keep a "crug y gorsedd," a mount of assembly of the neighbouring British tribes, for deliberating on questions of public or private concern.¹ I am loth to differ in opinion from so eminent an authority, and fully admitting that the same place may have served successive peoples, each for a purpose and use of its own, I have still much hesitation in believing this to have been such a place of Celtic assembly. It is rather curious that we have at a mile distant, in the St. Giles's Plantation, a "Creech Hill," which might be thought to favour this theory in the name itself. It is a large barrow-like mound on which lies a very large block of sandstone in a shallow cavity or pit which it seems to have made for itself, and I never contemplate that ponderous mass without wondering how it came there, whether by natural or human agency. In character, in name, and by position it would answer every requirement of the "crug y gorsedd" theory; and perhaps we ought not to dissociate it from the adjacent tumuli, the imperishable monuments of a past age and people.

The Crane stream wends its way through a vale below Cranborne, known as the Tything of Holwell. At the distance of one mile and a half I have had the knowledge for many years of a spot not generally known, where I have discovered indubitable evidence of Roman building and habitation. In the road-side bank I have traced two distinct lines of red brick tesserae, cubes of about an inch square, in lengths of seven and eight feet. I expected to find an extension of these floors in the meadow on the other side, but was disappointed, and came to the conclusion that the rooms were destroyed when the parish road was made. I have found on digging, fragments of Roman ware from the figured Samian to the ordinary black ware, and other kinds less common. I have also found several minor articles of bronze, and a small brass coin of the Constantines. This spot is in contiguity with a pond in which rises a never-failing spring of the purest water, which flows into the neighbouring stream. I have indulged in the speculation of this having been in Roman times a spring consecrated to some forgotten "Dea

¹ "Cranborne, the so called Castle," by the Revd. W. Barnes, B.D.—Proceed-

ings of the Dorset Field Club, vol. iv., p. 134, 1883.

Fontis," and celebrated for its healing property; a reputation which it may have retained during the Saxon era, and thus becoming a Holy Well, whose special virtues have been long forgotten, whilst the name is still remembered in the Holwell of a later age.

In the year 1875 a curious discovery was made at the village of Horton, in the source of a small stream which, after running a few miles, flows into the Crane in the Heath district. The discovery consisted chiefly in a few Roman vases and many coins of various dates, embedded in the gravel of the spring-head. It gave rise to much speculation, which is recorded in the *Journal of the British Arch. Assoc.* vol. xxxi, p. 60, in a paper entitled, *The Ancient Worship of Springs*. The relics are deposited in the Dorset Museum.¹

¹ But this discovery was entirely eclipsed by one of much greater magnitude that occurred in the following year in Northumberland, near to the Station *Procolitia* on the Roman Wall. The precise spot is the spring that feeds a rivulet which flows into the south Tyne. The spring and its receptacle were first noticed by Horsley in his "*Britannia Romana*," 1732. Excavations made in October, 1876, were rewarded by an abundant harvest of antiquities; coins, altars, statues, Roman ware, glass, brooches, rings, beads, dice, and other objects; tusks of wild boar, horns of deer, and bones of sheep and oxen. The very large number of Roman coins,

amounting to more than thirteen thousand, ranging from Augustus to Gratian, were all of them examined and tabulated by C. Roach Smith, F.S.A. It cannot be reasonably supposed that this large mass of coins had been deposited as votive offerings, but rather on the occurrence of some panic or alarm of invasion. Still we may well imagine that in peaceful days some of the coins and other objects of value were deposited as ex-voto offerings to the Nymph or Goddess who presided over this spring and its sacrum. -- See *Archæologia Eliana*, 1876-77. -- Papers read by John Clayton, Esq.