

ANSTIEBURY CAMP NEAR LEITH HILL SURREY



Edward P. James & Co. S.E.  
1911

Scale 1 inch = 1 mile

## HANSTIE OR ANSTIE BURY.

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THE ILLUSTRATION BY EDWARD JAMES, Esq., CAPTAIN  
ROYAL ENGINEERS.

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**I**N the Domesday Survey we find “Balduinus tenet de Willelmo unam hidam ad Hanstigam,”—thus early does the present name occur: these lands now form Hanstie farm. Hanstie Bury, close by, which gave the name to these lands, is an old hill-fort, situated on the extreme edge of the escarpment of the sandstone range of hills which overlook the great Wealden valley. It occupies a commanding position, having an elevation of 775 feet. Close below it, on the W. and N., was the “Stane Street,” from which circumstance it derived its name, Hean-stige Bury, or High-way Fort.

A full account of the Stane Street, as of the other British and Roman highways of the county, will be found in the Appendix to the “History of Surrey,” vol. iii. p. xlvii., which part was the work of Mr. Bray.

But though the Romans may have used and probably improved the line of the Stane Street in places, there are no reasons for supposing that they were the constructors. (Manning, vol. i. p. 579.) Its narrowness, coupled with the circumstance that the Stane Street, in crossing the Weald, follows the line of watershed of this part of the valley, make it probable that it was a track-way from much earlier times, as it could, from the nature of the soil, have been the only line of communication inland which was available to the original British population.

Of Hanstie Bury Mr. Manning says (Hist. Sur., vol. i. p. 579),—“The traces of this fortress are very discernible at this day, being nearly circular in form, surrounded

by a double trench, except on the S.E., S., and S.W., where the precipice rendered it unnecessary."

An examination of the ground along the whole of the south face of the escarpment shows that considerable landslips have taken place there, owing to the springs which break out at the base of the sands, and which slips have carried away those parts of the earthworks which came up to the edge.

The area included within this camp is 11a. 2r. 6p. The entrance seems to have been on the N.E., but on this side part of the original work has been levelled. A rude outline of the fort is given in the "History of Surrey" (vol. ii. p. 303). At the meeting of the SURREY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY in 1868 at Dorking, a plan of the intrenchment was exhibited, on the scale of 1 inch to 3 chains, which had been carefully prepared by Mr. W. G. Whatman, of Kitlands: on this all the essential features of the work had been faithfully given. Since then Captain E. James, R.E., has produced a beautiful topographical sketch, showing the camp in its relations to the country about it.

Mr. Manning supposes, perhaps from its circular form, that Anstie Bury may have been a Danish earthwork, and that it may have been the spot where they encamped previously to that signal engagement in which they were routed with such uncommon slaughter by King Ethelwulph at Ockley (A.D. 851). At this date the Danes had hardly begun to intrench themselves as settlers. They then came as marauders, and on this occasion, having plundered Canterbury, Rochester, and London, they had made an incursion into Mercia, where they defeated Bertulf. Having crossed the Thames, they directed their march towards Wessex. Ethelwulph was encamped near Ockley, and is said to have been attacked by the Danes; but he obtained a complete victory, so that few of the invaders escaped. The tradition of this Saxon success is preserved in such local names as Kill-man-bridge, in Charlewood, and Slaughter Wic, in Leigh.

The position of these places is some miles to the east of the "Stane Street," and it is perhaps the more probable

supposition that the Saxons, rather than the Danes, occupied the Hanstie Bury camp, and that the Danes were endeavouring to get into Wessex *viâ* the Stane Street and Chichester.

The thick growth of trees which now covers the whole of the area surrounding the Hanstie Bury camp prevents its advantages as a military position being clearly seen. This planting was commenced by Mr. Walter in 1763, and in preparing the ground outside the trenches, considerable numbers of neatly-made heart-shaped flint arrow-heads were met with, but no coins, nor any implements of bronze or iron: this circumstance assigns an early date to the Hanstie Bury earthwork.



A FLINT AXE-HEAD FOUND NEAR THE SPOT WHERE THE  
DEFEAT OF THE DANES HAPPENED.