

Prehistoric Mounds on Blackdown, Mendip, Somerset. Since the list of barrows on Blackdown was published (Tratman, 1927), four more mounds of possibly prehistoric origin have been found on the north slope, a little way down from the summit but still on fairly level ground. Two of these were first noted by Mr. Peter Bird.

Two are small mounds, probably ancient burial mounds. They are adjoining (N.G.R. ST 47515749; T 178A and T 178B in U.B.S.S. catalogue of barrows). Each is a simple mound, 15 ft. diameter and 1.5 ft. high.

Two are ring mounds with a gap in the ring to the west in one and south in the other (N.G.R. ST 47495751 (T 178C) and ST 47535753 (T 178D)). The ring is about 15 ft. diameter and 1.5 ft. high. An excavation was made in T 178C. The ring was found to consist of just a lot of stones piled up in this form. The gap to the west had no structure. In the central small hollow, under the present turf and modern burning level and very close to the entrance, was a small hearth where a fire had been made directly on the ground. A foot or so away from the inner edge of this and thus fairly close to the ring mound a single slab of Old Red Sandstone, the native rock of Blackdown summit area, was found, apparently having been placed flat where it was found. Nothing else at all was found.

The tentative conclusion reached was that this was a short-used tent site with the ring of stones used to hold down the skirts of a tent supported on a single slender pole, rather like some of the miniature tents used by hardy campers at the present day. No date can be assigned to the structure, but the presumption is that it was used in prehistoric times. But if it was a tent site why was the entrance, for presumably the entrance was through the gap in the ring, designed to face west into the prevailing wind?

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* This is an error for the Long Hole.—Ed.