

Archæological Notes

A possible chambered tomb west of Whitnell Farm, Mendip. On my copy of O.S. map, 6-in., there is an M.S. note by Mrs. K. M. Crook to a "sarsen" stone at ST 60085002 and a statement that there is a folklore story attached to it. In Nov. 1966 during a conversation with Mr. Dudden (see Tratman, 1966) he described a site, which it was possible to pin down as the site of the "sarsen" stone. His version of the story, which he had from his father, is in summary this. "About a century ago a man obtained permission to remove a large mound to fill in a quarry on the other [east] side of the road. In the course of removing the cairn a very long flat stone was found weighing about 4 tons. It was supported on four uprights. '25 horses could not move it'. Underneath was a skeleton 'which went to powder'."

The site was visited on 24/11/66 under excellent lighting conditions. The flat capstone is about 2 m. long \times 70 cm. wide at its wider base and about 50 cm. thick. It lies on the top of a very low grassy mound with indefinite edges on the tip of a very minor spur of a minor ridge, i.e. the highest point in the immediate area. The mound is about 18 m. in diameter and 60 cm. high. To the east are two other very low mounds each about 8 m. in diameter and 50 cm. high. The edges are difficult to determine.

They have been provisionally catalogued as three tumuli, (W.-E. T 351A, B and C). They could be the remnants of a single long barrow, which would fit better to a chambered tomb than a round barrow.

Mr. Ian Ford of the Department of Geology, University of Bristol has identified the stone for me as being a block of local silicified Jurassic rock.

E. K. TRATMAN

The Deer Leap stones. (ST 54 N.W.). The site is west of the road west of Hope Wood, Ebbor. Several years ago two large stones were observed standing in an old hedge bank. No local history of them was obtained at that time. In 1967 the hedge was grubbed out but the stones were left standing. An enquiry was made to the owner. According to him the stones (*Plate 37*) were known as the Deer Leap Stones; they were haunted and must not be moved. There is a third, but recumbent stone, in an old

hedgerow east of the road. Whether it has any connection with the Deer Leap Stones is unknown, probably not. The legend of the Deer Leap is variable but all variants contain the essential elements of a hunted stag or deer leaping over the cliff and being killed by its fall. One or more huntsmen also went over [and, presumably, several dogs] and were killed.

Stone 1. ST 51794878. Composed of Triassic Conglomerate. Much weathered. Base at ground level 80 × 40 cm. and top 50 × 35 cm. Height 95 cm.

Stone 2. ST 51794876. Composed of Triassic Conglomerate. Much weathered. Roughly cuboidal. Base at ground level 35 × 70 cm., top 45 × 60 cm. Height 1.0 m.

Stone 3. ST 51804881. Composed of Carboniferous Limestone. Largely buried. Recumbent. Visible part measures 50 × 50 cm. and length 1.2 m.

Stones 1 and 2 are being used as rubbing posts by the cattle and already (Feb. 1968) a ditch is thus being formed round them.

Geological identification was by Messrs. C. A. Wright and A. K. Yeats.

E. K. TRATMAN

Beaker Sherd from Piney Sleight (T. 21), Cheddar

This sherd which is the only find surviving from the pre-war excavation of this barrow by the Society (see Read [1925] p. 135), is of black paste, 5 mm. thick, with some fine yellowish white grits, and finely vesicular where the minute grits have been leached out. Possible traces of comb-stamp impressions survive on the weathered outside. It might be matched among the material from Gorsey Bigbury close by, and this is probably a sherd of one of the many varieties of Bell Beaker pottery.

A. M. ApSIMON

A Secondary Cremation Burial from Barrow T184 at Tynning's Gate, Charterhouse, Mendip. ST 46485579

Barrow T184 is situated approximately 700 metres S.W. of the Tynning's Farm Barrow Group. It was first recorded in 1926 when a note and sketch plan, which showed kerbstones and a central stone, were published (Tratman, 1929).

When the site was visited, shortly after it had been ploughed in Spring 1966, three small areas of disturbed cremation were noted (*Fig. 58*). One was accompanied by a scatter of recently broken sherds. In addition several of the western revetment stones had been removed and also the

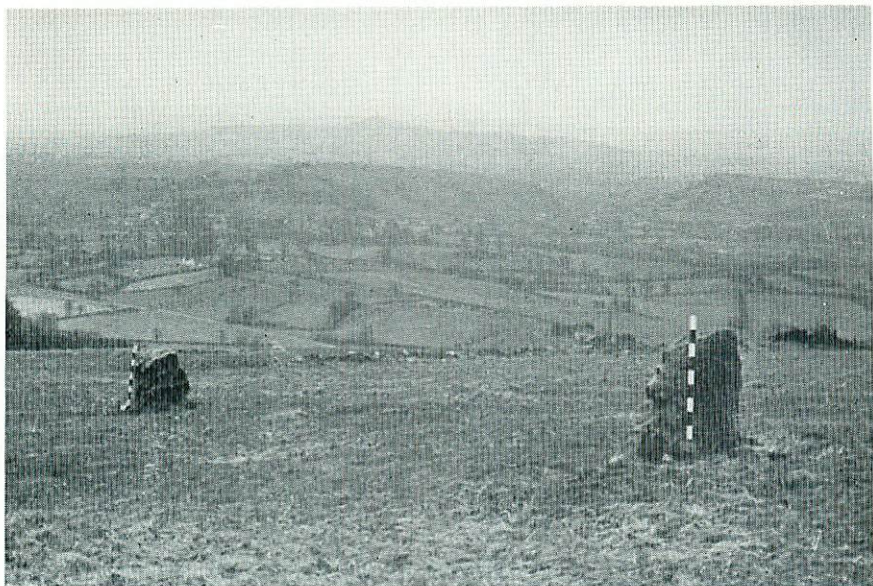


PLATE 37

The Deer Leap Stones, Ebbor, looking south. (Metre scale)

(Photograph: E. K. Traitman)