

Archæological Notes

*Portishead Camp, Somerset.** (O.S. 6 in. to 1 mile, Som. 2, N.W., N.G.R., ST 471775).—An examination of this site (made in the company of Professor Tratman) suggests that this is unlikely to be a hill fort. The only area available for occupation would be a narrow strip at the foot of the steep and exposed north slope of the almost knife-backed ridge on which the camp is supposed to be set. The bank (western rampart) which runs down the north slope is very much overgrown and not easily examined, but its defensive value appears to be negligible. The supposed southern rampart and ditch, which run along the south face of the ridge just below the crest, seem merely to be due to surface quarrying, and the approach road is clearly visible. There is an east-west natural ridge, which is continued west of the western bank, and can easily be mistaken for an artificial structure. The whole, including the part called the "Lookout" of other accounts, has some resemblance to the castle mound on Middle Hope north of Weston-super-Mare (Som. 9, S.E., N.G.R., ST 326660).

A. M. APSIMON.

Romano-British Site, Paulton, Somerset. (O.S. 6 in. to 1 mile, Som. 20, S.W., N.G.R., ST 645566).—In July 1955 the writer and some members of this Society investigated a Romano-British site, which was being destroyed by road construction works. The site is just over the Paulton boundary in the parish of High Littleton. The first discovery was of a square casket of Bath freestone, complete with lid and iron binding. This contained burnt human bones. Subsequent investigation showed that this casket came from within a rectangular building some 40 × 20 ft. The walls were of White Lias and the roof probably of Pennant stone tiles. No made floor was seen. A preliminary examination of the pottery suggests that the site was first occupied about A.D. 80–100 and that the stone building was erected early in the second century A.D., the occupation continuing till A.D. 150–200. A fourth-century coin, said to have been found on the site, is probably a stray unless a later building awaits discovery. The casket is in the Bristol City Museum.

A. M. APSIMON.

Excavations at Burlledge Camp, Somerset. (O.S. 6 in. to 1 mile, Som. 19, N.W., N.G.R., ST 582285).—By permission of the Duchy of Cornwall five days' excavations were made in March, 1955, under the direction of the writer. These excavations were designed to answer problems raised in the course of the Ministry of Works investigations into the archæological sites covered by the Chew Valley Reservoir. A full account will be published in the Chew Valley Excavation Report.

The excavations were confined to the interior of the camp. They showed that occupation was restricted to a triangular area 100 × 50 yards in the south-west corner. Lines joining *R*, *U*, and *S* of survey (Crook and Tratman, 1954, *Fig. 3*) would enclose the occupied area. The cuttings revealed a layer of occupation material nearly 2 ft. thick, as well as pits, post and stake holes, gullies and ditches. It seems likely that there was a row of huts sheltering behind the southern and western ramparts, which are still some 3 ft. high, though this is masked by the accumulation of occupation deposit and plough soil behind them. Iron slag and portions of clay bowl-furnaces found in the extreme south-west corner point to iron working. Other finds included a considerable amount of pottery of Iron Age A type, animal bones, part of an iron fibula and a saddle quern.

Some stratigraphical evidence was found of two phases of Iron Age A occupation. The pottery belonging to the second phase is very like that from the Iron Age A farmstead at Chew Park Farm, and may be of early first century A.D. date. The earlier phase of occupation is likely to fall within the first century B.C. No trace was found of any Iron Age B or of Belgic occupation, and the only evidence of continued interest in the site was a single sherd of late first century A.D. Romano-British type found lying on the top of the occupation deposit.

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* Victoria County History, II, p. 479.