Notes

The Meare Lake Village Excavations, 1937

The Meare excavations were re-opened on 23 August 1937 and the work extended over four weeks. Six men were employed, all of them having had previous experience in these excavations.

Work began 25 ft. north of the datum line at 10 ft. east of the 300 ft. post, in ground lying south of Mounds XVII and XIX. The examination included the whole of Mound XVII, the west half of Mound XIX, and portions of Mounds LI, XVI, and XXIV.

The north margin of the Roman stone-work was exposed overlying the British floor level, and was found to be 2 ft. 3 in. in maximum depth. Some of the stone blocks were quite near the surface of the ground and their position clearly defined by scorched marks in the turf.

From a structural point of view the digging was uneventful, as no timber substructure was discovered either under the mounds or in the ground surrounding the dwelling-sites. Interest was however sustained by the finding of an unusual number of important objects for the museum cases, amongst them being several entirely new to the collection.

Mounds XVII and XIX appear to have been constructed late in the occupation of the village, at a time when the peat had become consolidated and firm enough for the clay floors to be placed directly on its surface without the support of brushwood and timber.

Mound XVII was composed of seven thin clay floors with a total maximum depth of 3 ft. 4 in., and a series of seven superimposed clay hearths.

Mound XIX consisted of one floor. There were several points of interest regarding the construction of Mound XVII. The first was that the hearths were situated near the east side

of the floors, the second was the unusual accumulation of black earth and fire-ash that covered and surrounded the lower floors. This black earth, largely composed of fire-ash and charcoal, at places reached a depth of 18 to 24 in. It contained many lost objects, quantities of pottery and wheelbarrowsful of cracked up animal bones. Among the bones were those of the following animals, beaver, dog, horse, sheep, goat, pig and ox, red-deer, roe-deer, a great many different kinds of birds and several fish.

Among the smaller objects discovered were the following :—

Antler (*chiefly red-deer*).—Twelve weaving-combs ; finely polished knife-handle and another of roe-deer antler ; modelling-tool of roe-deer antler ; curved, socketed implement, zoomorphic (with an eel-head shaped terminal) ; eight square pieces of antler, nearly flat, three having perforated holes at the corners and in the centre ; long toggle ; two ferrules (one with three projecting rivets) ; and several other worked pieces.

Bone, etc.—Two complete and three broken needles ; two polished pins with long notch and mouldings, and another with the notch only ; polished radius of sheep, notched and grooved ; four gouges and ' skewers ' ; several ' bobbins ' ; seventeen worked shoulder-blades ; three perforated canine teeth of dog.

Beads of Glass.—Two globular beads, yellow and lemon-coloured ; two clear glass beads with yellow pattern ; yellow paste ring-bead with bluish-green wave pattern ; and parts of other beads.

Bronze.—Five fibulae, including one of La Tène I type ; long, narrow harness ornament ; hinge-plate with rivet-holes ; finger-ring ; length of bordering ; wire.

Iron.—Large tanged knife with convex cutting-edge ; several other knives, broken ; socketed spear-head ; part of a bill-hook ; large boss, cup-shaped ; cleat, or clamp.

Lead and Tin.—Part of an armlet and a bent rod of tin ; piece of a ring of lead.

Crucible.—One fragment.

Kimmeridge Shale.—Parts of eight lathe-turned armlets.

Whorls.—Twenty-nine spindlewhorls (stone, baked clay, Kimmeridge shale, bone, tin).

Flint.—One scraper, one core.

Stone.—Eighteen quern-stones of the saddle type, mostly upper stones,—one very fine specimen (a lower stone) found in Mound XVII; half-a-dozen hammer-stones, a collection of 142 sling-stones; a few well-formed pounders; and a 'mace-head' of a wide heart-shape, with hour-glass perforation.

Baked Clay.—Three 'balls' of baked clay.

Pottery.—Fragments of plain pottery vessels were very numerous this season, but, in proportion, ornamented wares were scarce; one pot has a handle and bands of ornament in slight relief. It will be possible to restore some of the vessels.

Animal Remains.—The remains of domesticated animals and of birds were very plentiful. The bones included a few of otter and beaver. Vertebrae of salmon (or trout) and of bass (?) were found this season.

ARTHUR BULLEID
H. ST. GEORGE GRAY

ST. CARANTOC AT CARHAMPTON

A SHORT paper on the Caratacus Stone by Mr. H. St. George Gray, F.S.A., is published in this volume. Dr. Macalister's theory, quoted by Mr. Gray, that the name carved on the stone may read Caranaci (genitive) and not Carataci, as has generally been supposed, suggested a new theory that the 'nepos' commemorated may have been a relation of a Celtic saint, known variously as Carantacus, Carannog or Carantoc in British and Welsh records, and in Brittany as Carantec. As late as the sixteenth century the saint was honoured at Carhampton, where he was believed to have founded the early Church which still existed at the time of Leland's visit. This Church stood in the same large churchyard as the later medieval Church. The evidence, however, is not sufficient to justify the association of so indeterminate an inscription with an historical individual, and moreover it appears very improbable philologically, in spite of the mutations which the name has suffered, that it could ever have been Latinized as Caranacus. Incidentally, it may be noted that the Léon Breviary of 1516 has lessons for the feast of St. Carantoc whom it calls Caradoc

(*i.e.* Caratacus), so that a confusion between the names Carantacus and Caratacus has a precedent, if only at a comparatively recent date.

The story of St. Carantoc's connection with Somerset is so little known that the writer has obtained permission from Canon G. H. Doble to publish the following notes drawn from *S. Carantoc, Abbot and Confessor*, Cornish Saints Series, No. 14 (1928).

Briefly, the evidences connecting St. Carantoc with Somerset are as follows :

1. Camden, *Britannia*, 1594, p. 156 ; ' Caranton is called after Carantocus a Briton '.

2. Leland. *Leland in Somersetshire :* 1540–1542, *Proceedings, S.A.S.*, xxxiii, ii, 97 ; ' Cornetun Paroche a Mile from Dunster Castle. Carntoun is shortley spoken for Carantokes Towne, wher yet is a Chapel of this Sainct that sumtyme was the Paroch Chirche.'

3. Calendar of the Priory of Dunster, *circa* 1380, ' Muchelney Memoranda ', *Som. Rec. Soc.* xlii, 159, 16 May, Karentoc. (See also *Ibid.* p. 183).

In the Domesday Survey, Carhampton is called Carentone, and there can be no doubt of the identity of Camden's Carenton and Leland's Carntoun or Cornetun with this place. Canon Doble states that it is also to be identified with the Carrum of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle which records a Danish Victory there in 833, and that about the year 1000 the place-name had become Carumtun. He gives the authority of Professor Mawer, hon. secretary of the English Place-name Society, for the statement that Carrum ' almost certainly takes its name from the rocky valley which leads down to it, the word being the dative plural for the old British word for a rock ', and adds a further local note, ' close by is the little river Willett—the Guellit of the Vita Carantoci '.

4. Vita Carantoci. This is a Latin life of St. Carantoc which was preserved in Wales and is now in the British Museum (Cotton MSS., Vespasian A. XIV). It was printed by Preb. W. J. Rees in 1853 in his *Lives of the Cambro-British Saints*. Canon Doble gives a literal translation of this life. After some genealogical information and an account of the saint's association with St. Patrick, St. Carantoc's works in Ireland are described. Then follows the passage which is believed to relate to Carhampton.

' And afterwards he came again to his own native country Kerediciaun, to his own cave, with many clerks, and there did many mighty works, which no man can enumerate. And Christ gave him from on high an honourable altar, the colour of which no man understood ; and afterwards he came to the river Severn, to sail

(across it), and he cast his altar into the sea, and it went before him where God willed him to come. At that time Cato and Arthur were reigning in that country, dwelling in Dindrarthou ; and Arthur came wandering round to find a serpent, most fierce, huge and terrible, which had laid waste twelve parts of the land of Carrum, and Carantoc came and saluted Arthur, who rejoiced, and received a blessing from him. And Carantoc asked Arthur whether he had heard where his altar had come to shore ; and Arthur replied, " If I am paid for it, I will tell thee " ; and he said, " What doest thou ask to be done ? " He answered, " That thou should'st take away the serpent that is close to thee, if thou art a servant of God, that we may see." Then blessed Carantoc went and prayed to the Lord ; and straightway the serpent came with great noise, like a calf running to its mother. And it bent its head before the servant of God like a servant obeying his master, with humble heart and downcast eyes. And he put his stole around its neck, and led it like a lamb, neither did it lift its wings or claws ; and its neck was like the neck of a seven-year-old bull, so that the stole could scarcely go round it. Then they led it together to the citadel, and saluted Cato, and were well received by him. And he led that serpent to the middle of the hall, to feed it before the people, and they tried to kill it. (The saint) did not suffer it to be killed, because he said that it came by the word of God to destroy the sinners that were in Carrum, and that he might show the power of God through it. And afterwards it went outside the gate of the citadel, and Carantoc loosed it and commanded it to depart and to hurt none, or return again ; and it went out . . . '

The remaining passage relating to Carrum seems to be introduced from another version of the same story :

' And he (Carantoc) took up the altar, which Arthur had thought of making into a table, but whatsoever was placed upon it was (immediately) thrown to a distance. And the King asked him to receive Carrum as a perpetual possession by a written deed, and afterwards he built a church there. Afterwards there came to him a voice from heaven (bidding him) to cast his altar into the sea[1] ; then he sent Cato (and) Arthur to ask about the altar, and they were informed that it had come to land at the mouth of the Guellit ; and the King said, " Give him again twelve pieces of land, where the altar was found." Afterwards came Carantoc and built a Church there, and the city was called Carrov. But there came to him a voice from heaven, and told him to go into exile and leave his family (of monks). Here are buried in this city innumerable persons, but their names are not given ; and he proceeded alone to the island of Ireland, and was buried XVII Kalends of June, in his

[1] Every Celtic saint carried a round, portable altar-stone with him.

own amous city and best above all his cities, which is called the city of Chernach.'

It appears that the Vita Carantoci was almost certainly an early twelfth-century work by an author familiar both with Cardiganshire and Somerset, written at Brecon Priory, and composed before the publication of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* in 1136 ; and it is shown by Canon Doble that St. Carantoc's association with St. Patrick may be as apocryphal as ' the inevitable serpent story ', but it can be accepted safely that there was such a person as St. Carantoc, and that he was in some way connected with the Church at Carhampton.

A. W. V-N.