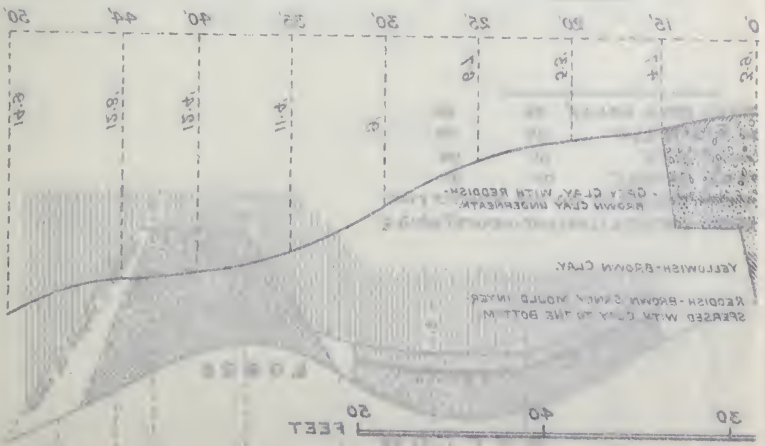
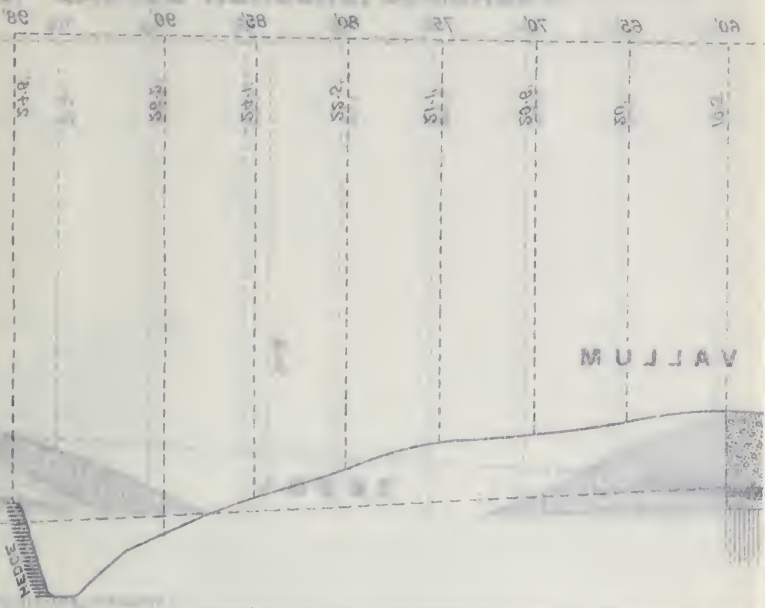


SECTION ACROSS CUTTING 4, "THE BEACON"

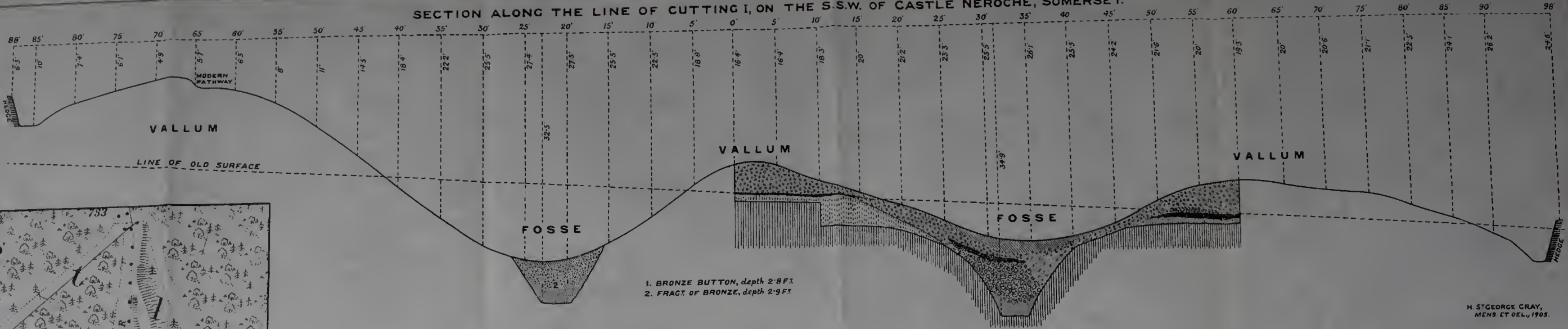


H. STIGRICE GRAY,
MENS. ET DEL., 1902.

VALUM

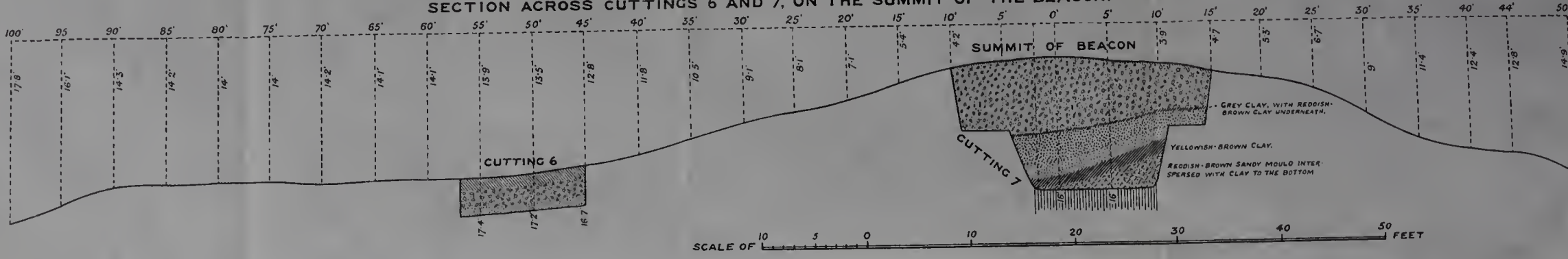


SECTION ALONG THE LINE OF CUTTING I, ON THE S.S.W. OF CASTLE NEROCHE, SOMERSET.

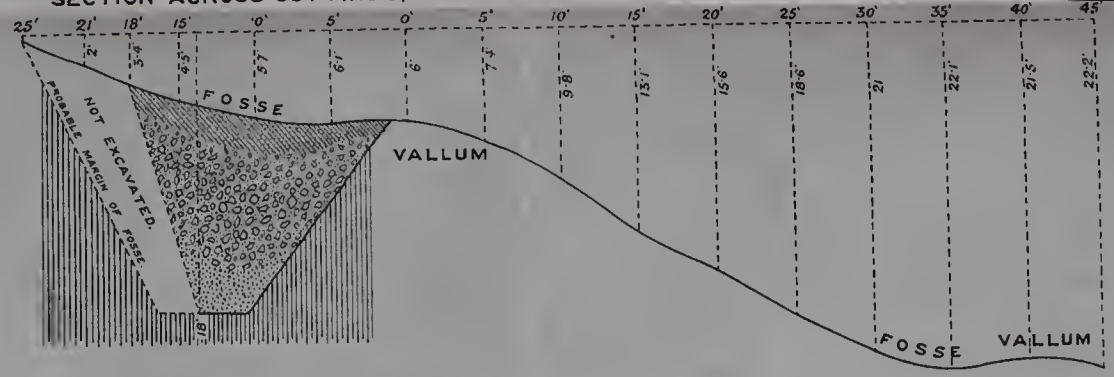


H. ST. GEORGE GRAY,
MENS. ET DEL., 1903.

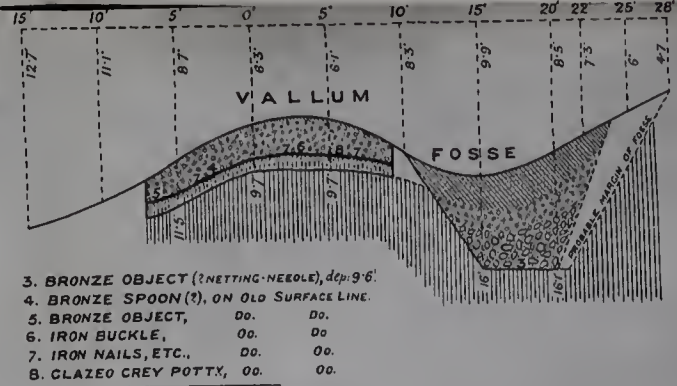
SECTION ACROSS CUTTINGS 6 AND 7, ON THE SUMMIT OF THE "BEACON."



SECTION ACROSS CUTTING 5, "THE BEACON"



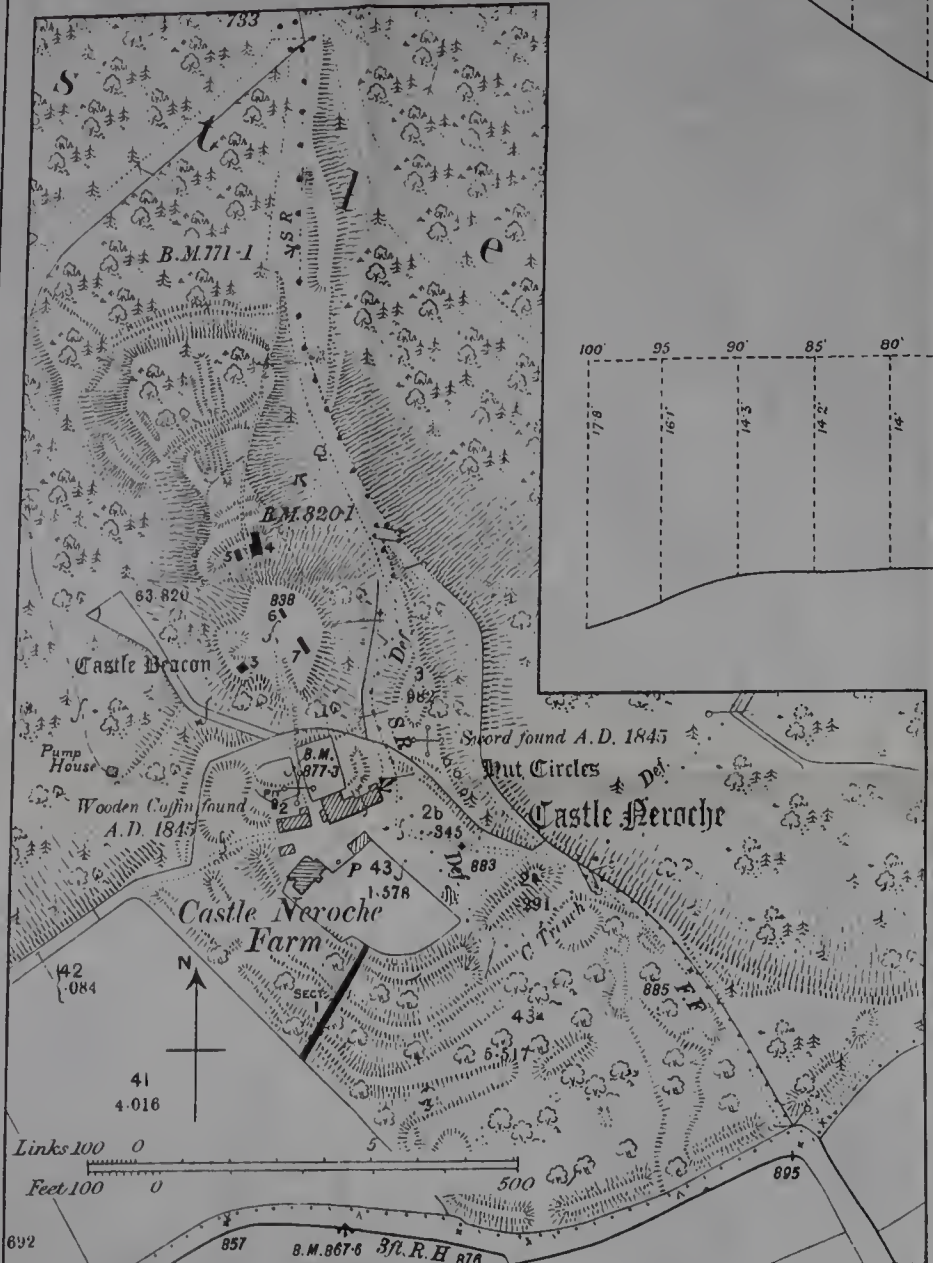
SECTION ACROSS CUTTING 4, "THE BEACON"



- 3. BRONZE OBJECT (? NETTING-NEEDLE), dep: 9.6'
- 4. BRONZE SPOON (?), ON OLD SURFACE LINE.
- 5. BRONZE OBJECT, Do. Do.
- 6. IRON BUCKLE, Do. Do.
- 7. IRON NAILS, ETC., Do. Do.
- 8. GLAZEO GREY POTTY, Do. Do.

REFERENCES TO SOILS.

- TURF AND SURFACE MOULD.
- CHERT WITH SAND AND SANDY MOULD.
- GRAVELLY MOULD.
- SURFACE MOULD WITH SAND.
- FINE SANDY MOULD AND CHERT (SMALL).
- LARGE CHERT STONES WITH A LITTLE MOULD.
- CLAY.
- SAND AND SANDY MOULD.
- BURNT CHERT STONES.
- OLD SURFACE LINE.
- UNDISTURBED SAND.
- UNDISTURBED SAND, EXCAVATED.



MAP OF CASTLE NEROCHE, SHOWING THE POSITION OF THE EXCAVATIONS MADE IN 1903.

Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey Map with the sanction of the Controller of H.M. Stationery Office, 1903.

Excavations at Castle Neroche, Somerset, June—July, 1903.

BY H. ST. GEORGE GRAY.

I. THE NAME, "NEROCHE."

ABBREVIATIONS:—Cal. = Calendar; C.R. = Close Rolls; P.R. = Patent Rolls; S.P. = State Papers; Som. R.S. = Somerset Record Society; F. of F. = Feet of Fines.

THE derivation of "Neroche" has from time to time caused much controversy, and has not yet been satisfactorily determined. In this debate, we have not only to consider the proper name of "Castle Neroche," but also the term popularly used by the peasants of the neighbourhood and others, viz., "Castle Rache."¹ Personally I am not prepared to offer any explanation of the term, but I have endeavoured to forward the solution of the problem by devoting much time to the collecting of various spellings of "Neroche" and "Rache," from numerous records of Neroche Forest, and a few of the Camp itself, extending from the thirteenth century to the present day; these spellings have reached a surprisingly large number, viz., thirty-seven, and it seems desirable to record them. Those commencing with "R" are as follows:—

1. See Rev. W. A. Jones' paper, *Proceedings, Som. Arch. Soc.*, vol. v, 1854, pt. ii, p. 81.

The Rev. H. A. Cartwright (Whitestaunton) has suggested that "Castle Rache" might have been originally derived from the Anglo-Saxon "*Rachen-teges*" = neck-bonds,—those terrible instruments of torture used in Stephen's reign. (See *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, edited by Benjamin Thorpe, 1861; original texts, vol. I, p. 382; translation, vol. II, p. 231).

1. RACCHE.—*Cal. of P.R.*, Ed. IV, 1461-67, p. 13.
2. RACH.—William of Worcester, a burgess of Bristol (died *circa* 1483). “Castellum de Rach proxime sequens distat a villa de Taunton, 4 miliaria ex parte meridionali.”¹
3. RACHICH.—Drokensford’s Register, 1309-29, *Som. R.S.*, vol. I, p. 40; Collinson, vol. I, p. 17 (26 Ed. I).
4. RACHICHE.—*Cal. of P.R.*, Rich. II, 1281-85, p. 598; do., Ed. IV, 1461-67, p. 13.
5. RACHYCH.—Drokensford’s Register, 1309-29, *Som. R.S.*, vol. I, p. 167.
6. RECCHICHE.—*Cal. of P.R.*, Ed. I, 1281-92, Index; do., 1292-1301, p. 276.
7. RECCHUCHE.—*Cal. of P.R.*, Ed. I, 1292-1301, p. 127.
8. RECHICH’.—*Som. Pleas*, Rich. I to 41 Hen. III, *Som. R.S.*, vol. XI, p. 321.
9. RECHICHE.—*Cal. of P.R.*, Ed. I, 1292-1301, Index.
10. RECHYCH.—Same reference as No. 5.
11. REITHICHE.—*Cal. of P.R.*, Ed. I, 1281-92, p. 160.
12. RITHICHE.—*Cal. of C.R.*, Ed. II, 1313-18, p. 238.
13. ROACH.—*Taunton Courier*, No. 1298, July 3, 1833.
14. ROCH.—*Cal. of S.P., Domestic*, 1663-64, p. 500.
15. ROCHE.²—*Cal. of S.P., Domestic*, 1638-39, p. 192.
16. RUCHE.—Gerard’s “Description of Somerset,” *Som. R.S.*, vol. xv, Index, p. 256.

Those commencing with “N” are as follows:—

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 17. NEERCHICH 18. NEERCHIST 19. NEERECHIST 20. NEERHICH | } | Gerard’s “Description of Somerset,”
1633, <i>Som. R.S.</i> , vol. xv, pp. 144, 147. |
|--|---|--|

1. Nasmith, James. *Itineraria Symonis Simeonis et Willelmi de Worcestre. Quibus accedit Tractatus de Metro*, 8vo., Cambridge, 1778, p. 95.

2. “Grant to Sir John Portman of the Keepership of ROCHE Forest, co. Somerset, Nov. 26, 1609.”—*Cal. of S.P., Domestic*, 1603-10, p. 562.

The Continental Castle of La Roche, mentioned by John de Waurin, A.D. 1423. (See *Chronicles, etc.*, by Waurin, 1422-31, pp. 47, 48).

21. NERACCHICH.—Perambulation of Forest, A.D. 1297. Bennett's MSS. of Wells Cathedral, p. 163.
22. NERACHIST.¹—Perambulations of the Royal Forests, made by command of Ed. I; Phelps' "History of Somerset," vol. I, p. 45.
23. NERCHICH.—*F. of F., Som. R.S.*, vol. xvii, Ed. III—Rich. II, p. 180.
24. NEREACH.—Gerard (see above).
25. NERECH.—Cartularies of Muchelney and Athelney Abbeys, *Som. R.S.*, vol. xiv, p. 111.
26. NERECHICH.—*F. of F., Som. R.S.*, vol. xvii, Ed. III—Rich. II, p. 185. *Cal. of P.R.*, Rich. II, 1381-85, p. 132.
27. NERECHICHE.—*Calendarium Inquisitionum p.m.*, Ed. II, vol. I, p. 226; do., Ed. III, vol. II, p. 106; do., Rich. II, vol. III, p. 232.
28. NERECHUCH.—23 Henry VI, *Som. R.S.*, vol. xiv, p. 100.
29. NERECHURCH.—A.D. 1445; *Som. R.S.*, vol. xiv, p. 31.
30. NERETHIC.—*Som. R.S.*, vol. xiv, p. 140.
31. NERETHICK.—Ditto.
32. NERETHYTHE.—*F. of F.*, Ed. II—III, *Som. R.S.*, vol. XII, p. 76.
33. NERICHE.—Drovensford's Register, 1309-29, *Som. R.S.*, vol. I, p. 271.
34. NEROACH.—*Taunton Courier*, No. 1298, July 3, 1833.
35. NEROCH.—Eyton's "Domesday Studies."
36. NEROCHE.—*Acts of the Privy Council*, 1578-80, p. 49.
37. NEROCK.—*Cal. of S.P., Domestic*, 1638-39, Index.

Before proceeding to the next section of this paper it will be expedient to quote from Thomas Gerard of Trent, 1633, as follows :—

"At this very place (Ile Brewers) another rill falls into Ile; whose head is neere an auncient fort or Castle, as they

1. "Neracke" (France).—*Acts of the Privy Council*, 1558-70, p. 242.

were then tearmed, in Roche forest, but of whose raising it was I cannot shew you, nor the reason of the name of the forest which was first called Nerechich, as an Inquisition taken the two and twentieth of Edward the first shewes, who gave leave to Henry de Urtiaco to assent certayne Coppices, the forest left open then consisting of about 2,000 acres; the one of Edward the second upon the death of Peche forester of it as of all the Kings forests in Somersett which then as the Inquisitions sayes were Northpetherton, Mendip, Selwood, Neerchist, Exmore and the warren of Somerton, it is as you read called Neerechist; afterwards vizt. the fifteenth of Edward the third Neerhich; and sithence by corruption Neroch and now Roche, a dirty soile enough it is, and something too good for deere which is the cause that very latlie it is disafforested.”¹

II. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS REGARDING THE EXCAVATION OF CAMPS.

We are at present only on the threshold of our knowledge as regards the hundreds of camps, fortifications, and ancient enclosures, with which the whole of England is studded, and which, as a rule, occupy the most elevated and commanding positions. The late General Pitt-Rivers threw much light on the date and purposes of many of the entrenchments of Britain, not only in Dorset and Wilts, but also in Sussex, Somerset, Essex, and Yorkshire. If he was noted as a practical archæologist in one way more than another, it was as a “camp-digger.” Others are following his example to a certain extent, but our advance in knowledge in this particular kind of exploration is necessarily slow, not only on account of the scarcity of funds in this branch of scientific work, but also

1. T. Gerard's “Particular Description of Somerset,” *Som. Rec. Soc.*, vol. xv, 1900, p. 144.

from the fact that antiquaries generally expect to be repaid for their expenditure by enriching their collections and museums with objects of greater intrinsic value than are to be found in dykes and ditches.¹

Wherever we find isolated encampments of *pre-historic* date on the tops of hills, we may be pretty sure that they were simply places of refuge for local tribes inhabiting their vicinity, to which they resorted when attacked by neighbouring peoples. The wants of invading forces in those days were, of course, for the most part, predatory. We regard these pre-historic camps as implying a low state of civilisation, before the dwellers in any large districts had attained to such organization as was essential for combined defence.

Endeavours to differentiate the Stone Age and Bronze Age camps from Roman, post-Roman, and Norman camps in Britain, therefore, opens up a field of enquiry for archæologists of the future; whereas antiquaries of the past veiled their lack of knowledge by calling most of the camps in this country "pre-historic" or "pre-Roman." The vast majority of these earthworks have not been even superficially examined, and yet there is probably not one the date of construction of which might not be ascertained, within certain limits, by sections cut through the ramparts and ditches,—provided that sufficient cuttings are made. Unless many more camps are systematically examined, it will be impossible, with the information we at present possess, to obtain sufficient reliable material to warrant a classification of them, or to assign them to their relative ages.

One can be greatly misled at times by the external appearances of earthworks. There are sometimes distinctions which may be drawn between the general outline of camps, as between Roman, British, and Norman, for example; but, as a rule, the art of castrametation was very much the same in all periods,

1. Mr. I. Chalkley Gould has paid much attention, superficially, to the entrenchments of Essex, but I do not know that he has done much in the way of excavating.

and the same necessities in the art of war led to the construction of similar defences. The great Cæsar's Camp, near Folkestone, was always considered to be British and pre-Roman before General Pitt-Rivers excavated it and proved it to be Norman.¹ The Dane's Dyke, at Flamborough, naturally enough was considered to be of Danish construction, but it was proved by a section cut through the vallum to be much earlier.² We need not go so far afield, however, but turn our attention to our own county,—to the Pen Pits and Orchard Castle, near Wincanton, which were for many years regarded as marking the site of a great Early British metropolis, and which were considered to be one of the most remarkable vestiges of the Britons in the country. The investigations of Pitt-Rivers and a committee of the Somersetshire Archæological Society, however, afforded evidence of Norman or early mediæval construction.³ Several other instances could be quoted, but space forbids.

All manner of dates of construction have been given to camps generally, and it is not surprising, as there is, as before stated, little in the principles of military defence to distinguish the camps of one people in a primitive condition of life from those of another. The only real method of throwing light upon the subject is by means of the pick and shovel, provided these potent instruments are wielded in the right manner.⁴ Indeed, it is in this way only, and by diligent search, that we may be able to distinguish the peculiarities of defence belonging to the early tribes and races of Britain. Time has obliterated minor details on which we might rely for discriminating

1. See *Archæologia*, vol. XLVII, pp. 429-465. General Pitt-Rivers found some urns here which might easily have been mistaken for Roman, except for their rounded base, by which, together with the associated objects, he proved them to be Norman.

2. *Journal, Anthropological Inst.*, vol. XI, 1882, p. 455.

3. "Report on the Excavations in the Pen Pits," by Lieut.-Genl. A. Pitt-Rivers, F.R.S., 4to., 1884. *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, vol. XXIV, pt. i, pp. 57-61; vol. XXV, pt. i, pp. 7-17; and vol. XXX, pt. ii, pp. 149-152.

4. "Memoir of General Pitt-Rivers," by H. St. G. Gray, *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, vol. XLVII, pt. ii, p. 126.

between the different modes of castrametation adopted. The fact of ramparts following the general outline of a hill, thus seeing into the surrounding hollows from all points, as at Castle Neroche, is a principle of defence too universal in its application to enable us to make distinctions as to the date of construction. The fact, also, of a camp being rather remote from water, is of no value in assigning a camp to an approximate date, until we have ascertained by means of excavations whether water was obtained by artificial means. In the present state of our knowledge it would appear that the necessity of occupying the strongest features of the country was considered of more importance than the proximity of a plentiful supply of water.

Many entrenchments were occupied successively by different races, and when this is found to be the case, the transition of the periods is clearly recognisable by changes in the forms and quality of the relics discovered. Camp-digging thus necessitates, for the explorer at least, a fair knowledge of each period, in order that he may distinguish the archæological remains of one period from those of another in the same entrenchment.

General Pitt-Rivers always strongly urged that archæology is mainly dependent for determining the dates of earthworks by the study and examination of *common* objects. It is, of course, sometimes irksome to dwell on the discovery of miscellaneous objects that have no doubt been thrown away as rubbish by their original owners, and to refer to drawings, often repeated, of the same kind of common objects. But such modes of procedure are absolutely necessary in connection with archæological field-work, and what may appear to be monotonous at first develops into quite a fascination.

It is impossible to lay too great stress on the importance of fragments of pottery in archæological and historical researches; they are practically imperishable, and afford valuable indications of the periods of construction of ancient sites and of sub-

sequent occupation by succeeding races. The character of the pottery, apart from the decoration, varied in different districts, being regulated more or less by the nature of the clay found in the neighbourhood; so that the qualities recognised in one place do not necessarily suffice to identify those of the same age in other districts.

Shards of pottery alone, therefore, are not *always* a reliable criterion by which the age of an entrenchment can be determined; relics associated with them have to be taken into consideration; and coins, of course, afford the soundest evidence, provided that their positions in the deposits and seams in which they occur are accurately recorded.

Many questions and details not in the mind of excavators at the commencement of a particular exploration may result from it, and, in consequence of evidence and knowledge derived from other and like excavations, may be afterwards sought for; this only emphasizes the importance of recording every little detail of an exploration that may appear to be unimportant at the time. The filling-in of all excavations should be properly attended to, otherwise the undesigned heaps of material thrown out from the diggings would not only prove to be a hindrance to future explorers, but a puzzle to them.

Even if errors occasionally creep into the records of carefully conducted archæological excavations, future investigators will of course be able to refer to the actual detailed published facts, to dimensions, etc., and to weigh them by the light of the increased knowledge of future times.

III. GENERAL REMARKS: CASTLE NEROCHE.

I do not purpose to give a general description of the irregular form which Castle Neroche takes, or to discuss any theories that exist with regard to its possible connection with other camps in the neighbourhood, but to confine myself almost exclusively

to the excavations which I had the pleasure of conducting recently on behalf of the Somersetshire Archæological Society. Indeed, our investigations at Neroche are not yet ripe for giving a general account of the actual purposes and *raison d'être* of this great fortress-camp. For the time being, and in the present state of our knowledge, the Rev. F. Warre's account, in the fifth volume of the *Proceedings*,¹ will suffice, in so far as the form and surroundings of Neroche are concerned.

Castle Neroche occupies an elevated point at the eastern extremity of the Blackdown Hills, the modern entrance to the camp and the farmhouse in the centre, being situated just beyond the seventh milestone from Taunton, on the Taunton and Chard road. As the crow flies, Castle Neroche is 6 miles S.S.E. of Taunton, $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles N.W. of Chard, $5\frac{1}{3}$ miles west of Ilminster, and $1\frac{3}{4}$ mile south of Staple Fitzpaine.

It is to be regretted that time or opportunity did not permit of a complete contoured plan of the earthworks or any part of them being made.² For present purposes, however, the 25in. Ordnance Survey, represented on Plate I, will amply suffice, with certain additions indicating the parts excavated, etc. The highest point, on the north, viz., the summit of "The Beacon," is, according to the 6in. Ordnance Survey (1890), 905·2 feet above mean sea level.

The map, Plate I, being on such a small scale, gives but a poor idea of the extent and strength of Castle Neroche and its earthworks. It, however, shows the position of what have been described as hut-circles,³ and also the place in which an iron sword⁴ was supposed to have been found in 1845. Iron arrow-heads are *said* to have been found on "The Beacon"; and human skeletons are recorded as having been found (see p. 36).

1. Also vol. VIII, 1858, pt. ii, pp. 70-75.

2. The survey in the field would take considerable time to do well, not to mention the necessary time that would have to be devoted to the working up of an elaborate plan for reproduction.

3. Mentioned by Mr. Warre, *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, vol. v, pt. ii, p. 46.

4. *Ibid.*

In 1854, the Rev. F. Warre presented to Taunton Castle Museum a few fragments of pottery found at Neroche, one of which is represented in the accompanying illustration (fig. 1). On my arrival at Taunton, I found much difficulty in classifying these particular fragments of pottery, not because I had any hesitation in pronouncing them to be "probably post-Roman," but because I was told that Neroche was always *considered* to be a pre-Roman

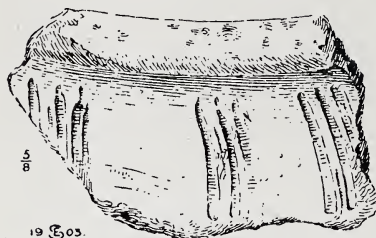


Fig. 1. Fragment of ornamental pottery found at Castle Neroche—*circa* 1854.

camp: as a matter of fact, excavations not having taken place there, the date of Neroche had been shrouded in obscurity throughout the many years of the existence of the Somersetshire Archaeological Society.

The whole hill-top of Neroche was apparently fortified by lines of earthworks thrown up along the edges of the natural declivities by which it is surrounded, without any consideration as to the quantity of the camping-area to be enclosed, and therefore not suggesting a Roman origin. The Roman practice was to regulate the external details and arrangement of their camps in accordance with the strength and position of the cohorts intended to occupy them, and with a foremost regard to the considerations of internal discipline. The Romans, of course, depended more on the strength of their legions than on the *natura loci*; and arranged their camps on geometrically constructed lines, often disregarding natural features altogether.

The strength of the ramparts of Neroche correspond inversely to the natural strength of the position; and in some places where a steeper declivity than usual occurs, no ramparts were found to be necessary, the artificial defence in those places probably being confined merely to a stockade. At present it is impossible to determine with certainty which were

the original entrances to the interior of Neroche camp. Future excavations can only determine this satisfactorily.

When such large camps as Neroche were thrown up, large numbers of men were in all probability collected to do the work; these men would encamp upon the ground previously to commencing operations, and would scatter bits of broken pottery about the surface, and various fragments of utensils and ornaments in common use. The ditch would then be dug, the materials from it being thrown up to form the rampart, and all that was lying on the surface would by this means be covered up and preserved. A section cut through the rampart and ditch at such a point would thus reveal objects of the date of construction of the earthwork.

IV. THE EXCAVATIONS.

The excavations, which were commenced on June 22nd, 1903, and continued for twelve working days, were carried out in anticipation of the Somersetshire Archæological Society's visit to Castle Neroche from Chard—the place selected as the centre for the 1903 Annual Meeting. Through the kindness of the owner, Viscount Portman, an old member of the Society, and one of its Vice-Presidents, and the interest evinced in the exploration by his steward, Mr. E. C. Treppin, F.S.A., nothing stood in the way of the operations being carried into effect. Lord Portman gave the services of four labourers from his neighbouring estate, and the Society provided two additional men.¹

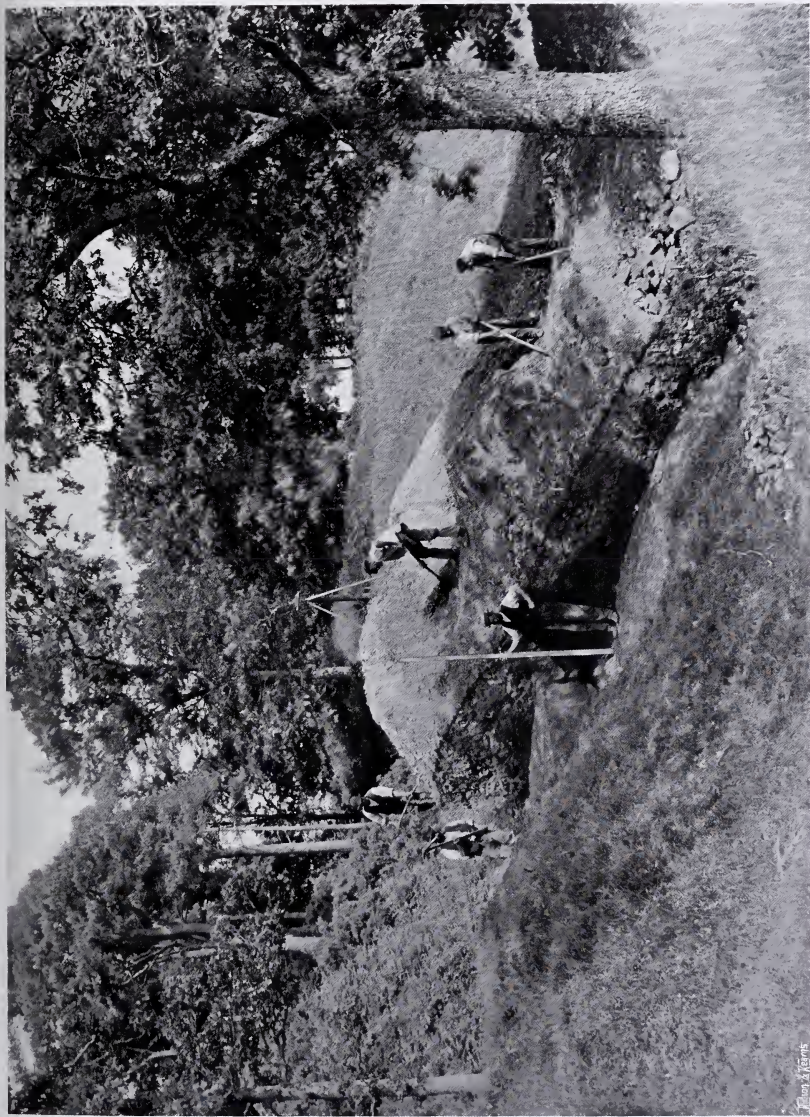
CUTTING 1.—A point 279 feet to the S.E. of the roadway

1. It appears to me advisable to register the names of the local workmen employed during these excavations, as such a record might possibly prove to be of some little importance in the event of a further examination of Castle Neroche taking place during the next few years. They are as follows: Edwin Newton, William Gamblin, Alfred Knight, John Hoare, James Yard, and Stephen Fudge.

leading into the farmyard from the s.w., and on the s.s.e. side of the camp, was selected for Cutting 1 (Map, Plate I, and Plate II), not only because it presented a fairly even and un mutilated surface, but also because no trees interfered with the levelling and plotting of a section (186 feet in length) from the hedge near the farmhouse to the hedge bounding the adjacent field on the south.¹ This being the weakest side of Neroche, it was defended by three valli with intervening fossæ. The cutting, 10 feet wide, was made half way through the middle vallum and partly through the outer vallum, as well as through both the fossæ,—the total length of the excavations being 71 feet. (See sectional diagram, Plate I.) In all cases the undisturbed ground (that is, the sand below the old surface line under the rampart and the sides of the original ditches) was exposed. The inner ditch was found to extend to a depth of only 5 feet below the surface of the silting, but in the case of the outer ditch to a depth of 9 feet before the greensand bottom was reached. The position in which the old surface line was found indicates that on the line of this cutting, the original surface—that is the ground before the ramparts were thrown up—dropped towards the s.s.e. to the extent of about 6 feet in every 100 feet of ground. This is well seen in the section, Plate I.

At a depth of $2\frac{1}{4}$ feet from the surface of the silting of the outer ditch, a band or seam of large chert stones was found which had been subjected to fire, but careful search only revealed a tooth of ox in this stratum, depth 3 feet. Indeed, nothing was found in any part of this cutting except a fragment of common glazed pottery just under the turf. When the ditch became filled up to within 3 feet of the present surface, fires no doubt were lighted here, and it is, therefore, astonishing that we found nothing else but the tooth above referred to. The soils have all been carefully represented in the section of this cutting, Plate I; but the lines of demarcation of the seams

1. The surveying instruments used at Castle Neroche were kindly lent by Messrs. C. H. Samson and J. H. Smith, of Taunton.



VIEW OF CUTTING I, MADE THROUGH VALLI AND FOSSEÆ ON THE S.S.E.
OF THE CAMP, CASTLE NEROCHE, SOMERSET, 1903.

in some of the cuttings were not very clear, nor would this be expected in a sandy soil.¹

In the middle and outer valli nothing was found, but this is not so surprising, as little is ever found in ramparts of this kind, unless objects by any chance get covered up on the old surface line at the time of the formation of the banks. Had relics of a known date, or pottery of a definite type been discovered on the old surface line under the rampart, they would, of course, have been of extreme value, inasmuch as they would have afforded reliable evidence of the age of construction.

Rather more success attended our efforts in the case of the inner ditch. Nine fragments of common brick-coloured glazed earthenware were found at various depths from 6 inches to 2½ feet. Two small fragments of red pottery, unglazed, were found at a depth of 3 feet; these appear to me to be probably early mediæval, but they are too fragmentary to afford satisfactory evidence of date. On the edge of the ditch, depth 1¼ foot, fragment of a red tile, of a type often found associated with Norman remains (but not exclusively so) was discovered;² and at a depth of 2·9 feet a small portion of a thin bronze boss, or top of a button, of no particular interest ("2" in Section, Plate I). The only other object discovered here was a circular bronze button at a depth of 2·8 feet,³ represented in Plate III, fig. 4. (See "1" in Section, Plate I). From its thinness, 0·3mm., it appears to be incomplete, and to have been originally capped by a rounded boss-shaped top. It is probably not earlier than the fourteenth century.

The paucity and character of the relics from Cutting 1 are certainly not enough to enable us to assign this part of Neroche

1. We had not the advantage of a chalk soil, in which the lines of demarcation of the different deposits are much more clearly defined than in most soils.

2. Similar red tile was found at the Pen Pits.

3. More than half way down in the silting. Had it been found quite on the bottom, it would have been co-eval with the age of formation of the ditch.

to a definite period of construction. It should, however, be observed that nothing pre-Roman or Roman was discovered.

CUTTING 2 AND PIT, 90 feet to the N.N.W. of the farmhouse, and between it and the Beacon (see Map, Plate I).

It was recorded by Rev. F. Warre, in 1854, that human skeletons were found near here,¹ "one of which is stated to have been enclosed in a wooden coffin of enormous thickness." The Ordnance Survey Map (Plate I) records that a wooden coffin was found in 1845. In the formation of this little rick-yard, two or three years ago, pottery was found by the tenant, Mr. Hoare, and when the operations ceased, he found that at this point mould and loose material extended to a considerable depth. This led me to excavate here, and resulted in the discovery of a pit, of circular form, 6 feet in diameter at the bottom, which was reached at a depth of 9·2 feet from the surface. From the turf to a depth of 1 foot, a quantity of common glazed ware was found, too recent to be of any importance; and at 1 foot deep, portion of an iron horseshoe and a fragment of red tile. From 1 foot to 3 feet deep, 231 fragments of rough pottery were collected; it is all unglazed, of a hard, sandy texture, of colours ranging from brick-red to dark brown, for the most part thin, containing grains of quartz (some of fairly large size), and in this respect only, bearing a close resemblance to a certain class of Early British pottery. Thirteen of the fragments are more or less decorated, and twenty-five are pieces of the rims of vessels. The ornamental fragments include:—Three pieces with horizontal flutings, one of which is figured in Plate III, fig. 12, and No. 20, p. 48; one with vertical and parallel depressions, Plate III, fig. 13; four with small diamond-shaped punch-marks, one being figured in Plate III, fig. 9; two with a kind of chevron pattern, roughly incised, one being given, in section, on p. 48, No. 34;

1. *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, vol. v, pt. ii, p. 46; also Plan accompanying Mr. Warre's paper.

a fragment of rim, Plate III, fig. 10, and No. 27, p. 48, with oblique, roughly-scratched parallel straight lines, ornamented also on the top of the rim (see drawing); and a fragment of rim and handle combined, bearing two little incisions by way of ornament on the root of the handle, of a well-known early mediæval type, and similar to examples from the Cambridge ditches,¹ and from King John's House, Tollard Royal,² etc.

The style of ornamentation includes nothing typical of Early British or of Romano-British art. All these fragments are, with little doubt, Norman or mediæval. (See general remarks on the pottery, pp. 46-51).

From 3 feet to the bottom at 9·2 feet, forty-four fragments of earthenware of precisely the same character were found, including a fragment showing the typical striations which occur

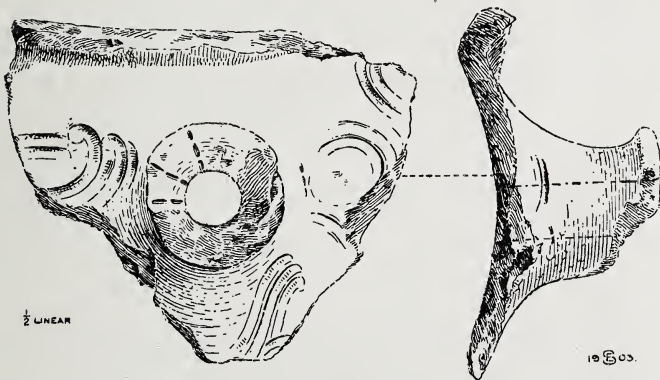


Fig. 2. Spout of a mediæval water-pot, found near the bottom of the Pit, Cutting 2, Castle Neroche, 1903.

on this class of pottery (mentioned also on pp. 50-51); eleven fragments of rims; and a large piece of part of the edge and spout of an ordinary water-pot, certainly mediæval, represented in the accompanying illustration, fig. 2. Its ornamentation,

1. *Proc. Cam. Antiq. Soc.*, vol. VIII, Plate V, fig. 31.

2. "King John's House," by General Pitt-Rivers, Plate XVI, figs. 1 and 2.

quality, colour, and high-firing are precisely similar to all the other fragments enumerated. This particular spout, by the kindness of Mr. C. H. Read, F.S.A., Keeper of the British and Mediæval Antiquities in the British Museum, has been compared with others in the National Collection, and there can be no doubt about its date.¹

The quality and ornamentation of the pottery satisfactorily establishes a Norman or mediæval date for the Pit. If the Pit had contained relics of earlier date they would have been found at the bottom.

This completes the excavations made within the bounds of the camp proper, and although the evidence derived from Cutting 1 cannot be considered *conclusive*, yet, considering the date of the Pit, the balance weighs in favour of the earthworks of Neroche *Camp* being Norman or mediæval; and nothing but further excavations can determine the point.

We next turn our attention to "The Beacon," where the remainder of the cuttings were made.

CUTTING 3 ON "THE BEACON" (see Map, Plate I). This excavation, 12 feet square, situated about 270 feet to the N.N.W. of the farmhouse, proved to be the most unproductive of the seven cuttings. This deep depression (and there is another precisely similar close to and to the N.W. of it—shown in the Map) attracted my attention from the fact that a fragment of a wall showed itself on the surface. The walling, however, proved to be merely an armful of masonry, and might have been rolled down into the hole at any time. Only three unimportant "finds" were made here, viz., a chert flake, depth 1·5 foot, a small fragment of pottery with a mottled glaze, depth 1 foot, and a small piece of earthenware, similar in quality to that found in the Pit, depth 2 feet.

1. Somewhat similar spouts were found in the Cambridge Boundary Ditches by Prof. M'Kenny Hughes. See *Proc. Cam. Antiq. Soc.*, vol. VIII, Plate IV, fig. 19, and Plate VI, fig. 50.

The workmen expected to find treasure here, and were most anxious that I should at least dig a hole. They tell stories galore about this deep depression, chiefly in connection with the "Castle Revel, or Play," formerly held annually on the first Sunday after the 7th of July.

Before leaving this hole, it will be interesting to quote what Mr. Warre said about it in 1854 :¹ "I have now only to draw attention to the deep indentations on the side of the beacon. These are modern ravages, and their true history is as follows : About a hundred years ago, a number of labouring men, urged on by the love of filthy lucre, and not having the fear of Archæological Societies before their eyes—not induced thereto by any hope of increasing their antiquarian and historical knowledge, but simply that they might obtain money—with sacrilegious spade and pickaxe violated the sanctity of this mysterious hill. But before they had found a single coin they were seized with a panic fear, renounced their presumptuous enterprize ; and, wonderful and awful to relate, within one month from the commencement of their attempt, some by accident, some by sudden death, and some by violent fevers, all paid with their lives the penalty of their covetous and most presumptuous attempt. Oh ! that this most veracious legend were universally published, as a warning to all wanton mutilators of ancient earthworks !"

CUTTING 7. (See Map and Section, Plate I). The Beacon of Neroche, from a military point of view, is a position of extreme strength, and must have been even more so when the Forest of Neroche practically surrounded it on three sides. From the summit of the Beacon downwards, in a N.W. direction, four ramparts with intervening ditches can be traced.² It would be well-nigh impossible for an invading

1. *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, vol. v, pt. ii, p. 47.

2. I have regarded the summit of the Beacon as Rampart 1 ; the level ground to the N.W. of Cutting 6 as Rampart 2 (Cutting 6 being the intervening ditch here) ; the bank through which Cutting 4 was made as Rampart 3 ; and

force from a westerly, northerly, or easterly direction to gain the summit of the Beacon ; but in the event of the defenders *not* being able to hold it, they had the main camp itself to fall back upon—a very obvious expedient.

The object of this cutting (No. 7) on the Beacon, which is 905 feet above sea level, was to ascertain whether the mound on the summit was natural or artificial. It proved to be the latter. Had it been natural, the undisturbed sand would have been reached within a foot or two of the surface. We excavated here to a depth of 12·7 feet before the natural sand was reached, and disclosed, from an average depth of 6 feet from the surface to the bottom, various layers of clay and sandy mould of different colours, all these seams rising continuously from the N.E. to the S.E. of the cutting, as shown in detail in the sectional diagram on Plate I. Twenty-seven fragments of the same kind of rough pottery as was found in the Pit were discovered at depths varying from 4·8 feet to 8 feet. The whole of this pottery was highly fired, red on both sides and grey in the interior, some of it exhibiting the striæ (referred to on p. 37). The fragments included three rims, similar in section to No. 28, p. 48.

CUTTING 6 (see Map and Section, Plate I). This little Cutting, 5 feet wide and 12 feet in length, was made to fill up the time of two workmen on the last day. The work was discontinued when a depth of 3·7 feet had been reached, and although no relics were found in the seam of sand and sandy mould at the bottom of the cutting, there is no certainty that virgin ground was reached. Further excavations can therefore only settle the theory that a ditch may be found here, or close

the bank on the N.W. of Cuttings 4 and 5 as Rampart 4 (shown in the bottom left-hand sectional diagram, Plate I). This seems to me to be the probable original design of the earthworks on Neroche Beacon ; but the remnants of artificial work here fail to convey any *definite* impression of the original design of the earthworks.

to; that is, between the summit of the Beacon and the ridge to the north of the cutting under consideration (No. 6).¹

The relics found in Cutting 6, although numerous, were not of any particular importance. They consist of:—

A bronze handle, perhaps of a spoon, length 67mm., of oblong cross-section (3mm. × 2mm.), found at a depth of 2·2 feet.

Iron fork,² probably seventeenth or eighteenth century, depth 0·5 foot.

Three large iron nails, and three much-corroded horseshoe nails, depth 0·5 foot.

Several lumps of iron slag, depth 1 to 2 feet.

One chert flake.

Gun-flint, depth 0·5 foot.

A few unimportant animal remains.

One hundred and fifty-five fragments of pottery, depth from 1 to 3 feet, including:—

(1) Four pieces of coarse brown pottery, containing much sand, and grains of quartz, pebble, etc., ornamented and strengthened by raised ribs on the outside, and in this respect closely resembling fragments of a certain class of large urn of Early British manufacture.³ Indeed, had they been found alone, and not associated with relics of mediæval (or later) date, I should have been inclined to assign them to the Bronze Age, although there is something in the quality, texture, and firing (but not form) that suggested at the time of discovery that they were probably not pre-Norman. The best defined example of this type is figured in the accompanying illustration, fig. 3, no. 2.

(2) The root of a somewhat flat handle of an unglazed vessel, ornamented with diamond-shaped punch-marks.

1. See footnote on pp. 39-40.

2. The use of forks did not become general in England till *circa* 1658.

3. See "Excavations in Cranborne Chase," vol. II, Pl. LXXXVII, fig. 3; and vol. IV, Pl. CCXL; Pl. CCXLI, fig. 7; Pl. CCCI, fig. 4, etc.

from the hotel at 9.30, and, passing through Forton, the hill beyond was mounted, bringing the party to

Leigh House,

the beautiful Elizabethan residence of Mrs. Savile, and belonging to Col. Henley. Mrs. Savile kindly allowed the members to ramble through the rooms, and her son, the Rev. E. S. G. Savile, made an excellent guide. This house has been twice visited by the Society, first in 1866 and again in 1882. On both occasions the age was decided to be earlier than 1611, the date on the lead spouts, and the style to be Elizabethan rather than Jacobean. Since then the contemporary notice in Gerard's "Survey" of 1633 has fixed the date of the building somewhat later; and a careful examination has shown that the figures are really 1617, the horizontal stroke of the last figure being deflected downward. On the spout on the north side of the front the figures are accompanied by the initials, H.H., S.H., *i.e.*, Henry Henley, and Susan, his wife, daughter of Robert Brage. Henry succeeded his father Robert in 1614. Now Gerard, writing in 1633, says: "Ley, in our way (from Cricket St. Thomas to Winsham) shewes a faire house finely sceated built by the now owner of it Mr. Henley. Aunciently it belonged to the Montacutes of Slow and Sutton Montacute; an heir generall of whom brought it to John Duport of Leicestershire whose successor sold it" (S.R.S., xv, 71). This statement confirms the evidence of the spout in every particular.

Thanks having been heartily given to Mrs. Savile and her son, the drive was continued to

Winsham Church.

Here the Vicar, Rev. D. H. SPENCER, acted as cicerone, and Mr. BLIGH BOND, of Bristol, read an interesting paper on "The Tympanum as surviving at Winsham Church." This Paper is printed in Part II.

Mr. BUCKLE said what Mr. Bligh Bond had told them

about the painting was exceedingly interesting, and threw fresh information upon a difficult and obscure point. The speaker went on to describe some features in the architecture of the Church, which he said was another instance of a Church with a central tower, and they would notice there that the tower was narrower than the chancel and narrower than the nave. The tower was oblong—wider from north to south than from east to west. He drew their attention to the very crooked line on which the chancel was built, the wall on one side of which was evidently XIII Century work.

Colonel BRAMBLE suggested that in this Church there might have been two screens, as at Crewkerne, Yatton, and many churches in Somersetshire where there were central towers.

Mr. BUCKLE said that might have been the case, although he did not think the two screens could have been in position at the same time.

Colonel BRAMBLE called attention to the beautiful chalice, and also an interesting document in one of the register books, which he thought ought to be printed. The latter is called a "Solemn Protestation," and is as follows:—

"Winsham } Upon the 13th day of February beinge the Lord's
1641 } daye Anno Dmni 1641 in the Pish of Winsham
within the County of Sūmset this Protestation
was performed solemnly accordinge to the Order
of the Hon^{ble} House of Commons in Parliament,
by all the Pishioners whose names are subscribed.

"I, A. B., do in the presence of Almighty God promise, vow, and protest, to maintain and defend, as far as lawfully I may, with my life, power, and estate the true Reformed Protestant Religion expressed in the Doctrine of the Church of England against all popery and popish Innovations within this Realm contrary to the same doctrine, and according to the duty of my Allegiance His Majesty's Royal Person, Honour, and estate; as also the power and

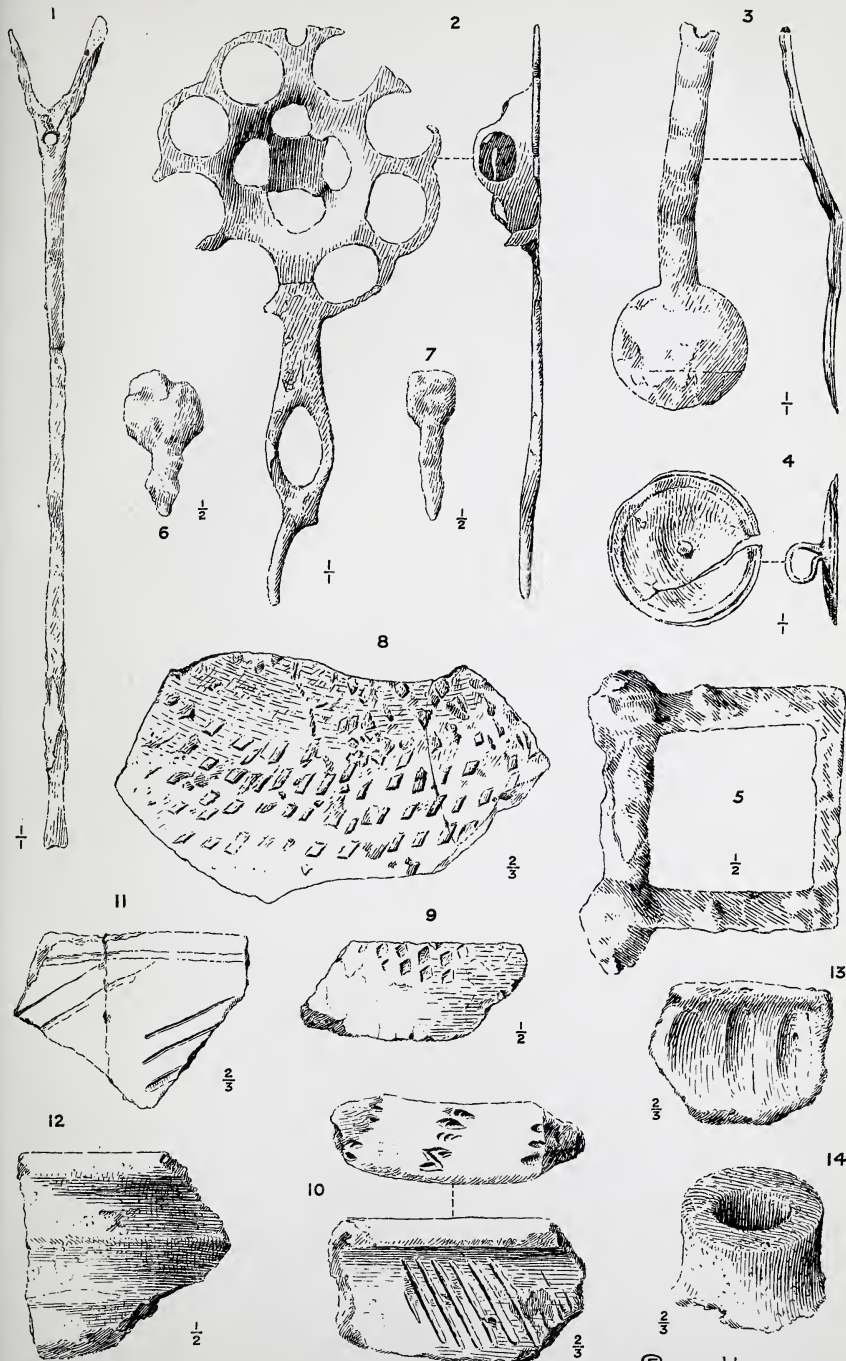
found at the higher levels), at a depth of 9·2 feet;¹ and (2) a copper (or bronze) object of a somewhat nondescript character, which might, however, be a portion of a netting-needle, as Mr. Reginald Smith, of the British Museum, has suggested; depth 9·6 feet. It is represented in Plate III, fig. 1; thickness about 1·2mm. ("3" in Section, Plate I). There are definite traces of its having been heavily gilded.² An exhaustive literary search for a similar object has not been made, but there is a strong similarity between it and the copper-gilt objects figured in *Archæologia*, vol. XLVII, Plate XIX, figs. 29 and 33, from Cæsar's Camp, Folkestone—a camp of Norman construction.

CUTTING 5 (see Map and Section, Plate I). This ditch, 7 feet wide, close to Cutting 4 and to the west of it, was re-excavated in search of further relics, but it produced nothing but an iron key, of no particular interest, at a depth of 0·8 foot, and twelve fragments of pottery, of a similar quality to those found in the other cuttings, at depths of from 1 foot to 3·2 feet. They include two rims, one of which is shown, in section, on p. 48, No. 33. Unfortunately no relics were found at a lower level, although the bottom was not reached until we had excavated to a depth of 12·8 feet (central measurement) from the surface of the silting.

On the N.E. side of this cutting a short length of masonry was found, apparently *in situ*, at a depth of 1·3 foot, extending to 3·4 feet from the surface. It appeared to be of a fragmentary character, but its object could not be ascertained, as time did not permit of the walling being followed out towards the N.E., and in the direction of Cutting 4. The masonry consisted of large pieces of chert, cemented together by a coarse mortar.

1. This will be brought forward again when mentioning the ingredients of which the pottery is composed, p. 49.

2. The gilt portions are somewhat corroded.



Sprankling. 1903.

RELICS FOUND AT CASTLE NEROCHE IN 1903.

CUTTING 4, VALLUM (see Map and Section, Plate I). A cutting, 7 feet wide, was made here in continuation of the original section through the adjacent fosse. As we were rewarded by making several "finds," the cutting was widened to 10 feet. The "old surface line" of decomposed turf was well defined here, and was reached at a depth of only 3·3 feet from the crest of the rampart. Resting on it, all the relics enumerated below were discovered:—

Copper or Bronze:—A spoon-shaped object, figured in Plate III, fig. 3, length 54mm.; the almost circular bowl (greatest diam. 19mm.) is very slightly concave on the inside, and in other respects also, it does not appear to have been a spoon; the back of the stem is ornamented with a row of circular projections in slight relief, as shown in the drawing; it shows considerable traces of having been gilt ("4" in Section, Plate I).

A copper object, found in two pieces, which fit together; use unknown. It is figured, full size, in Plate III, fig. 2, and was found at "5" in the Section, Plate I. The end of the handle is not complete, and four of the circular perforations on the edge of the "bowl" have been broken; the bottom of the "bowl" has been bent, as shown in the side view.¹

Iron:—Large iron buckle, represented in Plate III, fig. 5, half linear. It probably belonged to horse-harness ("6" in sectional diagram).

Thirty-five pieces of iron, in a *very* much corroded state, which include about a dozen horseshoe nails, two being figured in Plate III, figs. 6 and 7, ("7" in sectional diagram).

Pottery:—Eleven fragments of what appears to be a rude pottery funnel, with "trumpet-end" and a cylindrical outlet, about 16mm. in diameter.

One hundred and sixty-seven fragments of unglazed pottery,

1. Both these objects have been sent to the British Museum, but no information as to their probable use was obtained.

for the most part similar to that found in the other cuttings, including :—

(1) A fragment, 16mm. in thickness.

(2) Twenty-six portions of rims of vessels, some of which are represented, in section, on p. 48, including Nos. 1, 2, 4, 8, 9, and 14.

(3) Five pieces, ornamented and strengthened by raised bands on the outside; precisely similar to those found in Cutting 6, and commented on on p. 41.

(4) Mouth of a pottery bottle, figured in Plate III, fig. 14.

(5) A large fragment of light grey-coloured pottery, bearing distinct traces of a yellow glaze on the outside, and represented in Plate III, fig. 8. As compared with all the other fragments found, it is of a very superior quality, hard and close-grained, and containing no grains of small quartz pebbles. It averages 7mm. in thickness. The ornamentation consists of bands of diamond-shaped punch-marks, somewhat elongated, for the most part having one pair of sides longer than the other pair. This is the most interesting piece of pottery found during the excavations, and its position ("8" in the sectional diagram) on the "old surface line" is very important.

This completed the excavations.

V. THE POTTERY.

Six hundred and seventy-five fragments of pottery are recorded in this paper as having been found during the fortnight's work at Castle Neroche. This does not include a large quantity of common glazed ware, of more or less recent date, found under the turf of "Cutting 2 and the Pit." Only one glazed piece of pottery was discovered to which any importance attaches, and that is the fragment found on the "old surface line," under the rampart of Cutting 4. In this case the glaze has nearly disappeared, and I have no doubt that

some of the other shards found had been originally glazed, all traces of which are now lost. Although the Romans were acquainted with the art of glazing, their glazing was of a totally different character to that of later periods, and was only used with an extremely fine and thin class of earthenware; whereas pre-Roman glazed ware is a thing unknown in Britain.

The whole of the unglazed pottery found on the Beacon of Castle Neroche is of one general character. The shards are for the most part only the remains of common cooking-pots requisite for camp-life—pottery, which, for ordinary domestic purposes, was used for two or three centuries after Norman times, without developing to any appreciable extent. Most of it appears to have been roughly turned on the wheel,¹ and is highly-fired, very hard and brittle. There is an almost total absence of the better class of ware of the period. The majority of it is of a greyish-brown colour, some red on both sides, but more frequently red on the outside only.

The bulk of the shards has the Roman or Anglo-Roman character plainly traceable upon it. Continental ware sent over to Britain would, for centuries after the Roman evacuation of Britain, have the impress of Roman handiwork upon it; and much of the early mediæval pottery was probably directly derived from kilns of Romano-British origin, and retained characteristics of Roman fabrication. A Roman *type* of ware is generally found with early mediæval shards, but with it we find numerous other types which do not occur in the Roman period.

In speaking of rough mediæval pottery, Professor T. M'Kenny Hughes, F.R.S., has said that "while we have much which is indistinguishable from Roman, the general *facies* shows a mediæval modification, enough to suggest that we are

1. Up to what time hand-made pottery was used in this country we have as yet no definite means of proving; but when shards are entirely hand-made it is naturally reasonable to suppose them to be of early date.

dealing with something different from the distinctively Roman ware."

Had some of the Castle Neroche pottery not been found with other fragments of earthenware and other relics of undoubted Norman or mediæval date, there would have been some hesitation in ascribing all the pottery to a date as late as Norman times (see p. 41). In the case of the pottery from Ambresbury Banks, Epping Forest, General Pitt-Rivers had much difficulty in deciding whether *some* of the fragments were British or Norman.¹

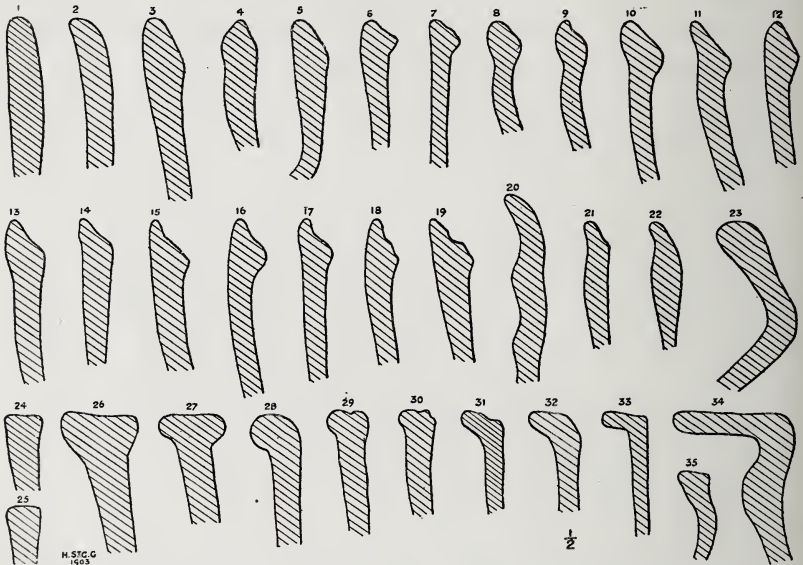


Fig. 4. Sections of some of the rims of earthenware vessels, found at Castle Neroche, 1903 ($\frac{1}{2}$ linear).

Some common types of Roman cooking-vessels are represented by *some* of the sections of rims given in the accompanying illustration, fig. 4; but when a large quantity of the Neroche rims and other fragments are examined together, it is readily observed that there is nothing distinctively Roman

1. *Trans. Epping Forest and County of Essex Naturalists' Field Club*, 1881.

(especially in quality) about them, although there is a great similarity.

The *precise* classification of the earthenware of the Early Britons, Anglo-Romans, Saxons, Angles, Jutes, Danes, and Normans, from the texture, quality, and general appearance of fragments of *unornamented* pottery is not possible, in our present knowledge of early ceramic art in Britain.

Bearing in mind the importance of a close examination of the quality of the Neroche pottery, two typical fragments of it from Cutting 4, Ditch (one found at a depth of 3 feet in the silting, and the other, the thin fragment, found at the bottom of the same ditch, see p. 44) were sent for analysis to the Mineralogical Department of the University Museum, Oxford, where they were examined, in the absence of Prof. H. A. Miers and Mr. H. L. Bowman, by the assistant, Mr. R. Graham, who has kindly made the following report:—

“I have examined a number of the grains in each of the fragments under the microscope, and have also taken the specific gravity of some by the “heavy liquid” method; the grains appear, almost without exception, to be minute pebbles of various varieties of quartz, both crystalline (colourless and smoky) and massive (chalcedony and agate and flint). In the smaller specimen (the one from the bottom of the ditch) I can find no other mineral, but the large one also contains dark green grains, apparently of chlorite slate, of which I send one in a tube; but there appear to be very few of these. In one cavity there is also a white material which is lighter than quartz, and is, I believe, kaolinite (china clay).”

Grains of quartz or pebble do not necessarily indicate any period, as both the Romans and the Normans made pottery of this kind, which was, as a rule, better and harder baked than the Early British examples.

In proportion to the number of fragments of pottery found at Castle Neroche, there is a scarcity of ornamental pieces, which are, however, all of Norman character. The same re-

mark applies to the shards from the Pen Pits, three fragments of which, bearing traces of glaze, are represented in the accompanying illustration, fig. 5. In quality they correspond with the Neroche pottery, and the style of ornamentation compares favourably with that depicted in the illustrations given in this paper (fig. 1, p. 32; and Plate III, figs. 10 and 11). The collection of pottery from the Pen Pits in Taunton Castle Museum includes rims of vessels having sections similar to fig. 4, p. 48, Nos. 3, 10, 11, 12, 23, and 24.¹

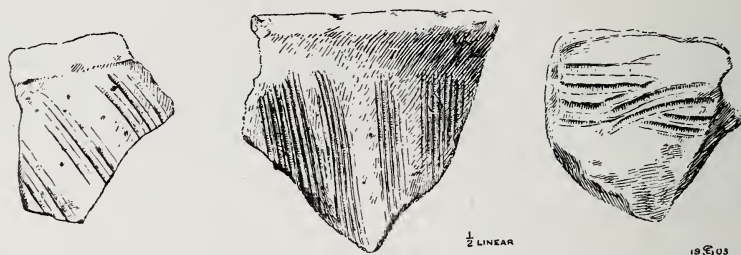


Fig. 5. Fragments of ornamental glazed pottery found at the Pen Pits, Somerset, 1879.

The Neroche pottery is very similar to some striated pottery found by General Pitt-Rivers in the Pit, close to the South Lodge Camp, Rushmore Park, Wilts,² and also to other fragments found by him at Handley Hill Entrenchment, Dorset;³ but he seemed to be uncertain as to its precise date.

But of all the pottery I have seen, that sent me recently by the Rev. C. V. Goddard⁴ most closely resembles the Neroche ware. It was found in 1898 in excavating the lower part of the south wall of Maddington Church Tower, Wilts, at a depth of from 2 to 3½ feet. "This refuse," Mr. Goddard suggests, "may be

1. The Neroche pottery bears a close resemblance also to two fragments (in Taunton Museum) from the site of the Abbey at the Isle of Athelney, found by J. Mellor in 1872.

2. "Excavations in Cranborne Chase," vol. iv, p. 42.

3. *Op. cit.*, p. 53.

4. Of Baverstock Rectory, near Salisbury.

accounted for by the fact that the old Manor House had stood just south of the Church, and these shards probably represent some of its breakages." Some of the shards are glazed, and some striated, and are evidently of mediæval date. Some of the Maddington rims are represented by those from Neroche, fig. 4, p. 48, Nos. 6, 15, 24, 25, 26, and 29.

VI. SUMMARY.

It will be seen from the foregoing that with regard to Cutting 1, through the valli and fossæ of the Camp, the results of *this* excavation cannot be regarded as conclusive. The relics were few, but the fact that nothing whatever of Roman or pre-Roman date was discovered has some significance, and the nature of the few relics discovered suggests the probability that this part of Neroche was constructed long after the evacuation of the Romans from Britain. As regards the Beacon, the age of the earthworks has been brought within much narrower limits, viz., to a period within the limits of Norman and mediæval times. If any part of Neroche was constructed in Early British times, the antiquities produced by these excavations have provided us with no material for proving it.¹ Neither can Neroche be regarded as the handiwork of Roman constructors, as neither its form, nor any relics found, support such a theory.²

In the case of Cutting 4, through the rampart and ditch, we

1. A careful study of ancient documentary material does not help us, as far as I have been able to ascertain, with regard to the construction or age of Neroche.

2. The Rev. Preb. Scarth wrote in 1878:—"Castle Neroche seems to have been occupied by the Romans, having first been a British earthwork. A branch of the Roman Foss road passed underneath. *Coarse Roman* pottery and an iron sword have been found there; and scorïæ, cinders, and horseshoes at Staple Fitzpaine." *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, vol. XXIV, pt. ii, p. 10. (The italics are mine.)

had conclusive evidence of Norman or mediæval origin. My only wish in respect to this rampart is—now that the British and Roman theories with regard to this part of Neroche have been overturned, and with no more surprise to anyone than to myself—that one of the constructors had, in the formation of this bank, dropped one of his hard-earned silver pennies!

To feel more satisfied with my own deductions, after carefully examining all the relics and pottery, I submitted the copper objects to the British Museum, and Mr. C. H. Read, F.S.A., and his colleagues agree in their being mediæval. Mr. Arthur J. Evans, F.S.A., of the Ashmolean Museum, and Mr. F. Haverfield, F.S.A., of Christchurch, Oxford, are also of precisely the same opinion with regard to the copper objects.¹ Gilt objects are very rare among Roman antiquities, and never found, I believe, with Late Celtic remains.

We were fortunate in finding metals, at any rate, which are, particularly in an exploration of this nature, pretty well essential to confirm the conclusion to which the pottery points. No relics have been marked in the sectional diagrams except those which are of value as evidence of the date of the earthwork.

At what precise period in Norman or mediæval times the earthworks on the Beacon of Neroche were constructed, must, for the present, remain in doubt, until further excavations can be undertaken. It is possible they may have been erected during those troubled days of anarchy, when Stephen was reigning, but not ruling, and when the whole country bristled with fortresses. If so, Castle Neroche would prove to be of much about the same date as the Keep of Taunton Castle, and the Castle at Castle Cary,² held against Stephen by William

1. Mr. Haverfield, probably our best authority on antiquities of the Roman period, wrote on July 19, 1903:—"There is, pretty certainly, nothing Roman among the Neroche things. I incline to consider that they may be mediæval, and Mr. Arthur J. Evans thinks so definitely."

2. *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, vol. xxxvi, pt. i, p. 23, and pt. ii, p. 168.

Luvel in 1138.¹ It is just possible that the foundations of a Norman Keep may be found some day in the level part of Castle Neroche Camp, now used as the outer farmyard.

From the quality and decoration of the pottery, the dates of Neroche Beacon, and Orchard Castle (Pen Pits),² near Wincanton, and, indeed, of Cæsar's Camp, near Folkestone,³ before mentioned, would appear to be almost identical.

1. "Exarserat namque tanta rabies procerum contra eum, ut fere ab omnibus quateretur; . . . Willelmus Luvel tenuit contra (eum) castrum de Cari."—Matth. Paris, *Chronica Majora*, II, 1067-1217, p. 167.

2. Although the Rev. F. Warre considered both Neroche and Orchard Castle to be of prehistoric construction, he said, pertinently, that "Orchard Castle is Castle Neroche in miniature."—*Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, vol. VIII, pt. ii, p. 74.

3. Footnote No. 1, see p. 28.