



PENORAGON

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Including report on the Gower dig by Donald Bryan,
this year's Director in place of Alex Schlesinger
who was unable to be with us.

When this magazine was first started, the intention was that it should be a forum to which all members would contribute, and a means of exchanging ideas, information and comment. In practice, it has been written almost exclusively by the Bristol members and rarely by others. Please will readers --especially those overseas --get out their typewriters or pick up their pens and get in touch with us? We want your views, comments, suggestions and information, and particularly some articles from you. You may well be more knowledgeable and better informed than we are, and you must surely have as much spare time as we have.

Meanwhile, it may be that some readers are awaiting news from us about Cadbury. Alas, there have been technical hitches. Our expert geophysicist lives and works in Cornwall and has all his super-gadgets down there. The task of our technological section was to assemble similar gadgetry here and work out all the preliminary investigation, after which our expert would come and check our findings and interpret all the data. Unhappily, we have not got thousands of pounds to spend on sophisticated instruments, and exhaustive search has not enabled us to acquire even temporary loans of instruments capable of producing the results required. We can only soldier on and keep looking.

Our A.G.M. week-end will be held during the week-end of November 1st --3rd and plans for this are going ahead. We hope that members who do not live too far off will make a note of those dates now and will be able to join us.

Several letters from America have reached us recently with the sender's name and address written only on the covering envelope and this address has been almost completely obliterated by the stamp mark or rendered illegible by rain. We shall be grateful if correspondents will make sure that their addresses are written within as well as without so that we do not send off replies or post magazines merely on a wild surmise. Thanks, folks! We look forward to hearing from you.

By Derek Brown.

In my article "King Arthur of Northumberland", which appeared last year in "Pendragon" (Vol.7. No. 3), I briefly referred to the site of the Roman fort known as Camboglanna on Hadrian's Wall. I had first come across the suggestion of a link between Camboglanna and Camlann in David Harrison's book, "Along Hadrian's Wall", and took it as no more than a piece of intriguing speculation on the part of one man. However, further references to this possibility which I have since encountered in sources of considerable authority have led me to consider the idea more seriously.

Shortly after writing "King Arthur in Northumberland" I read Leslie Alcock's splendid book, "Arthur's Britain", which I imagine is well known to most readers of 'Pendragon'. In Chapter 3 Alcock discusses the possible sites for the famous twelve battles at which Arthur "stood forth as victor" (Historia Brittorum), and then goes on to consider the thirteenth and final battle of Camlann. He suggests the connection with the Roman Wall site on the grounds that the Middle Welsh "Camlann" could derive from the British "Camboglanna"; but he considers that in Early Welsh (in which the original reference to this battle appears) the word would be "Camglann" from this derivation. (He neglects to mention, however, that the form "Camboglanna" for the Roman Wall fort is in any case uncertain: it also appears in early sources as "Camboglans", "Amboglanna" and even "Gabaglanda"). He mentions in support of the suggestion the fact that the battle of Camlann was not fought between Briton and Saxon but was an internicine struggle between the Britons; Camboglanna lies within the old British kingdom of Rheged. He suggests no other place as a possibility for this battle.

While reading "Arthur's Britain" I bought a copy of the O.S Map of Britain in the Dark Ages. This has "Camlann 537" and the familiar crossed swords uncompromisingly on the site of Camboglanna. Clearly the place deserved further investigation.

The fort lies on Hadrian's Wall towards its West end; it is six miles to the north east of the little Cumberland town of Brampton and two miles West of the Northumberland/Cumberland border of Gilsland. The fort itself now houses a beautiful, stone-built farm and its outbuildings; the fort walls, still standing to a considerable height in places, form the farm-yard wall and the lower courses of several Roman buildings are still to be seen among the modern barns and sheds. The modern name of the place is Birdoswald. A well-preserved stretch of Hadrian's Wall can be followed from the Irthing Gorge ($\frac{1}{2}$ mile to the east) to the north-east angle of the fort. The East Gate (Porta Principalis Dextra) which still stands to the height of eleven courses

is in a better state of preservation than any other fort-gate on the length of the Wall. Although few Roman buildings remain uncovered for inspection, excavations here have revealed considerable detail about the history and occupation of Cambloganna and of Hadrian's Wall generally. Anyone interested in studying the Roman period of occupation in detail should obtain the excellent guide to the site. (See references below.)

The site occupies a plateau of land 515 ft. above sea-level, overlooking the valley of the River Irthing, which snakes round to the east and south; to the north it overlooks a piece of lower-lying, boggy country known as Midgeholme Moss, and has views of the rather bleak fells beyond. When I re-visited the place, prompted by "Arthur's Britain" and the Ordnance Survey, it was late on a winter's afternoon. The woodland lining the banks of the wandering river below was half hidden in mist, and the sun, already low in the sky, cast an orange light on the ancient stone of the fort-wall. The effect was one of romantic and melancholy beauty, and I wondered how it must be to live on a farm in the middle of a Roman fort where perhaps King Arthur fought his final battle in defence of a dying culture. When I spoke to the farmer he spoke eagerly and proudly of the Arthurian connection, and added that Excalibur is said to be buried in Midgeholme Moss which was a lake in ancient times. But he found it necessary to add that he himself really believed none of it. Thus are the heart and mind of modern man at variance !

Camboglanna is a fascinating place, possessed by that remote, lonely and ancient beauty which is typical of this part of the Border Country. It is well worth a visit for anyone passing through the area -- a detour which can be further rewarded by a visit to Lanercost Priory four miles down the road to the west.

In the same chapter of "Arthur's Britain", Leslie Alcock discusses the possible location of the Arthurian battle fought on a hill called Breguoin according to the Historia Brittonum. He speculates that this may be derived from Bremenium, the name of the Roman fort at High Rochester near Otterburn in Redesdale. This enables us to add another possible site to our Arthurian Map of Northumberland. It lies below the Cheviot Hills about twenty-five miles from the site of another Arthurian Battle at Milfield Plain (the battle on "the river which is called Glein" - modern River Glen) which I referred to in my previous article.

Another book which has impressed me recently is Eleanor Merry's "The Flaming Door". This book should certainly be on the reading list of anyone interested in the significance of King Arthur for our own time. Although not specifically about Arthur, "The Flaming Door" is concerned with exploring the whole mission of the Celtic peoples in the evolution of Western man. This Eleanor Merry does by investigating the myths, legends and literature of the Welsh and Irish streams -- such myths as Ceridwen and Hu the Mighty, the legends

about St. Columba and the story of Taliesin come in for penetrating study. The following quotation fairly illustrates her line of enquiry and the conclusions she reaches.

"The Celtic folk-soul is no longer the soul of a people, but the soul of a spiritual awakening of mankind. The blue mantle of Bridg is his banner shaken out over the expectant heavens. "King Arthur" will not be roused by the blast of the horn of any national egotism....he will awake only at the touch of the Woman of Beauty who will come into the hearts of men and women...The Celtic spirit that prepared the way for the Holy Grail is the forerunner of all those Announcers of Christ whose great procession will follow his "second coming" when He is admitted at last into the hearts of the nation-souls of the world."



This stimulating argument seems to express what I was trying to say in a more limited context in "King Arthur in Northumberland". There I suggested that the King Held in Enchanted Sleep is indicating to us that something which was prepared in "Arthur's time" is slumbering in the unconscious depths until we acquire sufficient strength of soul to reawaken it.

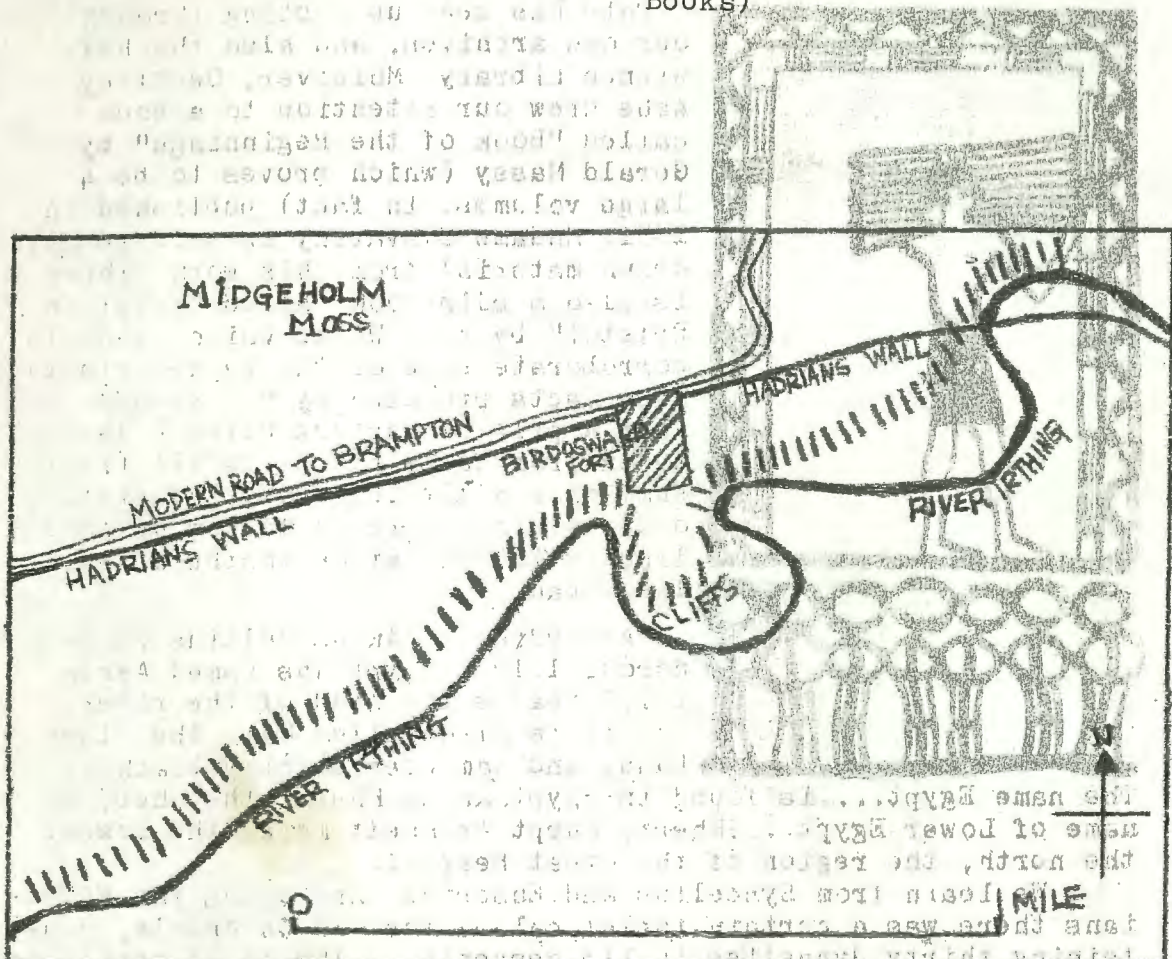
This article, like the previous, ranges from historical investigation to the meaning of mythology and it may be asked if areas of inquiry which are usually kept well apart can justifiably be brought into such proximity. I am neither historian, nor archaeologist, no folk-lorist nor depth psychologist, but find myself drawn by The Matter of Britain into several branches of learning, leading me to the impression that when we ultimately understand the true nature of man there will be no such divisions. "King Arthur" can be found as a historical leader of the Britons, as mythological folk-hero, as a role in a Mystery-cult, as a psychological archetype, and on many other levels, and our divisions already begin to overlap --unless we insist on re-establishing them through our own preconceptions. I would like to quote again from Eleanor Merry -- she is discussing the story of Taliesin.

"In the case of an individual so developed as Taliesin, it often happens that what is on the one hand taking place in the life of the soul is also present in external historical events. It is as though the force of such development must run side by side with or be taken hold of by the outer events. This is the secret of many legends. It explains why facts known to history are sometimes included in the most fabulous tales which are really allegories of the spiritual life."

So, we may justifiably look for Camlann on Hadrian's Wall without offending our friends who have found it in Cornwall ! For Arthur was known, and will be re-discovered, here too -- as he will be in one form or another throughout his real kingdom.

References:

- "Arthur's Britain" --Leslie Alcock (The Penguin Press and Pelican Books.)
 "Birdoswald Fort on Hadrian's Wall" --Peter Howard (Cameo Books, 6 Ryndleside, Huddersfield 3.)
 "The Flaming Door" --Eleanor Merry (New Knowledge Books)



MAP OF BIRDOSWALD FORT
 (CAMBOGLANNA)

A-MOWING THE BARLEY

A book has recently been published called "Sphinxes and Megaliths" by John Ivemay. As it is not yet available in Bristol we have not yet read it, but a Radio discussion about it, which we did hear, informed us that the author is putting forward the theory that Avebury and Silbury were built by Egyptian colonists here.



This has sent us rooting through our own archives, and also the Reference Library. Moreover, Geoffrey Ashe drew our attention to a book called "Book of the Beginnings" by Gerald Massy (which proves to be 4 large volumes, in fact) published in 1881. Madame Blavatsky is said to have drawn material from this work. There is also a slim book called "Egypt in Bristol" by E.F. Wills which tends to corroborate some of the rather startling facts proposed by Mr. Massey. From a pile of copious notes I have taken from these books I shall try to summarise a little of the information offered. If we are to follow up this line of investigation months of work lie ahead.

"According to Aulus Gellius (Diodorus 1.19.) Egypt was named Aerea....Aerea is the land of the river....It is also called Kam, the Black Land, and Kam does signify black....

The name Egypt....is found in Egyptian as Khebt, the Kheb, a name of Lower Egypt....Khebt, Khept or Kheft means the lower, the north, the region of the Great Bear....

We learn from Syncellus and Eusebius that among the Egyptians there was a certain tablet called the Old Chronicle, containing thirty dynasties in 113 descents....The first series of princes was that of the Auritea....The laws of language prove that the Auritea, the first series of princes, were Kafiritea, and the laws of evolution prove the primal race, so far as we can get back, to be the black people. (Kaffirs.) On another line of modification and development the name Kafiruti becomes Karute, found on the monuments as Karut, (indigenous inhabitants), and also applied to masons and workers in stone. The Karuti, it is suggested, became the Kaldi and the Keltae."

Mr. Wills is less startling. "From earliest times Bristol has been famous for its voyages and contacts with other countries, but what of those seamen who came as settlers here from the Mediterranean in Neolithic times?"

As will be seen, some of these people were almost certainly Egyptian and they brought with them an Egyptian civilisation. Their chief commercial interests were barley, flax and woad. The root word for barley is bd, or bdj, or again but. Flax is mhi and woad is wadj....."

Travelling in the tracks of the early colonists we find ourselves looking for good harbours and navigable rivers, or even for smaller streams. We reach Land's End, and find a good anchorage at Padstow, near the mouth of the Camel river. Camel, it appears, means exactly "Great Egypt" (Cam-ur) as we say "Great Britain", and Padstow means Barley Town. Mr. Wills gives additional examples and evidence in Cornwall, and suggests that in the Bristol area names such as Flax Bourton, Mayhill and Watley embody the more ancient forms of wad, or wod and mhi etc.

Both books teach us about the sacred bird of Egypt called the Bennu (a kind of crane with two large feathers erect behind its head) which was later the Phoenix of the Greeks and in both civilisations was regarded as the symbol of resurrection. The Egyptians worshipped Ra, the Sun God, and Ra was frequently associated with the Bennu so that both names were often incorporated as Ra-Bennu. The theory is that our name of Robin Hood stemmed from this and in "The Old Straight Track" Alfred Watkins wrote: "The number of Robin Hood's Butts...and hills and earthworks...absolutely disprove the idea that the original of this name was an outlaw of the Middle Ages. The name is assuredly much earlier."....Near the top of St. Michael's Hill (Bristol) is Robin Hood's Lane. It is now a mere passage, but in the early maps it appears to have been larger. It is marked on the map of B. Donn, 1773. ...It is the situation of this Lane which makes it not unlikely to have been a place where the Rising Sun was worshipped. The hill commands wide views to the south and east and the Lane actually faces east.



Taking up the suggestion that "Karut" was applied to masons and workers in stone, we come back to "Mysterious Britain" where, on Page 51, we find a picture of St. Piran's cross in Cornwall, and find, beneath the legend: "The age of the Cornish crosses is uncertain, but some are thought to be pre-Christian, and to show Egyptian influence. The shape, with a round head, and two side projections above a tapering base, echoes the shape of the Egyptian ankh, symbol of life."

And Gerald Massey also takes up another line which carries him to Britain.

"The vervain plant was used by the Druids in casting lots and foretelling events. It was gathered without being looked on by the sun or moon at the rise of the Dog-Star. In digging it up the left hand alone was to be used, and when dug up, it was waved aloft. Leaves, stalks and roots were dried separately and in the shade. This serves to connect the plant of prophecy with the Egyptian Star of Annunciation, the Dog-Star, the son of the great mother, who appears to have been reproduced as Arthur, the son of Arth or Ta-Urt. Arthur, son of the Great Bear, is the equivalent of Sut-Har of the Dog-Star, which leads me to conclude that Arthur was the Sabeian Son before he became the

solar representative. The parents of Arthur are the Great Dragon and Eigyr....

Taliesin, in praise of Llod the Great, recognises the kymry of four languages, and says, 'the kymry of four languages shall change their speech'. These four quarters of the kaer and four languages of the Kymry affiliate them to Aft of the four corners, the earlier Khefy or Ked. Taliesin says that Necessity produced nothing earlier than Ked (Keridwen) and the primary sacred order in the world was that of her priests....In the first period of the Round Table Ked is represented as living in the time of that Arthur whose symbol in the heavens was the Great Bear, and whose harp was the constellation of Lyra. Arth is the name of the Great Bear, and of Arthur it is said, 'Aythur-ap-Arth-Hen against foeman's attack and injury made the blade (for use) in battle' which identifies him as the son of old Arth, the genitrix, goddess of the Great Bear....

The British Arthur is primarily represented with the Seven in the Ark who are the only ones that escape from the Deluge in the Circle of Caer Sidi. Sidi corresponds to Suti (Sebti, Sothis, the Dog-Star, Sut). A poem of Taliesin's called Preidden Annwn, the 'Spoils of the Deep', contains the Arkite imagery. In the house of Osiris there are seven halls and seven staircases. These seven came to signify the circles and pathways of the seven planets, but the first seven in mythology are not the planetary seven, they are the seven companions in the constellation of the Bear. These are the Seven Rishis of India, the Seven Hohgates of the Californian Indians, the Seven sons of Sydid in Phenocia. They appear to be the seven companions of Arthur of whom the bard sings in their escape from seven different kaers, 'Thrice the number that would have filled Prydwen we entered into the deep; excepting seven, none have returned from Caer Sidi.' The subject matter of this mystical representation is the escape of Arthur and the seven companions from the Deluge based on the time and circle-keeping of Arthur's Star, and seven other stars. Now if Arthur were here considered a solar god, there would be one too many for the seven planetary gods, therefore the seven are those of the Bear, Arthur's constellation, and Arthur is identical with Sydik, the Egyptian Sutekh of the Dog-Star."

There is, of course, much more to follow. Next time we shall have to consider, for instance, Osiris and his place-names. He was the possessor of lands producing grain, notably barley, which he was thought to have given to mankind. Can it be that we have to thank Osiris for the great Brewing Industry that dominates our country to-day?

Members who have been with us for some time might now like to go back and re-read some previous issues of 'Pendragon'. Vol.7 No.2. "Stone of Destiny" by Rita

Moreno.


"Concerning the Origin of King Arthur" by B. Crump.

Vol.6. No.3. "Guardians of the Grail" by J. Foster.

THE DOLOROUS BLOW

Quote from "King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table", by Lancelyn Green. Puffin Paperback.

When Balyn found that he was weaponless, he turned and ran, seeking for a sword or a spear with which to fight; and King Pelles followed him, still in a great rage.



Away went Balyn out of the hall with King Pelles behind him, along stone passages, up dark spiral staircases, and through room after room of that great, mysterious castle. And at last he came to a great tower far away from the part where anyone lived, or had lived for many centuries...until, near the top, he paused at a closed door, and a great feeling of awe and fear began to creep over him. But he heard King Pelles clattering up the stone steps behind him, so he pushed open the door and sprang into the room.

As Balyn stepped across the threshold a Voice said to him: "Enter not into this room, for you are unworthy !" But there was no one in the room.

Balyn looked about him, and saw a table made of silver standing in an alcove under an archway of the most beautiful carved marble; the table was spread with a fair white cloth which showed no sign of dust or age, and on it stood a great cup under a silken cloth --and it seemed to Balyn that the cup was filled with light, so that he could hardly bear to look at it.

He was trembling now, he did not know why, and he seemed to wish nothing so much as to kneel before that table and the cup upon it and pray for the blessing of God. But he saw above the table a strange spear which hung point downwards with nothing to support it; and once more he heard King Pelles behind him, stumbling over the threshold of the room.

Then Balyn leapt forward to seize the spear: "Sinner, touch it not !" cried the Voice again. But he did not heed it, for now he seemed to wish for nothing but to turn and slay King Pelles.

King Pelles stood in the doorway, and he had dropped his weapon and all the hate had gone from him. But Balyn, in his madness, took the spear and struck the Dolorous Stroke, wounding King Pelles deeply in the side.

Then the Castle of Carbonek shook and rocked: all became dark, and a great wind seemed to seize Balyn and whirl him about and left him bleeding and senseless on the ground, while a terrible cry of woe rang in his ears and went echoing away across the distance.....

Quote from "Selected Writings of Charles Williams", Chosen by Anne Ridler. Oxford Paperbacks.

The Dolorous Blow consisted in the wounding of the royal Keeper of the Hallows with the Sacred Spear. The Spear was that which had wounded the side of Christ, and it bled continually at the point. It was then aimed at the central

heart. But when Balin le Sauvage used it, he used it for his own preservation. It is this turning of the most sacred mysteries to the immediate security of the self that is the catastrophic thing. It is indeed, morally, precisely the wounding of the Keeper of the Hallows which then takes place. Man wounds himself. It is an image of the Fall; it is also an image of every individual and deliberate act of malice, though the deliberation here is but passionate and not coldly angry.

It has, of course, every excuse. The mystery of the invisible Knight --say, the Invisible Slayer -- is abroad in the world. He might have been explained, had the question been asked. As it is, he rides destructively, but in the hall of Carbonek he is at least seen and known; it may be that even there he was a dark knight, and perhaps the King or Duke of Castle Mortal, since one must not over-multiply the title of king. There is here a certain similitude to the figure of the Holy Ghost, as It exercises Its operations in the world. For Balin actually to kill an inhabitant of Broceliande can hardly be allowed; the forest and its people are not of a kind that could be overcome in that manner. But the ever-bleeding wound of the Keeper is exactly symbolical, and so is the ruin that falls on Logres. A new darkness and sterility begin to creep through the land from which the pagans have been expelled. The outer conquests are not the inner. Victory is still being celebrated in Camelot when defeat issues from Carbonek.



Black is the cloak that laps his iron frame.
 Black are the flags a-crest his basalt towers.
 No seagull dares to mew this island crag,
 But cormorants and petrels winter there.
 Even the Sun seems darkened by his shade.
 The Black Knight of the South welcomes a guest
 Whose herald arraigns him from the beach below:
 "Nabon le Noir, Miscreant, Sorcerer,
 For crimes committed 'gainst the race of men,
 For ships ensnared and lured to your rocks,
 For women held enchanted by their hair,
 Gwalchmai, the Hawk, doth challenge you, to death."
 He draws his sword and raises it aloft
 Like killer shark with mouth upturned to strike.
 Gwalchmai swings back his ashen seaman's axe,
 Feints up, then down into the Black Knight's side.
 His shaft breaks off like willow on a rock,
 The sword is buried deep in Gwalchmai's throat.
 This is the only welcome that his guests expect.
 The Black Knight leaves the body on the deck
 And, sorrowing, the crew put out to sea
 For Nabon has a secret sorcerer's charm --

No blade of man can make him shed his blood,
No fire of man can burn his charmed flesh,
No poisoned food or drink can ever do him harm.
Whenever a woman is brought into his bed
By his command, she must grow long her hair
So it hangs down her waist or even more.
When he is tired of her, he has her shorn
And hurled from off the highest of the cliffs.
He has a secret use for murdered hair.
This Gwalchmai had six brothers left at home
And Yraminthe, younger than them all.
Her eyes were green, her skin like silk or fur.
So silently she stepped that in the night
Only her moon-white hair showed where she walked.
Each brother swore to avenge Gwalchmai, the Hawk,
And one by one they sailed down to the south,
In lawful combat challenged the Black Knight,
Were cleft and hewn and sent back cold as stone.

One day there came a ship into the bay
With forty mariners to heave her oars.
Mainsail and foresail bore the crescent moon:
Seaworthy, but her cabin hung with silk.
A woman had the helm of this strange craft,
Brought her ashore, then lightly leapt to land.
Her step was silent and her eyes were green,
Her hair was white, and soft as milk or cream,
Woven in plaits, reached down below her hips.
"Are you Lord Nabon, the great Sorcerer ?
I have acquired some skill in mantic arts,
Command some Elementals of the sea.
I have sought out the master of the Powers
To learn wisdom and witchcraft from your Grace."
"First let me know your name and family."
"My name is Marian, I have no kin."
Now Nabon resolved to steal her silver hair,
Thought to deceive her with a word of truth.
"Be welcome here ! The best I have is yours.
Fresh water for the lady for a bath !
Most precious oil I shall have sent to you,
To purge your skin and hair from cruel salt:
Whale's ambergris and nightshade for your eyes.
When you are rested, fed, and clothed in lawn,
Pass through the double guard, climb up the narrow stair.
There is a secret I will show to you."

"See, on the bed a coverlet is spread.
Each thread of it I spun and wove myself
With sorcery from carding to the nap.
Hast ever seen a silk as fine as this ?
Such burning colours in a cloth of gold ?"
Upon a ground of shimmering shades of black
A yellow dragon breathed red fire, and smoke
that curled and swum in every tint of brown.
Each thread of it was spun from womens' hair.
Whoever wore this weave could have as slaves
The souls of all the murdered women there,

Command them wait, and from their moaning make
A wind to blow a ship where'er he list --
To harbour or to ruin on the rocks;
Could also weave a cloud of darkest night,
Make him invisible to prey or foe.
One thing remained to make the cloak complete:
The cords to bind the cloak must all be white
As must the wicks of waxen candles nine
Upon the head of human sacrifice,
The light to welcome home the nameless powers.
"Now you shall help me kill my enemies.
See here, nail-parings and some rags of clothes,
And there a cauldron, beeswax and the fire.
We two shall take our ease upon the bed
When you have put the wax upon the boil."

Two lovers kneel, embrace, and intertwine.
Two swordsmen draw their steel in mortal fight;
Mongoose and viper dart and twist and bite.
Each one meant murder in the tenderness
As man may drown in softness of the stream.
While they made love the wax began to boil.
All over her form she feels the lecher's lips.
His eyelids droop, his jaw falls and he sleeps,
Not poisoned, but in the blissful dream of drugs:
Her skin was oiled with mandragora root.
"Let your head rest against my side, my Lord,
And I will sing you softly into sleep."
She scoops a pillow underneath his head
And snakes away, letting him sleep in peace.
She silently picks up the pot of wax
And empties it down his loud-roaring throat,
Over his nostrils, deep into his eyes.
In searing, blinding pain it smothers him.
She pulls a brand from the cauldron fire,
Enflames the hair and wax upon his head
As candles for the demons that he ruled.
Not on his iron skin the fire destroys,
But deep into his throat and pits of eyes,
The only place his charms do not prevail.
Not by the hand of man was he destroyed.
Yraminthe makes the cloak its cords,
The threads are spun from her own silver hair.
Not as slave-mistress will she rule its souls,
But, like a captain, lead her troops to fight.
As one of them she will command the winds,
She will put on the cloak invisible
As 'twere gold for the seven brothers slain.

* * * * *

A LAND WITHOUT MERCY, by Alan Lacey (aged 15) New English Library.

(Reviewed by Giles Fraser (aged 15)).

This is quite a good book, very readable and reasonably accurate in its portrayal of life after the Romans had left Britain.

The main character is a Celt who is trying to evade the invading Saxon hordes, and in the course of the story has to evade his former tribe leader as well, just because of a personal feud.

Although I think the book worth reading, one should not expect too much from it. It starts uncertainly but picks up in style until, by the middle, it is the sort of book you can't put down. The end leaves the reader rather non-plussed because there does not seem to be a proper end.

The hero has a passion for doing things that are quite serious but for trivial reasons. For instance, he ignores the importance of staying together as a group; instead of ejecting a troublesome member of his group, he himself leaves the party without warning, abandoning a number of defenceless women with an injured Saxon in their care.

The book describes two battles both of which are well written, and in the last of these his whole tribe is massacred. Previous to this last battle the remnants of the tribe was in a fort. What puzzles me is that the remnant remained, apparently, totally static for three or four days: they made no attempt to strengthen the fortifications, nor to escape as other members of the tribe had done.

The main criticism I would make is that the book has no definite purpose with no real beginning, and worse, no real end. The story would be immensely improved if the hero had some purpose, other than just escaping, and if he achieved something at the end.

NOTICE BOARD

Will any member interested in mazes, lab, and kindred matters, please write to Sid Birchby, 40 Parrs Wood Avenue, Didsbury, Manchester M20 0ND.

We now have in hand just half-a-dozen Pendragon badges of our old stock, price 50p. The makers have informed us that the next issue will cost 75p each, so will members who are thinking of acquiring badges please write now and let us know how many new badges to order. (The first half-dozen orders will procure badges at the cheaper rate.)



IN RETROSPECT it needs a little psychological insight to see exactly why Charles Kingsley's "The Water-Babies" (1863) proves satisfying to the reader despite its many failings, inconsistencies, moralisings and prejudices. The story is of a chimney-sweep called Tom who is ill-treated by his master Grimes. Due to a misunderstanding he runs away from a Yorkshire country home and, at the height of summer, slips into a stream to cool himself. Though ostensibly drowned the Queen of the Fairies has transformed him into a water-baby the size of an elf. Under the guidance of the fairies Mrs. Bedonebyasyoudid and Mrs. Doasyouwouldbedoneby he learns the virtues in turn until, for one particular folly, he has to journey (directed by Mother Carey) to the Other-End-of-Nowhere to find his former master. Having "won his spurs", as K puts it, he is re-united with Ellie, his teacher-companion, while also gaining an insight into the nature of the various fairies who succour him.

This scanty synopsis does little justice to a work which has all the richness and diversity of a fairy-tale, a notebook on natural history, a fantasy for children, and an allegory for adults. For those of an allegorical turn of mind, the feature that strikes most forcibly is the notion that The Water-Babies is a grail-story without the grail. Kingsley would have been well acquainted with The Matter of Britain -- "from first to last Sir Thomas Malory's Morte d'Arthur, and Spenser's Fairie Queen were among his most beloved books" wrote his wife, and Tennyson was a close friend.

Tom -- the name may be traced to Blake's Songs of Innocence among other sources -- is the typical mythical "perfect fool" found in all the cultures, of which Percival is a supreme example. (The fool figures in the Tarot pack with which K. may have become acquainted in his undergraduate days at Cambridge or through their use by his friends the gypsies of his parish.) Tom's Grail-Castle is St. Brandan's fairy isle ("old Plato called it Atlantis") to which he returns for the final grail-type vision. And, like a grail-hero, his quest takes him through various waste-lands, echoing the lands and voyages familiar to readers of Plato, Pliny, John Mandeville, Hakluyt, Dante, Thomas More, Rabelais, Cervantes, Bunyan, Swift and Coleridge (to name but a few, for K's interests were wide for a country parson, encompassing, as a friend noted, classic myth and medieval romance, magic and modern science, metaphysics and poetry, West Indian scenery and parish schools, politics and fairyland).

An argument following through every aspect of the book and relating it to the grail-stories, would be too complex to re-iterate here, but one particular feature can

serve to illustrate the relationship.

At the end of the final chapter K. describes a vision of both Tom and Ellie. Compare this passage of Apuleius in the second-century The Golden Ass where Lucius becomes an initiate of the Goddess Isis in the sanctuary of her temple:

I will record as much as I may lawfully record for the uninitiated, but only on condition that you believe it. I approached the very gates of death and set one foot on Prosepine's threshold, yet was permitted to return, rapt through all the elements. At midnight I saw the sun shining as if it were noon; I entered the presence of the gods of the under-world and the gods of the upper-world, stood near and worshipped them. Well, now you have heard what happened, but I fear you are still none the wiser.

The Queste del Saint Graal (thirteenth century) puts this supreme moment thus:

He rose from his knees and intoned the mass of the Glorious Mother of God. When he came to the solemn part of the mass and had taken the paten off the sacred Vessel, he called Galahad over with the words: 'Come forward, servant of Jesus Christ, and look on that which you have so ardently desired to see'. Galahad drew near and looked into the Holy Vessel. He had but glanced within when a violent trembling seized his mortal flesh at the contemplation of the spiritual mysteries....'Now I see revealed what tongue could not relate nor heart conceive....Here I see the wonder that passes every other !'

Dante -- whom K. calls 'highest master' -- attempts it in this way:

And so my mind, bedazzled and amazed,
Stood fixed in wonder, motionless, intent,
And still my wonder kindled as I gazed....
For everything the will has ever sought
Is gathered there, and there is every quest
Made perfect, which apart from it falls short....
Thither my own wings could not carry me,
But that a flash my understanding clove,
Whence its desire came to it suddenly.
High phantasy lost power and here broke off.....

Kingsley took a copy of Rabelais with him on holidays, and Gargantua and Pantagruel has a description of the Temple of the Oracle of the Holy Bottle, an oblique reference, in Rabelais' inimitable way, to a Grail-Castle, with the frequent references to drunkenness only metaphors of the ecstasy brought about by contemplation of the divine (as in the Rubaiyyat of the Sufi poet Omar Khayyam) in the Temple precincts.

Finally, here is K's version of the vision:

"My name is written in my eyes, if you have eyes to see it there." And they looked into her great, deep, soft eyes, and they changed again and again into every hue, as the light changes in a diamond.

"Now read my name," said she at last.

And her eyes flashed, for one moment, clear, white, blazing light: but the children could not read her

**

the mass or the glorious mother of God, or Dante through the intercession of the Virgin, of Panurge aided by the priestess Bacbuc, and of Tom and Ellie in the almond-shaped eyes of the fairy Mrs. Doasyouwouldbedoneby --all are clearly akin.

(In fact Tom and Ellie's vision is not the final vision but the prelude to it, just as Dante's temporary blindness on gazing at Beatrice in the Empyrean leads to the final vision of God.)

The Water-Babies is in fact a grail-story with a grail, but --whether consciously or not --disguised. As Geoffrey Ashe has shown, the cult of the grail in the Middle Ages is an 'esoteric mode of devotion to Mary', Mother of God (King Arthur's Avalon, 262ff): 'The secret of the Grail is an insight into the mystery of the Word made Flesh, communicated by her in whose womb it happened'. Kingsley the classicist knew of ancient parallels --the Deiknumena (things shown) of the Eleusinian and other Mysteries involved a transmission of this secret, for example --and translated them into his five fairies --Mrs. Doasyouwouldbedoneby, Mrs. Bedonebyasyoudid, Mother Carey (from madre cara, Italian for 'mother dear') the Irishwoman who appears at the beginning of the book, and the 'Queen of the Fairies' (whose title is no doubt influenced by Spenser).

Robert Graves comments that 'poets can well be judged by the accuracy of their portrayal of the White Goddess'. Graves' rendering of the universal portrait of the Goddess depicts 'a lovely, slender woman with a hooked nose, deathly pale face, lips red as rowan berries, startlingly blue eyes and long fair hair...' Mrs. Bedonebyasyoudid 'had on a black bonnet, and a black shawl, and no crinoline at all; and a pair of large green spectacles, and a great hooked nose, hooked so much that the bridge of it stood quite above her eyebrows; and under her arm she carried a great birch rod.'



An Early Iron Age version of the vision? -
'Sacrificial' scene from the Gundestrup cauldron.

* Erratum

name; for they were dazzled, and hid their faces in their hands. "Not yet, young things, not yet," said she, smiling.....

The vision of Lucius, priest of Isis, of Galahad at

a parable worth the attention of grown-ups.

Biographical Note: Most of the books mentioned are conveniently available in Penguin paperbacks. King Arthur's Avalon (Collins) is now a Fontana paperback. The White Goddess is published by Faber. The Water-Babies comes in various editions (some condensed) and no doubt will appear in new editions in 1975, the centenary of K's death.

* * * * *

BOOK REVIEWS

THE CANNON, by William Stirling is published by Garnstone Press in association with R.I.L.K.O Trust and carries a foreword by John Michel.

While Pendragon members have time to read and digest this book of 420 pages and 30 diagrams we feel we cannot do better than reprint the review of this republication as issued by R.I.L.K.O. Trust.

"The Canon is the cosmic law and, since man is a microcosm of the universe, it is also the law of human nature. The history of all civilisations is the history of their interpretation of The Canon. Codified by the ancient philosophers, guarded by priests in the temples. The Canon sanctified the society that possessed it, regulating its institutions in accordance with the laws of nature. By observation of The Canon and by cultivating the science of interpreting it throughout the changes of time and season the stability of the ancient world was maintained. Plato, writing in The Laws of the Egyptian Canon, claimed that by its use the high civilisation of ancient Egypt had been preserved from deterioration for 10,000 years.

It is an ancient belief that changing fashions in music presage and produce changes in the social order. The Canon was therefore set up as a standard in music, architecture and all other arts, and artists were instructed to compose only by reference to the canonical ratios and harmonies. Even after the decline of the old world order and of the canonical standard, knowledge of The Canon was preserved in the mystery schools of Greece and Alexandria and in the traditions of masonic and other craft guilds. It is a curious fact that the sacred names of the Christian religion are found to correspond to the sacred numbers of the ancient Canon."

Paper copies are available to R.I.L.K.O members only at £2. 20 plus post 20p. Other applications have to be made to Garnstone Press, 59 Brompton Road, London, S.W.3.

****Erratum.

Mother Carey was 'a white marble lady, sitting on a white marble throne...with two great, grand blue eyes, as blue as the sea itself. Her hair was as white as the snow --for she was very, very old....'

The Water-Babies is no mere children's book but



REPORT ON EXCAVATIONS AT LLANELEN JUNE 1974.

EXCAVATIONS 1973. A preliminary excavation, under the direction of Mr. Alex Sschlesinger, was carried out in 1973. All background information can be found in PENDRAGON Vol. 7. No.3. November 1973.

PRELIMINARY JUNE 1974.

After studying the results of the 1973 excavations it was decided to concentrate on the excavation on the whole of a Phase 2 building of which only part of the north and south walls were exposed by the trial trench of the 1973 excavation.

It was also decided to examine a possible building on Site B of which no information was available.

EXCAVATION JUNE 1974.

Excavation commenced with site clearance of surface tumble and undergrowth, which was followed by scraping down to the tumble layer. The walls of the Phase 2 building were uncovered, running in an East-West direction. At a point 9' from the western wall of the Phase 1 building a closing wall was discovered, completing the Phase 2 structure: all walls were 2' 6" wide and the building was approximately a 9' square. The walls were constructed using the natural stone with a yellow clay for bonding the stones together. The walls were well constructed and are in better condition than those of the Phase 1 building. A trench was excavated around the outside of the building to determine whether there was any evidence of domestic debris or objects to date the building. The trenches produced no finds at all.

The interior of the building was excavated down to a rough, stony floor level, which, as in the Phase 1 building, had a layer of burning over the floor area, indicating that the building was destroyed by fire.

At a point 1' 10" from the eastern wall, and approximately half way between the north and south walls, there is a very large stone which is set, up-ended, into the floor. It measures 4' long and is 18" thick. It's total width is not known as it is still embedded in the floor. It appears to be too big for a lintel stone and could, therefore, possibly have been used as an altar stone.

SMALL FINDS AND DATING.

Two pot sherds were found on the floor of the building. Both were of a very coarse, gritty texture, inglazed, which can only be dated to the period Post Roman/Medieval. No other finds were discovered.

CONCLUSION.

With the absence of any domestic debris it seems that the building could well have been

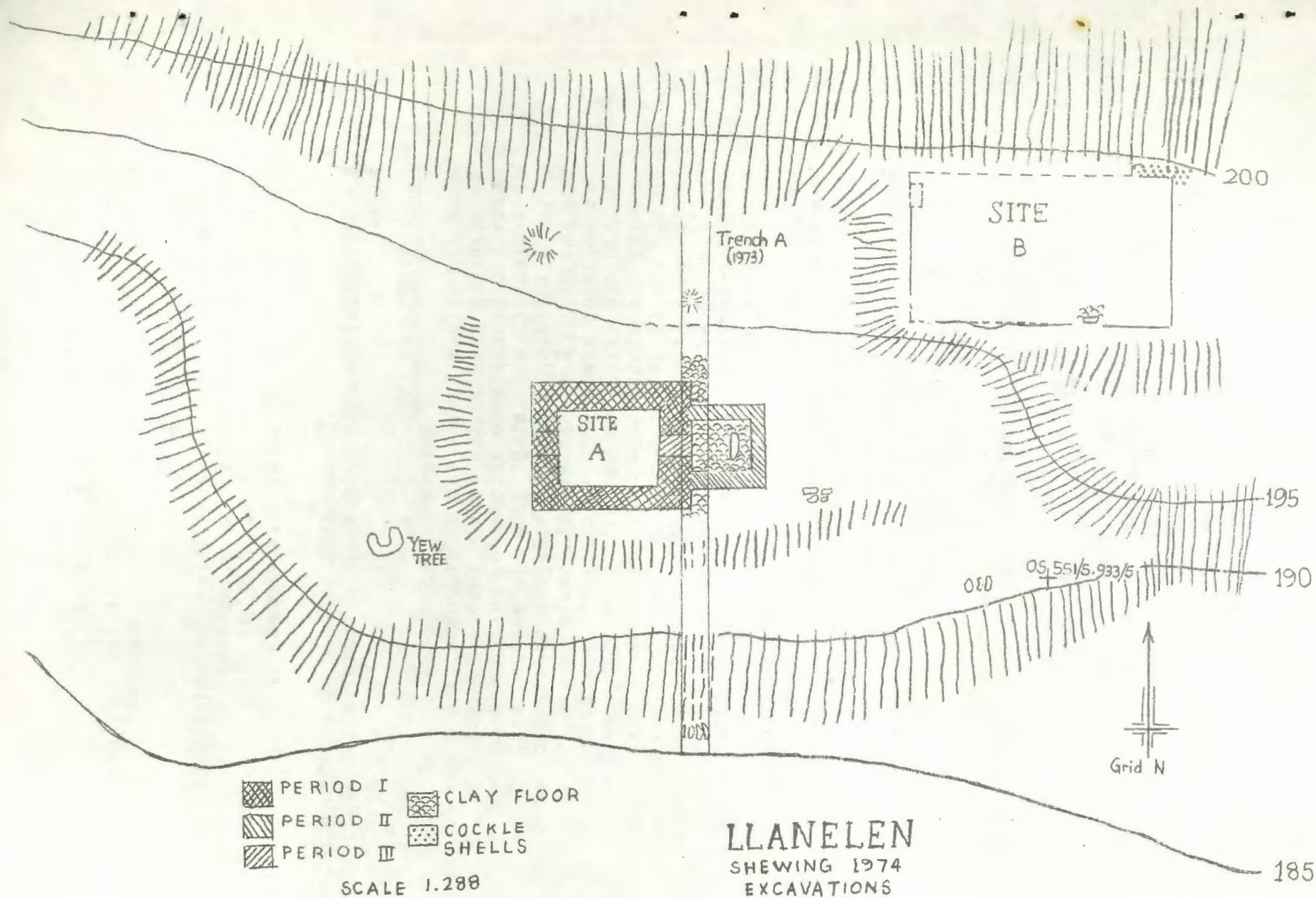




Plate 1
Site A from
North-East



Plate 2
Period 2 room
and stone slab
from East



Plate 3 (left): Yew tree from East
Plate 4 Period 2 room &c from West

used as a sacred site. However, as no evidence has yet arisen to substantiate the local tradition that Llanelen is a sacred site, the use and dating of the building remains unknown.

SITE B.

At the North-East corner of the enclosure, at the foot of a very steep bank, approximately 110' from Site A, the remains of another building were visible. That is, a corner of a building was visible, the rest of the structure being buried by tumble and soil which had washed down from the bank. The whole of the site was covered by thorn and bracken. After strenuous effort, a vast amount of tumble and undergrowth was removed, permitting the top of a wall running North-South to be discovered. A trench, 1 yard wide, was excavated down to the natural clay and the face of the wall was followed northwards for a distance of 24' 3". At this point the wall turned westward. At this North-East corner of the building a layer of cockle shells was discovered between the north wall and the bank, possibly making a path (local custom). Owing to the fact that a great amount of labour would be involved in following the north wall along, it was decided to follow the south wall, which proved very rewarding, at a distance of 10' 9" from the south-east corner, a corner stone was found which proved to be one side of a doorway. The doorway was excavated inwards to ascertain the width of the wall which turned out to be 2' 10". The floor of the doorway was covered with a thick layer of burning with several minute sherds of coarse pottery crushed into the floor. A large, flat stone had been used as a step into the building. Alongside the west wall of the doorway an iron object was found which was probably part of a door fitting.

From this point at the doorway towards the west corner, the wall bulged outwards due to the pressure of the soil drift from the bank pushing downwards. The south-west corner stone was missing, but the length of the southern wall was 38'. The western wall was in a very poor condition owing to the fact that the top-soil at this point is very shallow, and weathering had taken place. Approximately 3' 6" from the west corner another possible doorway was discovered, which could be part of the wall which had been robbed out. However, the north-west corner stone was in place and the western wall measured 24' 3".

CONCLUSIONS.

As time did not allow of any further excavation of this building one can only comment on the structure externally. However, a vast amount of evidence determines the fact that the building was used as a domestic structure. With its size of 38' X 24' 3" and a 4' 6" doorway one can suppose that the structure was a barn-type building rather than a habitable one, but the evidence of the cockle shells along the northern wall, and

the fragments of pottery found in the doorway, the building must have been used for more than a barn. This fact is supported by the discovery of a large amount of iron stone and iron slag found in the trenches around the walls. which implies that ore-smelting has taken place in or near the site of the building.

It is interesting to note that whilst Site A was practically bare of any domestic debris, Site B already gives evidence of substantial habitation use.

DATING.

On the evidence available at this time, it would be wrong to fix a date to this building except to say that the dimensions would seem to indicate a medieval building.

I would like to thank Mr. Howells and Mr. Williams for their great effort in clearing Site B so well, and Mr. Howells especially for providing the accommodation and other home comforts. My thanks also the girls who managed the catering so well.

Finally, the team of diggers whose efforts and enthusiasm enabled so much work to be done in the week. We hope to see them again in the future.

* * *

Notice has just come to hand from the Garnstone Press of yet another lavishly illustrated book which will be available by the middle of September. This will be Evan Haddingham's "Ancient Carvings in Britain: A Mystery". The publishers assure us that the book is skilfully written and well researched and they hope it will "find itself a niche as a source book for enthusiasts in this area."

An advance covering jacket looks mightily tempting. It is inevitable, of course, but regrettable --for people like us -- that the cost will be £5. We must at least make sure that it is stocked by all the libraries in our various areas.

