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**On a Skeleton and Other Relics Lately Found in a Romano-British Settlement at Radstock**

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ON A SKELETON AND OTHER RELICS LATELY  
FOUND IN A ROMANO-BRITISH SETTLEMENT  
AT RADSTOCK.

By J. McMURTRIE, F.G.S.

WITH NOTES ON THE SKULL BY DR. JOHN BEDDOE,  
LL.D., F.R.S.

IN the years 1897 and 1898, in the course of quarry operations at Tynning, Radstock, it was the writer's good fortune to meet with an interesting series of remains, which were pronounced by Professor Boyd Dawkins to belong to the prehistoric Iron Age, and probably contemporary with the Glastonbury lake village. In the following year, when opening out a new lias quarry in Kilmersdon Road, Radstock, at a distance of thirteen hundred yards as the crow flies from Tynning Quarry, a still more remarkable series of remains was discovered, which contained much in common with the previous find, but included Samian pottery, one Roman coin, and various other relics, which were considered to be of Romano-British age. In another part of the same parish, and at an intermediate point between these two quarries, in Hobbs's nursery gardens, a third group of remains of less importance was found, this succession of discoveries indicating a rather widespread occupation of the parish in ancient British and Romano-British times, presenting a strange contrast with the busy mining and industrial surroundings of the parish in these later days.

Having contributed various papers on the subject to the Somerset Archæological and Natural History Society and the Bath Field Club, in the years 1898, 1899 and 1900, I do not propose to go over the same ground in this paper, except so

far as may be necessary by way of introduction to the more recent discoveries which these notes are intended to describe.

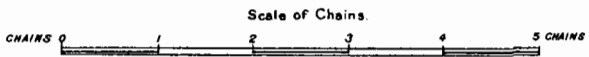
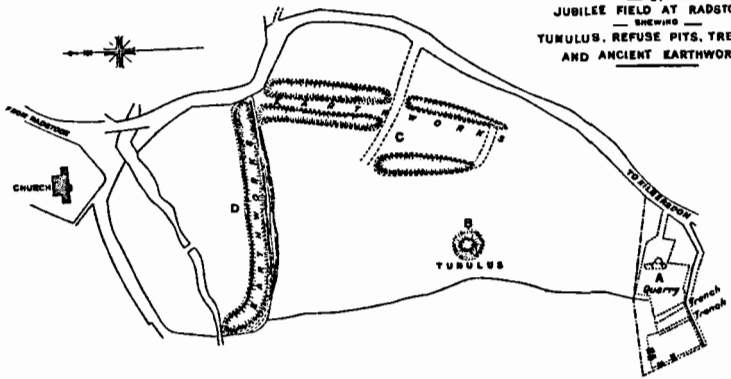
In order to explain the locality in which these various discoveries were made, and to point out the site of other ancient remains with which they are associated, attention is directed to the plans, which give a general outline of that part of the parish of Radstock situated on the line of the ancient Fosse, where these interesting remains were found.

Near the eastern extremity of the parish, and close by the Fosse, stands an exceptionally fine barrow, called . . . Round Hill, formerly explored by Skinner of Camerton, and near it is the reputed site of an ancient Roman town, said to have been traced by him, but of which no vestige now remains.

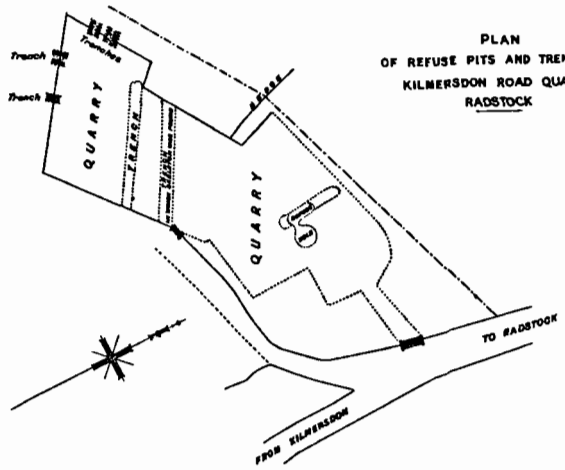
No special feature marks the immediate surroundings of Tynning Quarry or Hobbs's Nursery, but the Kilmersdon Road Quarry is situated in a field called Jubilee Field, near Radstock Church, which contains various ancient remains, forming a fitting environment to the place where the principal relics have been found. Standing on the summit of a bold promontory, between the Charlton and Kilmersdon valleys, there is an ancient tumulus, where some British chief may perchance lie buried; but his bones must have been severely roasted by the Jubilee bonfire erected on its summit in 1887, unless, indeed, they had been appropriated by Mr. Skinner or some other antiquary, at an earlier date, of whose researches there are some traces.

At the foot of this elevation there is an ancient earthwork, flanked by a deep ditch, which extends along the northern fence of Jubilee Field, from the public bathing-place in Charlton Brook to Kilmersdon Road, a distance of two hundred yards; and turning off at right angles to this, a double line of earthworks and trenches extends southwards along the eastern margin of the field, ending in what has the appearance of a small rectangular camp. These earthworks do not appear to have

PLAN  
OF  
JUBILEE FIELD AT RADSTOCK  
— SHOWING —  
TUMULUS, REFUSE PITS, TRENCHES  
AND ANCIENT EARTHWORKS.



PLAN  
OF REFUSE PITS AND TRENCHES IN  
KILMERSDON ROAD QUARRY,  
RADSTOCK



been noticed by any previous writer, and their purpose is very difficult to understand, the fortifications now visible being confined to the northern and eastern sides of the field, while the southern and western sides have no apparent protection ; but the more recent discoveries, to which this paper is intended to call attention, tend to show that other entrenchments probably existed which may be deserving of further exploration.

The relics formerly met with in the various quarries referred to have already been recorded in the *Proceedings* of the Somerset and Bath Societies, and may be shortly summarised as follows :—

In *Tynning Quarry*, a quern of rather special make, a rubbing stone with pebble rubber, a spindle-whorl of white lias, a considerable quantity of black pottery (most of it of a very coarse description), an iron nail, the teeth and bones of red deer and sheep or goats, some specimens bearing evidence of gnawing ; and interspersed with these were numerous fragments of charcoal, burnt clay and stones, some of the latter being foreign to the locality in which they were found.

In *Hobbs's Nursery* the articles found were a stag's horn of large dimensions, partly petrified ; numerous specimens of red pottery, etc., but no Samian, which was entirely absent both here and in the quarry last described.

In the *Kilmersdon Road Quarry*, however, the finds were much more numerous and varied in their character, including bronze implements of beautiful manufacture, flints, ancient glass, iron implements and nails, iron ore, the bones and teeth of the horse, cow, sheep, pig, dog, cat and hedgehog, also of fishes and birds ; baked pellets and pottery of almost every description, from highly ornamented Samian to the commoner red, yellow and black pottery peculiar to this period. Examples of these relics have been exhibited at a previous evening meeting of this Society, as well as in the temporary museum at the Annual General Meeting held at Bristol in July 1906.

Since the date of these earlier finds, considerable quantities of black pottery, and of bones of various descriptions, have been met with from time to time ; also some relics of a more valuable kind, amongst which the following may be mentioned :—

Two examples of ornamented Samian, of patterns not previously found in these deposits.

Additional specimens of red and buff-coloured pottery.

Portions of an urn, noticed by Dr. Bulleid.

One fibula of an exceptionally beautiful pattern, probably as fine an example as is to be met with in any collection.

One bronze armlet of twisted pattern.

Two small pieces of brass, possibly droppings from the smelting-pot.

One short circular bar of lead, bent oval in the shape of a link.

One bone pin.

One small copper coin, the only one yet found, bearing on one side the head of a Roman Emperor, but with the accompanying inscription quite illegible, the reverse side containing a much worn representation of Romulus and Remus suckled by the wolf. In the opinion of Mr. Pritchard, who has kindly examined the specimen for me, the head is without doubt that of Constantine the Great, Emperor from 306 to 337.

The whole of the finds in Tynning Quarry were obtained from circular refuse pits or kitchen middens, which had been excavated in a thick layer of liassic debris and earth overlying the lias rock, and when discovered contained black earth or soil quite distinct from the original strata, the soil being interspersed with the relics which have already been described.

At the Kilmersdon Road quarry the specimens were, in one or more instances, met with in refuse pits similar to those described ; at other places in a thick deposit of black earth which overlay the liassic debris, and being much thicker



SAMIAN POTTERY  
FROM RADSTOCK.



BRONZE ARMLET.



BRONZE FIBULA.



FOUND AT RADSTOCK.



than the ordinary layer of surface soil, may have been the remains of earthworks levelled about for agricultural purposes. Later extensions of the quarry, however, seem to show the existence of ancient trenches extending right across the quarry, and apparently into the adjoining land. At least three of these have been cut through, the liassic debris having been originally excavated down to the lias rock, and afterwards filled in apparently with dark earth resembling surface soil, which is in marked contrast with the strata in which the trench was cut. These trenches appear to have been about 5 feet to 10 feet wide at the surface, narrowing downwards towards the bottom, which is about 5 feet deep. Similar trenches were met with and excavated by General Pitt Rivers at Cranbourne Chase.

It was in the innermost of these trenches, which ran diagonally across the quarry as shown by red lines on the diagram, that when uncovering the beds of building stone, in the autumn of 1905, the quarrymen discovered the skeleton which forms the subject of this paper. As described in their own words, it lay on its back at full length, about the middle of the quarry, in the line of the trench and near the bottom, with its head towards Kilmersdon and its feet towards Radstock, the arms being straight down by its side. It is much to be regretted that the workmen did not cease operations at this stage, in order that some more skilled person might have removed the skeleton without injury; but they appear to have dug it out in their rough fashion, and deposited the remains on the neighbouring turf. It was fortunate that Dr. Bulleid (of lake village fame) happened to look into the quarry on the following day, when he gathered together all that was sufficiently intact to be removed, more especially the skull, which he was the means of getting out, cleaning and restoring with professional skill and care, for which the writer would desire to express his personal obligations, as also to Mr. Bolton and his assistants at the Bristol Museum for their kind help in mounting it.

The bones thus preserved are as follows:—

- The skull.
- 2 blade bones.
- 2 parts of collar-bones.
- 19 vertebræ and portions of others.
- 19 parts of ribs.
- 1 right tibia.
- 1 left humerus.
- 1 left ulna.
- 1 left radius.
- 1 part of pelvis.
- 3 wrist bones.
- 15 finger bones.
- 5 bones of foot.

Total 71 out of about 200 bones of which the human body is composed, so that a large number have been destroyed or lost.

It will be remarked that the remains, such as they are, are in a remarkable state of preservation, the skull although fragile, and the bones generally showing little evidence of decay; the teeth being such as might well give rise to a feeling of envy in the present generation. Their antiquity, however, cannot well be open to doubt when it is remembered that, partly associated with them in the same trench, and generally under like conditions in the same quarry, there have been found the many relics of Romano-British age to which attention has been called.

In burials of this early period various articles are commonly present, but although search was made nothing of the kind was found

Dr Beddoe having kindly examined the skull as well as the principal bones, and contributed notes thereon, which follow this paper, it is unnecessary to say more about them here than to express our great obligation to him for his valuable assistance so readily given when suffering from indisposition. It may be remarked, however, that the views of Dr. Beddoe



as to the colossal size of the skull and its probable Roman origin are quite in accordance with the surroundings amongst which the remains were found.

Before concluding these notes, it should be added that the deposits in which all these remains have been found would appear to deserve further and more systematic investigation than they have hitherto had. The fact that they are no longer confined to occasional refuse pits, but are found in what may have been ancient lines of entrenchment, tends to show that the earthworks which still exist on two sides of the ground may once have extended all round it, thus completing what now appears to be a very defective fortification. And just as General Pitt Rivers found similar trenches rich in ancient remains, so it might prove in the present case. It may be outside the scope of the Bristol and Gloucester Society, but it may be commended to the Bath Branch of the Somerset Archæological and Natural History Society, which is doing excellent work in its own sphere of operations, and would find here a fitting object for investigation.

REPORT ON MR. McMURTRIE'S RADSTOCK CRANIUM.

By DR. BEDDOE, LL.D., F.R.S.

The following are the measurements of the skull in millimetres. It has been well restored where broken, and the figures may be fairly well depended on.

Lengths.—Clabello-max., 205; Fronto-inial, 191; Clabello-inial, 192; Ophryo-max., 204; Upper Facial, 73.

Breadths.—Frontal-min., 103; Stephanic, 130; Zygomatic, 120?; Auricular, 108; Maximum, 154 (parietal); Mastoid, 128; Astial, about 120; External Orbital, 106?

Height.—Basio-bregmatic, 152, which is also the maximum.

Circumference, 575; Sagittal Arc, 143—294 (including post-parietal wormian bone, 383—426); Transverse Arc, 352 to upper edge of meatus and in position, or 364 to the centre of meatus across bregma; Foramen, 39 × 29; Basio-nasial, 108; Basio-alveolar, 103.

Indices.—Cranial-Latit<sup>l</sup>, 75.1. Dolicho-meso.  
                   Altit<sup>l</sup>, 74.1.  
                   Orbital, 100.  
                   Nasal, 45.6. Leptorhine.

Capacity, estimated:—

Beddoe	.. 5	2175.	
Manouvrier..	}	2037	(divisor 230).
(Flower)			
Pelletier	.. ..	2049	(Ear-height taken at 135).
Pearson—G.F.	..	1944.	
Do. 10 bis	..	1888.	} (Ear-height, 135).
Do. P. & L.		1833.	
Do. Basibreg		1813.	

Manouvrier's and Pelletier's are probably most correct. Beddoe's is doubtless too large, owing to the enormous length of the sagittal arc, and the shortness of the lower occipital.

Pearson's plans are always too small for large skulls. The average modern Englishman has a capacity, it is believed, a little below 1500. This skull is much too large to be estimated from the tables of Welcker, in which measurements so great were not contemplated!

Long Bones.—No femur preserved, unfortunately, but Right Tibia, 383 mms.; Left Humerus, 325; Left Radius, 233; Left Ulna, 255. *Stature, as deduced from the mean of these bones, may have been, by Manouvrier's plan, 1649; by Pearson's, 1653 (5 feet 4.9 inches, or 5 feet 5.1 inches). By the tibia alone it would be 5 feet 6.5 inches.*

In the norma verticalis this skull presents a very regular oval; in the norma lateralis a great elevation, especially just about the bregma. Glabella prominent. Cerebellar region full, but inio-opisthial part of occipital very short (45 mms.). Stephanic region full, but zygomatic probably very narrow. Orbits very large and high. *Features rather delicate, and bones not thick or heavy. Teeth good, and not ground down. An adult, but not in advanced life.*

The colossal size of the skull does not arise from great bodily development, the stature being moderate, and the bones well-formed, and not thick or clumsy. The whole aspect is that of a civilised man. The type is, in my opinion, Roman rather than British; indeed, it has a distinct likeness to some undoubtedly Roman skulls, such, for example, as that of Julius Cæsar.