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Source: *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, Vol. 51 (Jan. - Jun., 1921), pp. 200-216

Published by: Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland

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## SOME EARLY BRITISH REMAINS FROM A MENDIP CAVE.

[WITH PLATES VIII—XIV.]

By L. S. PALMER, M.Sc., Ph.D.

## I.—INTRODUCTION.

IN the spring of 1919 the University of Bristol Speleological Society commenced investigations in the caves on the northern slopes of the Mendip Hills. The work in various caves is still in progress.

This paper places on record the discovery of a new cave, which has been called "The Keltic Cavern," and the results which have been achieved by subsequent examinations of the cave floor.

## II.—GEOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS.

From a general inspection of the district in the neighbourhood of Burrington Coombe, Somerset, it was realized that the cliff face on the south-west side of Mendip Lodge Hill, marked "Foxes' Holes" on Ordnance map of Somerset (Sheet XVIII, N.W.), appeared to be a position in which a cave might possibly be found. The position is marked "Swallet E" in Figs. 1 and 2. The three chief factors which led to this conclusion were:—

- (1) Swallet E is a typical active swallet, very similar to Eastwater Swallet.<sup>1</sup> A stream disappears at the foot of the cliff which is situated on the 600-foot contour line, whilst Langford Spring, on the northern slope of Mendip Lodge Hill, is on the 200-foot contour line and about half a mile from the swallet (Fig. 1).
- (2) The position lies at the junction of the limestone shales and the "Z" beds of massive limestone.
- (3) On both sides of the site a line of depressions is apparent which have been formed by the sinking of the surface at weak points along this junction. One of these pits has a stream flowing into it and at one place is still sinking. The present depth of this pit from the surrounding surface is about 40 feet.

A closer examination of Swallet E revealed the fact that the surface of the rock at the base of the cliff is covered in places with stalactite formation which was partly covered by a long mound of earth and stones running parallel to the cliff face

<sup>1</sup> *Wookey Hole* (H. E. Balch), p. 209.

(Pl. VIII, Fig. 1). It was therefore thought probable that the mound was once the roof of a cave in which the stalactite was formed, and that at some period the roof had

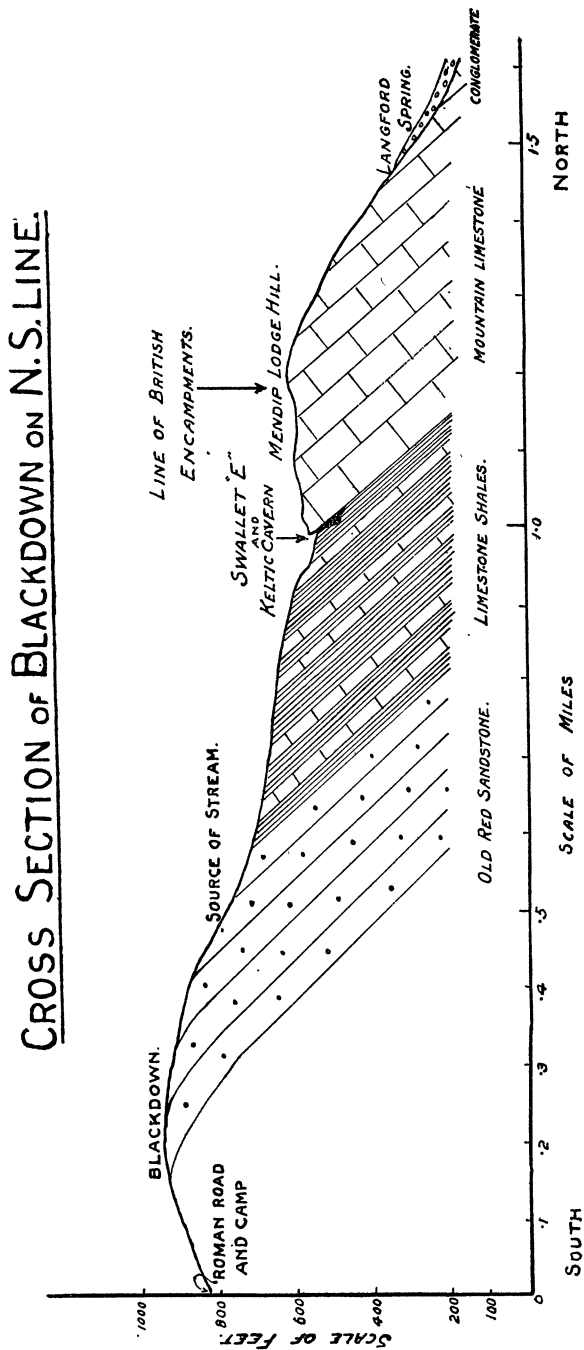


FIG. 1

fallen in and obscured the original cave entrance and also blocked the way to any further caves which might exist. The original line of roof can be seen by the

shadow cast by the overhanging ledge of rock in Pl. VIII, Fig. 1. This conclusion has since been verified, and there is some evidence which tends to show that the falling in of this roof occurred in early historical times (see pp. 204 and 210).

### III.—PRELIMINARY WORK.

An attempt was first made to follow the course of the stream, but the removal of 20 tons of earth and stones only led to a deep water-worn limestone rift, which became too narrow to follow. This excavation was not entirely fruitless for it enabled the dotted line on the cross-section EE (Fig. 3) to be definitely fixed. Some red deer teeth were found about a foot below the surface.

Excavations were then commenced at the foot of the cliff above the present water level, and after the removal of only one ton of material a small hole was seen to lead into a horizontal tunnel, which when followed for 20 feet led to a steep declivity of loose stones. This was negotiated, and at about 45 feet below the surface a large cavern was reached.

A new entrance has since been excavated which leads directly to the incline and thus avoids an awkward 20 feet of tunnel. The bones of a horned sheep, similar to those subsequently discovered inside the cave, were found 15 feet below the top of the mound at the point (*a*) in the cross-section EE. All together about 60 tons of material have been removed in the course of opening up the cave and in making the descent comparatively safe.

### IV.—THE CAVE.

The cave presents many interesting features and is formed rather by earth movements than by water action, although the waterways which pass across the main chamber at the points A and D (Fig. 3) are typical underground courses of a limestone district. The completed survey reveals the fact that the cave is one long rift chamber 175 feet in length, with an average height of 27 feet and approximately 33 feet wide at the bottom—the cross-section being triangular. Recent explorations have disclosed a vertical descent of about 60 feet leading from the cave floor at L 19 (Fig. 3) to a lower and smaller chamber in which pebbles and sand indicate a less rapid descent of the water. It has not been possible so far to progress beyond this point.

The interior contains the usual interesting examples of water action. The old swallet, from which the stream has been diverted, reveals beautiful stalactite and stalagmite formations, some of which are of the erratic type seen, for example, in Swildon's Hole, a local cave described by Baker and Balch.<sup>1</sup> Other examples of water action are seen in all the offshoot passages, where the water has weathered the rocks to such an extent that fossils, such as *Zaphrentis*, *Syringothyris*, *Michelinia*, *Spirifer*, etc., have been left protruding and showing their internal structure with

<sup>1</sup> *Netherworld of Mendip* (Baker and Balch).

greater detail than any specimen extracted with a geological hammer. Besides water action, some interesting examples of earth movements are seen in this cavern.

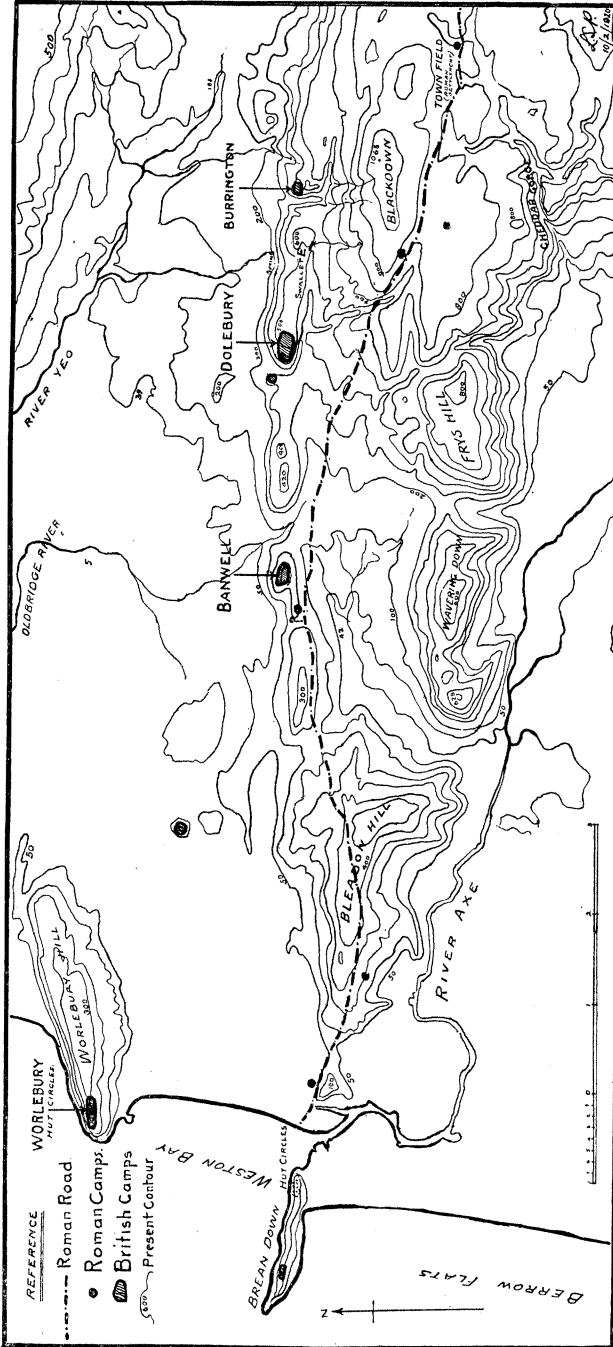


FIG. 2.—THE MENDIP HILLS.

Reference has already been made to the roof fall which destroyed an outer cave or shelter. Other interesting examples of earth movements are seen in the fold of

rock above the entrance (Pl. VIII, Fig. 1). The apex of the roof of the cave itself consists of a right-angled fold, part of which has fallen down, forming a right-angled rock, marked "K" (Fig. 3). At another part stalactites and stalagmites had joined, forming a pillar from roof to floor. The subsequent downward movement of the floor has caused the separation of the stalactites from the roof, recording in this way the motion of the underlying rock. The only other example of such an occurrence is to be seen in Swildon's Hole.

Another natural record is seen where a stalactite was formed on a rock which became tilted through an angle. The stalactite continued to grow vertically. The angle between the two portions is quite well defined, thus not only giving an exact measure of the angle through which the rock moved, but indicating by the straightness of each piece, and by the definiteness of the angle, that the rock movement must have taken place suddenly. Had this not been the case the angle would have been rounded and the new portion of stalactite would have been curved. It is quite probable that the violent action of the outer roof falling in caused the sudden movement here recorded. The length of stalactite that has been formed since the movement occurred indicates very roughly that the fall took place about 1,500 years ago. (See pp. 202 and 210.)

On first entering the cave it is of interest to note that the air in the lower portion was slightly foul, whilst the atmosphere was very dry. Both these facts tend to show the reason for the excellent preservation of the iron which was subsequently discovered. The trench dug and indicated on the plan reveals a floor of stalagmite from  $\frac{1}{8}$  to 1 inch thick, covering a layer of black mud, varying in depth from 1 to 8 inches. The mud covers a stratum of cave earth intermingled with boulders, but without evidence of occupation.<sup>1</sup> This bottom layer is about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  to 3 feet in depth. At some parts of the cave the total depth of the deposit is only a few inches.

#### V.—THE FINDS.

On the first day the cave was entered bones and implements were discovered lying on the surface and covered with stalagmite where the conditions for its formation were suitable. This at once indicated that man had probably occupied the cave at some time or other.

The following method was therefore devised in order to correlate subsequent work and to have a correct record of the position and depth of any material collected. A rough plan, afterwards replaced on the completion of a more exact survey (see Fig. 3), was covered with 5-foot squares. The position of each square was indicated by a letter and a number. As all the material has been found in the top layer of black mud or on the surface, no suffix has been necessary to indicate the depth of the finds. Various objects have been found below this layer, but these were resting

<sup>1</sup> Cf. "Wookey Hole," *Archæologia*, vol. lxii, p. 569.

at the bottom of rifts or had fallen down among the cave boulders which cover the floor. No earlier layer of occupation has been found as in the majority of similar sites.

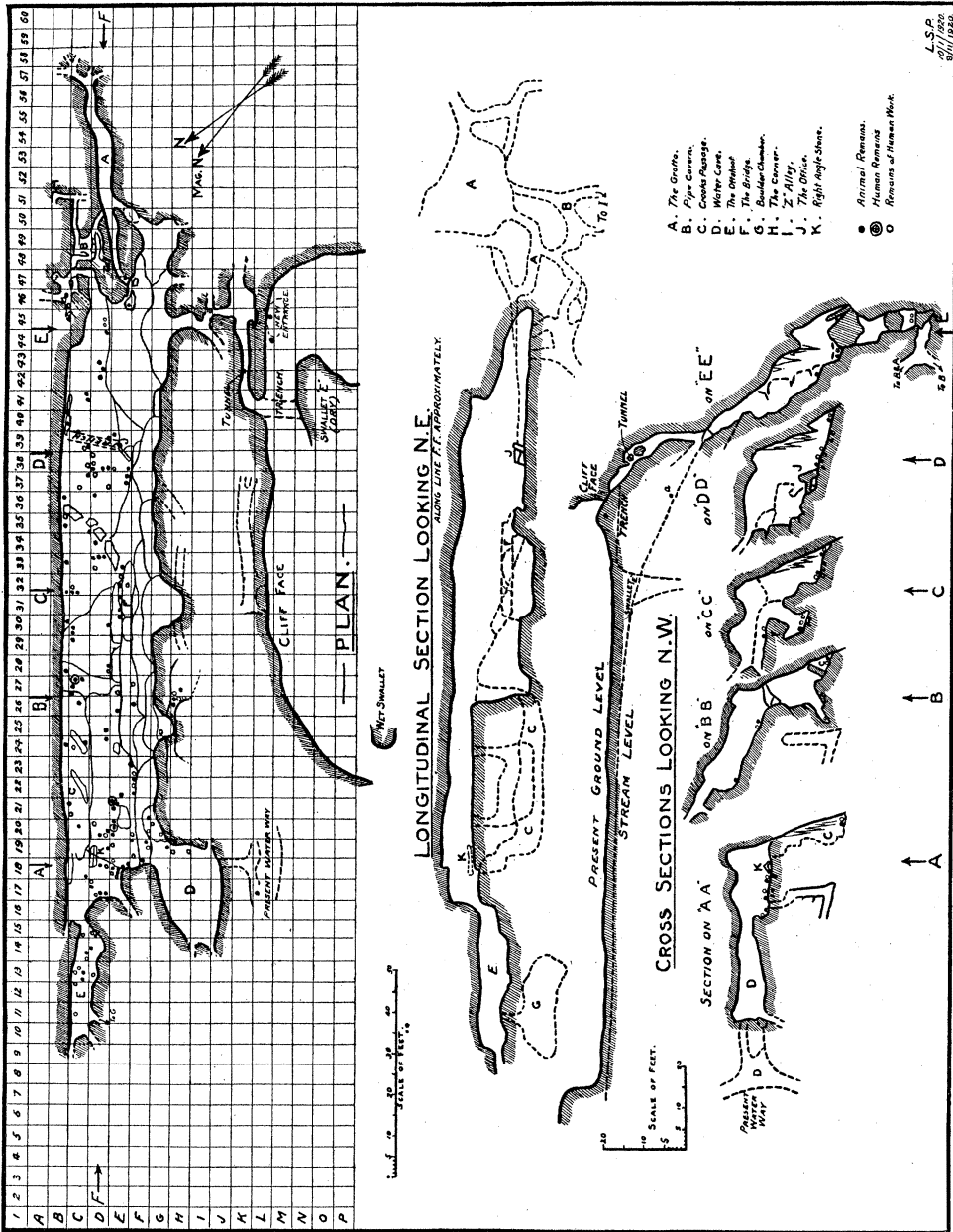


FIG. 3.

The material is conveniently discussed under the following headings:—

- (1) Human Bones.
- (2) Other Bones.
- (3) Worked Material.
- (4) Miscellaneous Finds.

The position of the finds is recorded in the plan of Fig. 3.

(1) Human Bones.—Only three human bones have been discovered, namely :—

- (i) A left radius (male).
- (ii) Portion (upper) of left scapula (female ?).
- (iii) Upper half of shaft of a left femur (male).

The radius was photographed *in situ* (Pl. VIII, Fig. 2), and was lying on the surface at E 21, covered with a coating of stalagmite about a millimetre in thickness. The bone possesses no abnormal features.

The lower portion of the blade of the scapula is missing (Pl. VIII, Fig. 3). Although found in close proximity to the radius, it does not appear to belong to the same skeleton, since it possesses female characteristics. The reference number for its position is E 20.

The femur (Pl. VIII, Fig. 4) was found in the lower portion of the cave at C 27. The pilastering noticeable from the posterior aspect is comparable with this feature on the bones discovered in the hut circles on the eastern end of Brean Down (Fig. 2). However, the prominence of the *linea aspera* alone is not sufficient to enable the type of man to be ascertained with any degree of certainty, but, combined with other evidence, it is probable that this feature is of considerable significance. The short length discovered prevents the detection of any abnormal curvature.

(2) Other Bones.—Bones of the following domestic animals have been discovered, the order indicating their relative numbers :—

Sheep	..	..	..	..	..	<i>Ovis aries.</i>
Pig	..	..	..	..	..	<i>Sus scrofa.</i>
Ox	..	..	..	..	..	<i>Bos longifrons (?)</i> .
Horse	..	..	..	..	..	<i>Equus caballus.</i>
Goat	..	..	..	..	..	<i>Capra hircus.</i>
Dog	..	..	..	..	..	<i>Canis familiaris.</i>

Bones of the following wild animals have also been found :—

Roe-deer	..	..	..	..	..	<i>Cervus capreolus.</i>
Wild boar	..	..	..	..	..	<i>Sus scrofa ferus.</i>
Wild cat	..	..	..	..	..	<i>Felis catus ferus.</i>
Field mouse	..	..	..	..	..	<i>Apodenus flavicollis.</i>

At C 30 a pigeon's skull was discovered.

Some of the bones had been charred and others apparently split open for marrow. One showed signs of saw-cuts and another had been gnawed, probably by a dog.

The horse bones are those of the small Keltic pony of about 11 hands.



The prevalence of sheep is in accordance with the finds at Glastonbury Lake Village,<sup>1</sup> whilst pig is second in this cave only. At Worlebury Camp no sheep were found,<sup>2</sup> but these animals are typical of those found at Hunsbury<sup>3</sup> and Wookey Hole<sup>4</sup> and other Late Keltic settlements. The wild animals are also comparable with those found at Glastonbury Lake Village, etc.

(3) Worked Materials.—Three stone implements have been discovered : a grinding stone, a spindle whorl, and a circular disc (Pl. X, Fig. 1). The sandstone grinder was probably used with a saddleback quern, but is unlike anything found either at Wookey Hole, Glastonbury Lake Village, Hunsbury, or Worlebury. The nearest is that numbered Q 34 on p. 609 of *Glastonbury Lake Village*; but the length of the specimen found in the Keltic cave is about half as long, being only 4·5 inches. The shape of the specimen is approximately that of a semi-ellipsoid.

A white lias spindle whorl, similar in all respects to the commonest type found at Glastonbury Lake Village, was also found.

The third stone implement (?) is a circular disc, possibly an incomplete whorl or gaming stone, although, if the latter, its size is larger than any yet found. Its diameter is 1·75 inches, comparable with that of the spindle whorl. At E 47 two pebbles are cemented in a small passage which leads to the Grotto (A, Fig. 3). Some authorities have thought that they are gaming stones. They lie close to the old waterway, in which similar though less perfect pebbles are to be found.

Of worked bone, five examples have been discovered. The most important (Pl. X, Figs. 2 and 3) are a spindle whorl made from the head of a femur of an ox, in every respect like the one found at Worlebury or Wookey Hole, or like the many from the Glastonbury and Meare Lake Villages, and three "cheek-pieces," two made from deer tine and a third from a boar's tusk. Of the first two cheek-pieces, one has two parallel holes and a third hole unfinished (Type C),<sup>5</sup> whilst the other has two parallel holes only (Type B).<sup>5</sup> The boar's tusk, apparently adapted as a cheek-piece, is quite unusual.

It seems improbable that the large numbers of similar objects found at Glastonbury, Ham Hill, Meare, Hunsbury, etc., should all be cheek-pieces of bridles, especially when one without holes from Meare Lake Village shows signs of having been extensively used at the point.

In the British Museum a curved needle of Roman origin is exhibited which contains three parallel holes in the broad end. Although somewhat finer than the boar's tusk "cheek-piece," it bears a very close resemblance to it, both in design and in dimensions. This suggests that some of the so-called "cheek-pieces" may

<sup>1</sup> *Glastonbury Lake Village* (Bulleid and Gray), p. 643.

<sup>2</sup> *Worlebury* (Dymond), p. 124.

<sup>3</sup> *Hunsbury* (George), p. 33.

<sup>4</sup> "Wookey Hole," *Archæologia*, vol. lxii, p. 590.

<sup>5</sup> *Glastonbury Lake Village*, vol. ii, p. 441.

have been used in the formation of the coarse materials manufactured in the vertical looms, the existence of which is evident from the discoveries at Glastonbury Lake Village.<sup>1</sup> It is also possible that they were used in the making of nets. Another Bronze Age example made from a boar's tusk is described as a pin by Canon Greenwell.<sup>2</sup> The fifth example of worked bone is an implement haft of deer-horn, about 3 inches long, in which the stump of the iron implement still remains (Pl. X, Fig. 3). There is, unfortunately, not sufficient iron left to enable the nature of the implement to be determined. Another piece of bone is highly polished and shows signs of a few saw-cuts. This bone may possibly have been intended for use as a tally-stick.

Eight bronze articles and one of copper have been found, a typical Late Keltic finger ring of  $2\frac{1}{4}$  turns, the half of a hollow bronze bracelet (Pl. X, Fig. 4), four nave hoops of chariot wheels (Pl. XI, Fig. 1), a ferrule  $\frac{2}{3}$ -inch in diameter and  $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch deep, and two other small pieces, one of which is made of copper and may possibly be a portion of a hollow bracelet of semicircular cross-section. The ring is like those depicted on page 209 of *Glastonbury Lake Village*.<sup>3</sup> The bracelet has no counterpart in any of the local settlements, the comparable specimens having cores of Kimmeridge shale or iron. The sixth century B.C. bracelet<sup>4</sup> from Halstatt is the nearest approach to the present find. The four nave hoops, of 4.9 inches internal diameter, were found lying together (as in Pl. XI, Fig. 1) in one of the lower chambers of the south-eastern end of the cave. The place was such that no chariot could have been taken there without being dismantled. Unlike other similar finds, no portions of wheels or tyre bands were found. The hoops are comparable with those from the Yorkshire burials described by Canon Greenwell.<sup>5</sup> The Figure shows in one hoop a solder joint, indicating that at one time the hoops had been used and repaired. It therefore seems probable that they were removed from the hubs and placed with some pottery in a place of security.

The ferrule is a plane strip of bronze bent into a cylinder and may have been used to decorate or strengthen a spear or similar object. If the former use is correct, it is the only find that indicates the presence of weapons. The density of the bronze is about 8.7 grams per c.c., whilst that of the copper ornament is 9.1.

The objects of iron are of considerable interest. The shackles shown on Pl. XI, Fig. 2, are similar in design to those found at Bigbury.<sup>6</sup> There is no other record of a similar find in England. The key depicted on Pl. XII, Fig. 1, is a good specimen, and similar to those found at Wookey Hole, Charterhouse, Ham Hill, Combe Down and

<sup>1</sup> *Glastonbury Lake Village*, vol. i, p. 340.

<sup>2</sup> *British Barrows* (Greenwell), p. 35, Fig. 9.

<sup>3</sup> See also *Arch. Journal*, vol. v, p. 323.

<sup>4</sup> Now in the British Museum.

<sup>5</sup> Greenwell's *British Barrows*, p. 454, and *Archæologia*, vol. lx, p. 285.

<sup>6</sup> Boyd Dawkins, *Arch. Journal*, lix, No. 235, p. 211.

Glastonbury,<sup>1</sup> etc. The article shown with it is of doubtful use. The flat end is in reality a circular disc containing an oblong hole which does not show in the photograph. Sir Martin Conway suggests that it may have been one of the handles of a tankard. This seems highly probable.

Pl. XII, Fig. 2, shows portions of a rectangular iron clamp similar to that found in a grave at Connantre, Marne; a spike, many of which were found at Wookey, Glastonbury, etc., and a hook. The "U" shaped iron is the rim of a wooden spade, a unique find in this country. The nearest approach to it is the protecting rim of the early Scottish push plough. Jacobi's *Saalbourg* depicts two similar ones of Roman manufacture.<sup>2</sup> The *Bronze Age Guide* of the British Museum shows a somewhat similar iron hoe from Mesopotamia, dated about 1500 B.C.<sup>3</sup> A woman's grave at Breban, Marne, yielded another specimen with square edges. A similar rim from a Scottish crannog at Lochlea is supposed to be a breast plough.<sup>4</sup> From Wookey Hole a wooden shovel was obtained which showed no signs of having been shod.<sup>5</sup> The width of the present specimen is 7·1 inches, its total depth being 6·4 inches. Other iron objects are a portion of blade of an adze or axe-head (2·4 inches wide), parts of a sickle-like implement, four nails, a short piece of iron, the end of which has been split longitudinally for about 1·5 inches, and a bar of iron 8 inches long and 1 inch by ½-inch cross-section, slightly tapering towards a rounded point.

The pottery (Pls. XIII and XIV) found in the cave is very similar to that found at Glastonbury Lake Village or below the Roman layer at Wookey Hole. Similar pottery has been found at Hunsbury, Worlebury, Ham Hill and Meare Lake Village, etc. It is also of interest to note that a specimen of this type has been dug up at Dolebury Camp.<sup>6</sup> The shape, markings (Pl. XIV, Figs. 3 and 4) and nature of the material are all comparable with the ware manufactured in Armorica and brought over by the Brythonic invaders, probably about 400 B.C., and are quite distinct from the Belgic ware of Aylesford. As yet no pottery with the scroll markings or crucibles, so common at Glastonbury, have been found. One piece probably shows the dot and circle pattern, but the fragment is too small for this to be certain. No Roman or Romano-British pottery has been discovered.

The pot depicted in Pl. XIV, Fig. 1, is very similar to one found in the lowest level of the Iron Age deposits at Wookey Hole.<sup>7</sup> The beauty of the design and the skill of the workmanship suggest the earliest type of Brythonic culture in England,

<sup>1</sup> *Glastonbury Lake Village*, p. 375.

<sup>2</sup> *Saalbourg* (Jacobi), p. 446.

<sup>3</sup> *Bronze Age Guide* (British Museum), p. 127.

<sup>4</sup> *Ancient Scottish Lake Dwellings* (Munro), Fig. 120, p. 121.

<sup>5</sup> *Wookey Hole*, p. 133.

<sup>6</sup> At Taunton Museum.

<sup>7</sup> *Archæologia*, vol. lxiv, Nos. 5 and 8; Fig. 2, p. 342.

for after settling in this country there is evidence to show that the style of ornament considerably changed during the period 400 B.C. to Roman times.

The characteristics of this pot and the design on many of the fragments (Pl. XIV, Fig. 4, in particular), also the absence of "S" markings, which were probably developed independently in this district much later, tend to indicate an earlier rather than a later settlement. In many respects the markings closely resemble earlier Neolithic forms in the simplicity of the design, whilst the more ornate are comparable with the pottery manufactured in Armorica about this time; the technique, on the other hand, is a great improvement on that of Neolithic ware, as for example, the pottery from the lowest level of Wookey Hole or from the various barrows which have been described by Canon Greenwell (*loc. cit.*). These features are in keeping with the characteristics of the portion of bronze bracelet and copper ornament described on page 208. One large fragment of unmarked pot is of yellowish clay, and about two-thirds of an inch thick. From the size and curvature of the fragment the original bowl must have been about 18 inches in diameter.

(4) Miscellaneous Finds.—Much charcoal and remains of fires are scattered over the surface. In some places these fires are to be found under large boulders which now appear to be an integral portion of the cave floor. From the material resting upon them it is evident that a considerable fall of rock has taken place since the time of occupation (see pp. 202 and 204). One sample of charcoal which was examined was found to be charred grain, and another specimen showed traces of beans. The cooking fires appear to have been scattered throughout the cave. A microscopical examination of some blackened wood chips showed that they were oak, a tree not prevalent to-day on this part of the Mendips.

One lump of limonite and one lump of galena were discovered. The former is quite typical of the limestone shales in which the cave is formed; the latter does not appear to have been used, and is common in the district.

All the "finds" are from the surface of the cave floor or from the black mud which is the top and only layer in the cave that has yielded evidence of human occupation.

It has also been noticed that the finds have been placed, perhaps hidden, and not washed in. The presence of charcoal, the possibility of piecing together the pottery, and the position of the chariot nave hoops, amongst other evidence, all tend to support the view that the cave was occupied. It is, however, of importance that there were no definite divisions of the cave which can be said to have been stables, kitchen, or workshops, etc., as at Wookey Hole,<sup>1</sup> Glastonbury,<sup>2</sup> and other pre-historic settlements. This is clearly seen from the manner in which the solid and open circles are dotted over the plan in Fig. 3.

<sup>1</sup> *Wookey Hole*, Plate XVIII, and p. 103.

<sup>2</sup> *Glastonbury Lake Village*, pp. 269 and 303.

## VI.—ASSOCIATED EVIDENCE.

It is generally accepted that some of the earliest invaders of this country were broad-headed men, who crossed from the Continent between 2000 and 1500 B.C. It was just before this time that bronze was first used in England. The Goidels followed these people about 800 B.C. Then a comparatively highly civilised people invaded our shores from the neighbourhood of Brittany. These people—the Brythons—were opposed by the amalgamated forces of the Goidel and the remnants of the earlier invaders. From some of the place-names of Ireland, Scotland and Wales, and from the existing language of some of the remoter districts, we can see how the Goidels retired before the advancing Brythons. This latter invasion took place about 400 B.C., and the invaders were probably the people who introduced iron, the industry of weaving, of soldering and other civilized arts unknown to the earlier inhabitants. In speaking of these people, Cæsar erroneously calls them all Belgæ. He speaks of one tribe, the Morini, whose name is Brythonic in origin, as using the war chariot then abandoned on the Continent.<sup>1</sup> Compared with the last group of pre-Roman invaders, these people were peaceful farmers rather than warriors. Somewhere between 50 B.C. and 50 A.D. came the last pre-Roman invaders—the Belgæ, and other tribes who, under Teutonic influence, were warriors rather than farmers. This invasion probably took place more or less continuously between the dates mentioned, and to a smaller degree from 150 B.C. These invaders repeated history by gradually driving the Brythons northwards. Their conquest, however, was short-lived, and they reached only the southern provinces by the time that Constantine with the Romans governed England, when all the tribes were gradually subjected to Roman influence.

The successive invaders left their imprint in Somerset. The submerged forests on the western coast yield evidence of the earliest peoples. Such names as the Axe show the presence of the Goidel, though Somerset seems to lack evidence of the habitations of the early Bronze Age and Neolithic peoples. The Brythonic invaders who came from Armorica, and the coastal districts north of the Loire, have left abundant evidence of their stay in this locality. In Wookey Hole numerous finds have been obtained which show that this was one of their dwelling places.<sup>2</sup> Glastonbury and Meare Lake Villages give even more evidence of the Brythonic origin of their peaceful inhabitants.<sup>3</sup> Worlebury Camp was probably built either by the Goidel or by the Brython.<sup>4</sup> This conclusion was derived from detailed consideration of the methods of construction in comparison with other encampments. It has been stated that this camp was occupied by the Belgæ and sacked and destroyed

<sup>1</sup> *Cæsar's Commentaries*, iv, 24 and 33.

<sup>2</sup> *Wookey Hole*, pp. 52, 57, 59, 79 and 137.

<sup>3</sup> *Glastonbury Lake Village*, pp. 488, 496 and 693.

<sup>4</sup> *Worlebury*, pp. 110 and 115, and *The Ancient Entrenchments and Camps of Gloucestershire* (E. J. Burrow), p. 18.

by the Romans.<sup>1</sup> This implies that the Belgæ must have driven out the Brythons. Figs. 1 and 2 lead to the same conclusion with regard to the builders of these camps. A very elementary tactical knowledge will show that the enemies expected by the defenders of the camps lived to the north. In every case the camp is placed on the northern and lower slope of the Mendips, and backed by the higher hills, which must have been the country of those who built the camps. Such a state of affairs could only exist if the camps had been built by invaders from the south. This confirms the conclusion of Dymond, which was based in his case upon constructional details.

That there is any connected tactical scheme in the arrangement of the numerous camps of the South West of England and South Wales has never been definitely recorded, although E. J. Burrow in his recent work on *The Ancient Entrenchments and Camps of Gloucestershire* (p. 8), has stated that "one camp after the other can be traced all along the *edge* of the hills." (the italic has been added). In Somerset the alignment of the camps is more clearly marked, since the camps are fewer in number.

On the Quantock Hills, as on the Mendip Hills, the fact that all the camps face north is very defined, the particular edge of the hill being of the utmost importance to the builders. The frontage gradually tends north-west as the line of the Severn is reached. In South Wales, on the other hand, the camps in general face south-east, are in many cases connected by entrenchments, and are directly opposed to those on the left bank of the river. We can thus see the various lines of advance of the Goidels (presumably) and of the Brythons subsequently, and how the Goidels (Silurians) in South Wales turned to oppose the advancing Brythons when the line of the Severn had been reached. From this analysis of the tactical dispositions of the encampments it is easy to see how the Brythons would readily fall victims to any enemy who might attack them from the south. This was in all probability the situation when the Belgæ were driven into England by the Roman advances on the Continent. Considering the Brythonic positions in the locality of the Keltic Cavern, we find that in the case of Worlebury there is some evidence to show that at least two battles were fought upon this site. With Glastonbury Lake Village it is quite evident that the village was sacked and the inhabitants massacred by a war-like people,<sup>2</sup> who were not, as in the case of the Swiss Lake Villages, Romans. That the finds at Glastonbury were Brythonic points to the sacking of that peaceful settlement by the Belgæ. In Wookey Hole also there is evidence that the inhabitants were driven into the fastnesses of the cave by some invader.<sup>3</sup> Thus the three local places in which finds similar to those of the Keltic Cavern have been disclosed appear to have suffered probably between 50 B.C. and 50 A.D. at the hands

<sup>1</sup> *Worlebury*, pp. 111 and 115.

<sup>2</sup> *Glastonbury Lake Village*, pp. 488, 496 and 695.

<sup>3</sup> *Wookey Hole*, pp. 38 and 128.

of an invader. In Lancashire the Dog Holes<sup>1</sup> have been shown to contain similar remains, and appear to have been occupied as temporary refuges by these same people, presumably in their retirement northwards.

#### VII.—CONCLUSION.

The evidence from the Keltic Cavern can be summarised under two heads, viz. the points which tend to give evidence of the peoples and the date of occupation, and, secondly, the points which tend to indicate the nature of the tenancy of the cave.

(1) The points which tend to give evidence of the peoples and the date of occupation are as follows :—

- (a) All the finds are comparable with Late Keltic settlements in general, and with Glastonbury Lake Village, Wookey Hole, Hunsbury, Bigbury, Dolebury and Worlebury in particular. An exception is the rim of a spade and possibly the iron article depicted with the key in Pl. XII, Fig. 1.
- (b) The absence of weapons is significant and may point, as in the case of Glastonbury, to a tribe of farmers rather than warriors.
- (c) The presence of chariots is in accordance with Cæsar's description of the people he found in the southern provinces in 55 B.C.
- (d) The cave is in what might be termed a "Brythonic front line of advance."
- (e) The presence of peoples similar to the inhabitants of this cave, yet living in adjacent marsh villages, is in accordance with the practice of the Brythons of Northern France, recorded in *Cæsar's Commentaries*.<sup>2</sup>
- (f) A large number of the names in the neighbourhood are further evidence of the Brythonic inhabitants, such as Dolebury (*Dole* = marsh or dale), Banwell (probably from *Ban* = deep) and Mendip (*Maen dippa* = stone pits), Armorica and Morini both containing the Brythonic word "mori," meaning sea.
- (g) No Samian ware, coins, or other evidence of Roman occupation has been found in the Keltic Cavern.
- (h) There is some slight evidence, especially from the style of the pottery, which points to the "finds" belonging to the earlier half of the period of Brythonic settlement in this locality.

These points lead to the conclusion that the inhabitants of the Keltic Cavern were Brythonic; their work is that described as "Late Keltic," and indicates a date from 400 B.C. to the time of their defeat by the Belgæ, somewhere between 50 B.C. and 50 A.D.

<sup>1</sup> *Trans. Lanc. and Cheshire Antiquarian Society*, xxx.

<sup>2</sup> *Cæsar's Commentaries*, iii, 28, and iv, 38.

(2) The evidence pointing to the nature of the tenancy may be summed up as follows :—

- (a) The depth of the layer yielding finds is, on an average, about 3 inches.
- (b) There is no evidence of a layer above this, or of previous occupation from the cave earth below.
- (c) The depth of the cave, though probably less at the time in question, is exceptionally great for the place to have been used as a habitation for any length of time.
- (d) Finds which might have been expected, but which have not yet been discovered, are almost as interesting as those found ; *i.e.*, a spindle whorl has been found but no weaving combs or loom weights, a grinding stone without a quern, nave hoops without wheel tyres, and no horse harness, no currency bars, no weapons, and only three human bones.
- (e) The articles were placed, possibly hidden, and not washed in.
- (f) There are no signs of industry in the cave itself.
- (g) There are no definitely established places in the cave from which groups of similar finds might have been expected.

Before interpreting these facts the possibility of applying one of the usual explanations of groups of finds must first be considered. Such explanations are generally one of the following :—

- (1) A hoard of either personal belongings, merchants' stores or founders' implements.
- (2) A settlement.
- (3) A battlefield.
- (4) A cemetery.

From the considerations mentioned above, it does not seem probable that either of these explanations will fit this particular case. It is therefore reasonable to suppose that this cave was a temporary refuge, and possibly occupied during the earlier period of settlement in this district. Hence it is concluded that :—

- (1) The finds from the Keltic Cavern were the work of the Brythons, and are "Late Keltic" in style.
- (2) The cave was used as a temporary refuge by the Brythons.

Prof. E. Fawcett and M. A. Hinton, Esq., kindly assisted in the identification of the bones.



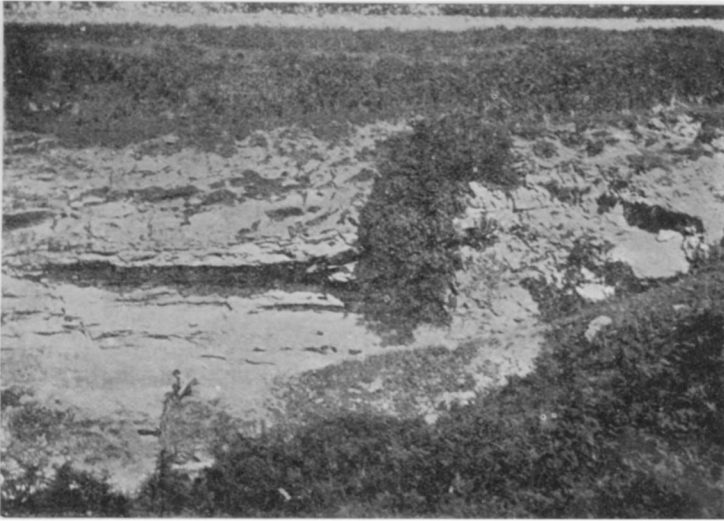


FIG. 1.

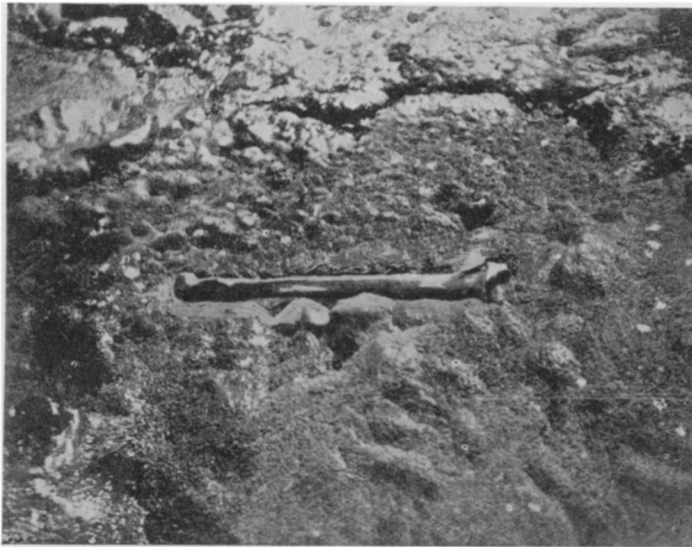


FIG. 2.



FIG. 3.

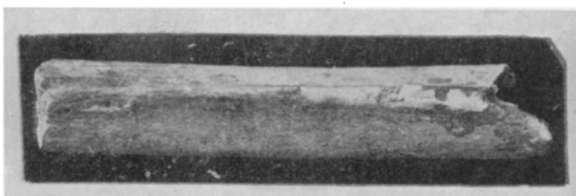
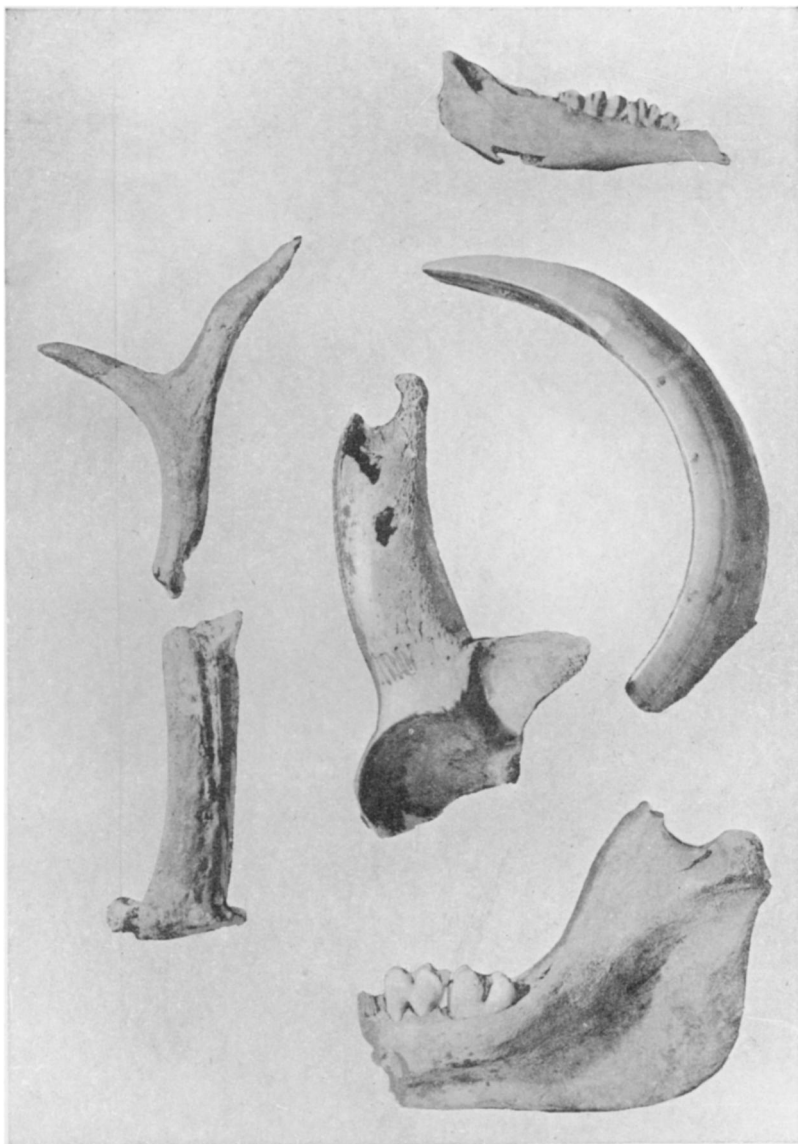


FIG. 4.

SOME EARLY BRITISH REMAINS FROM A MENDIP CAVE.



SOME EARLY BRITISH REMAINS FROM A MENDIP CAVE.



FIG. 2.

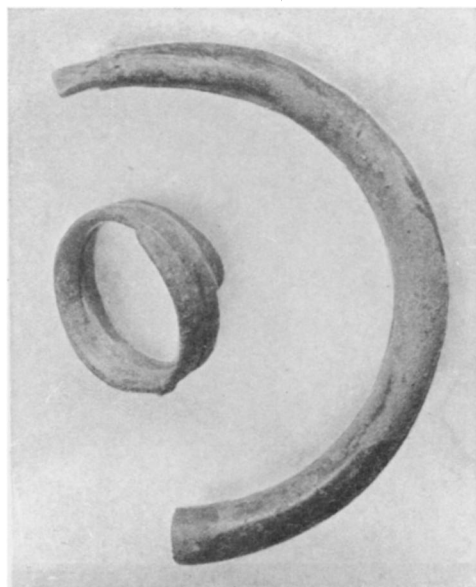


FIG. 4.

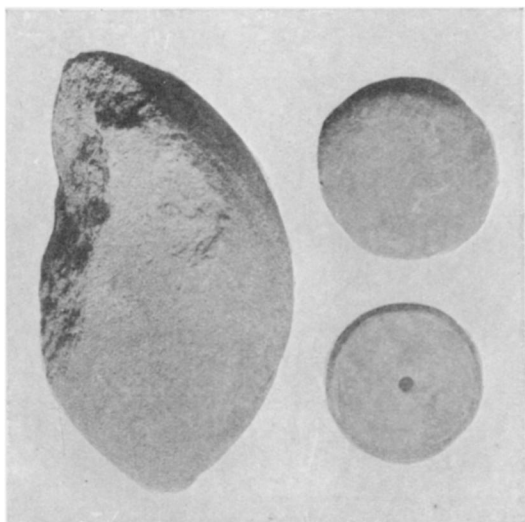


FIG. 1.



FIG. 3.

SOME EARLY BRITISH REMAINS FROM A MENDIP CAVE.

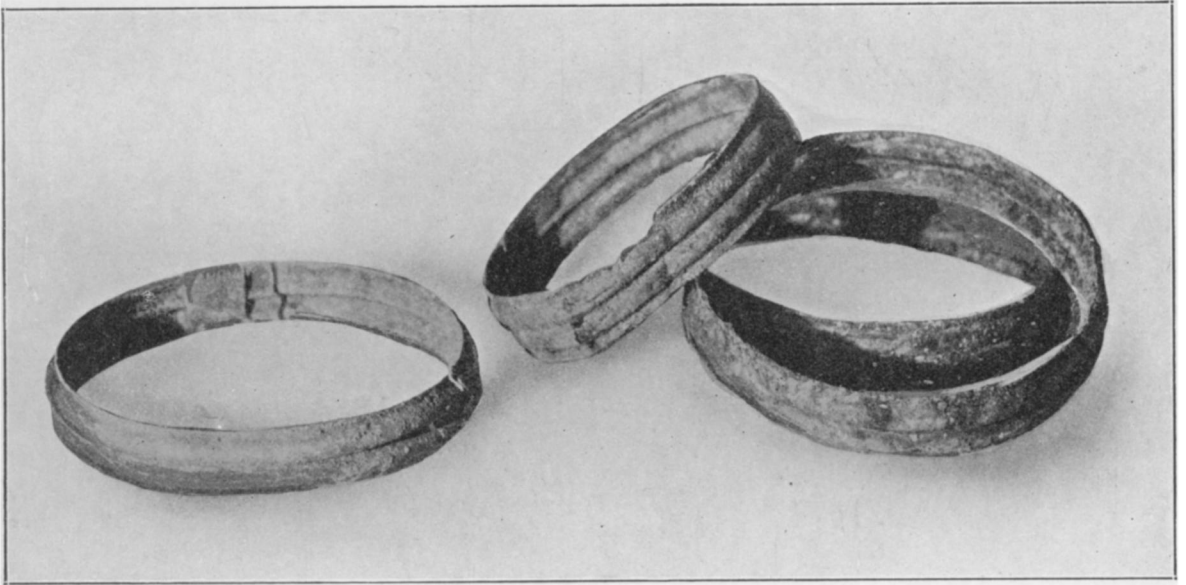


FIG. 1.

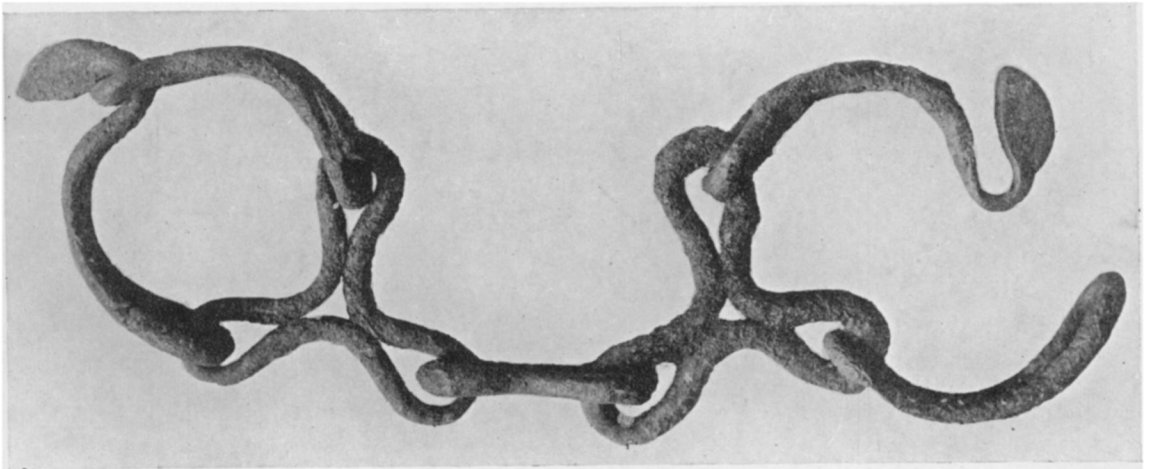


FIG. 2.

SOME EARLY BRITISH REMAINS FROM A MENDIP CAVE.

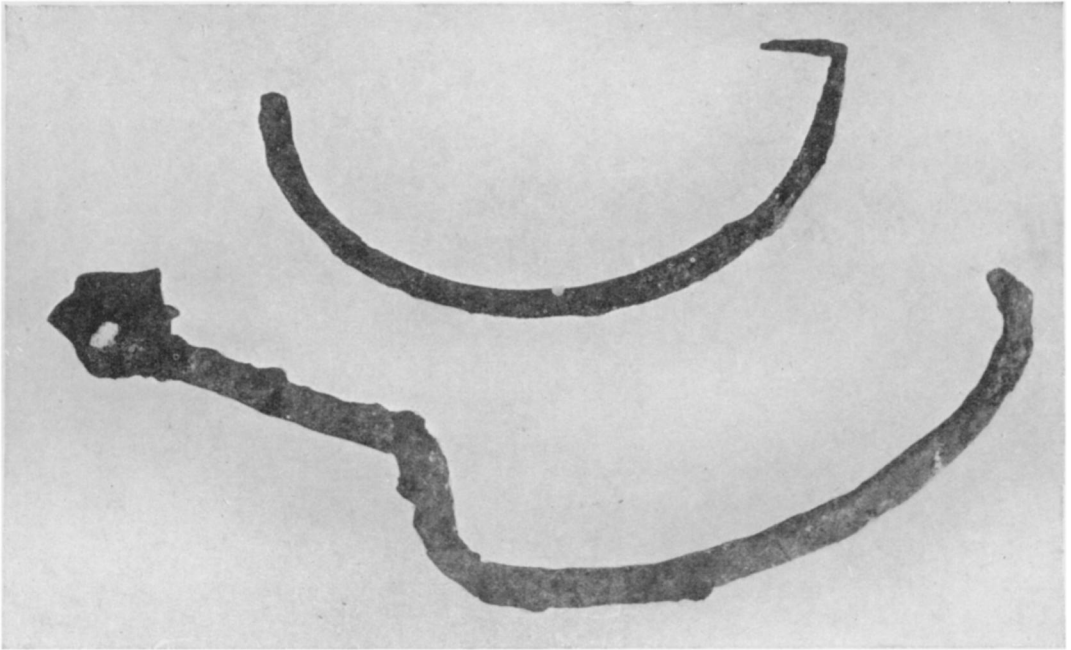


FIG. 1.

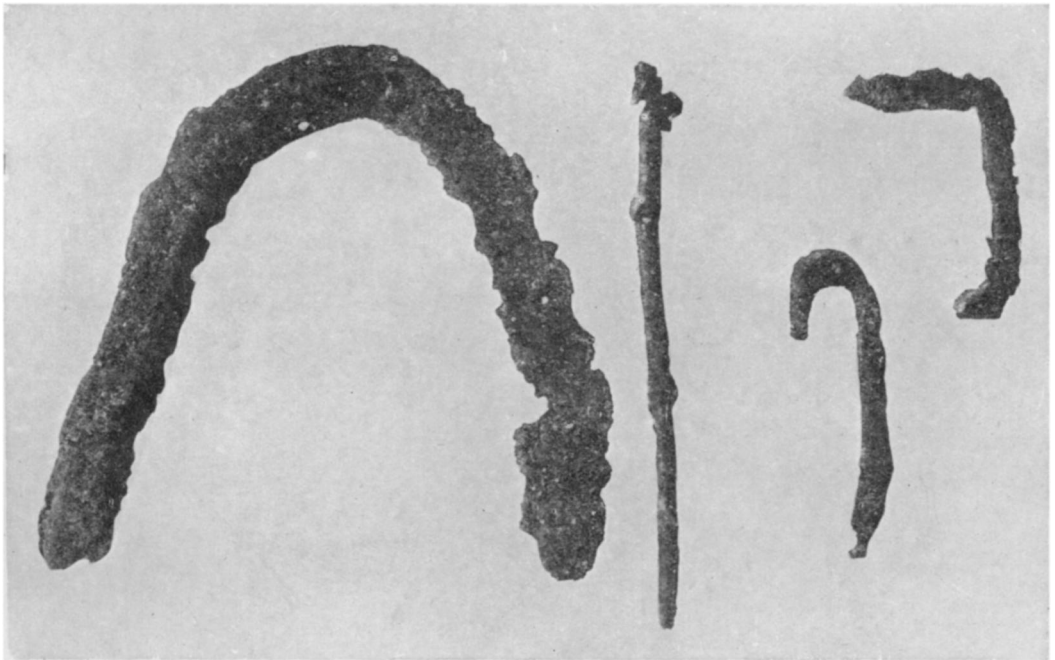


FIG. 2.

SOME EARLY BRITISH REMAINS FROM A MENDIP CAVE.

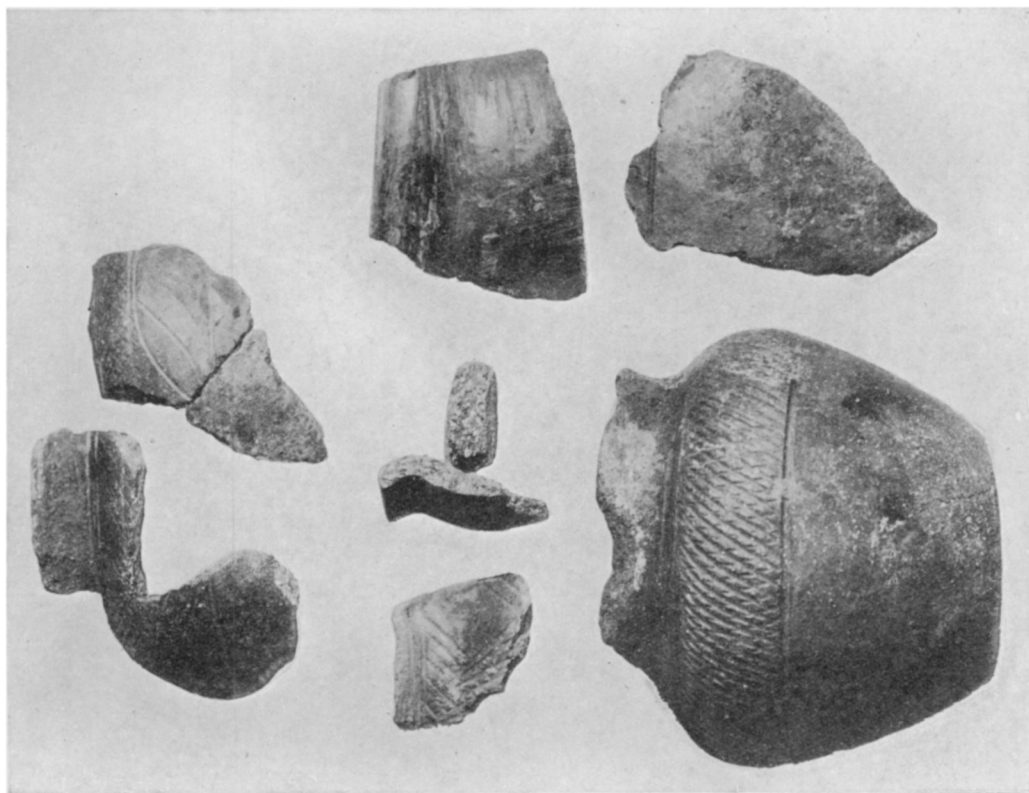


FIG. 2.

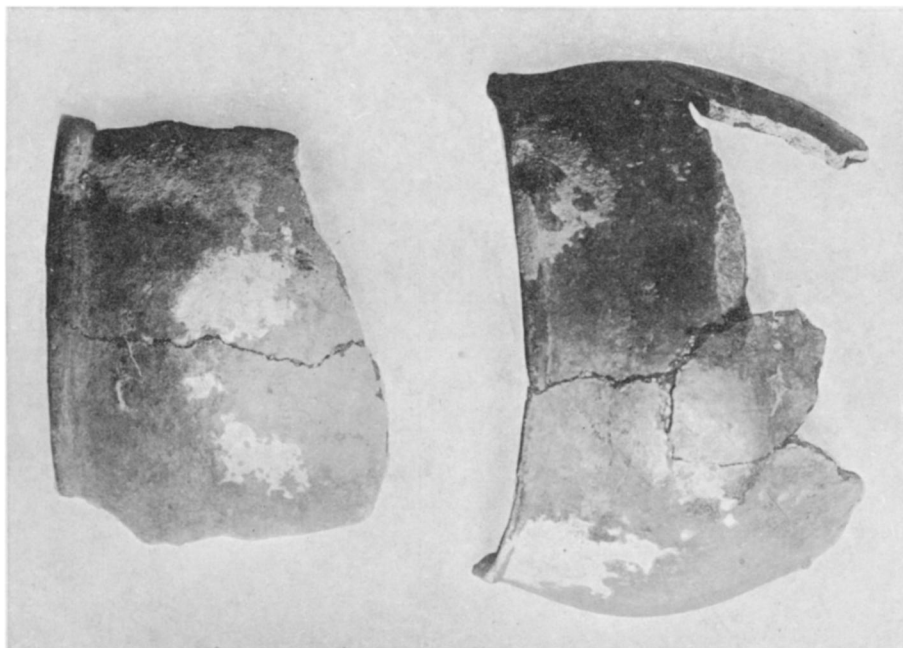


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SOME EARLY BRITISH REMAINS FROM A MENDIP CAVE.

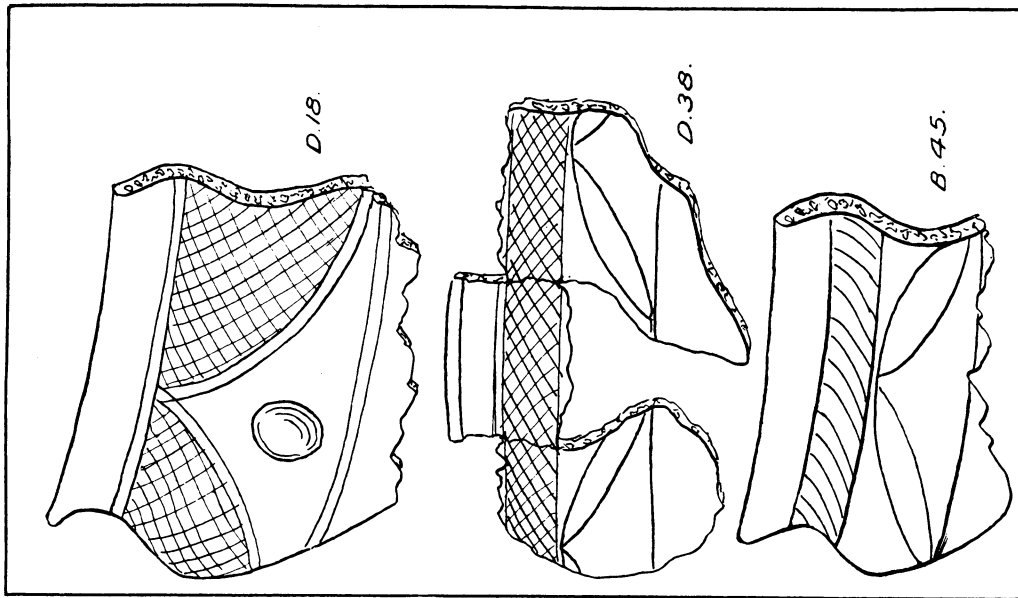


FIG. 4.

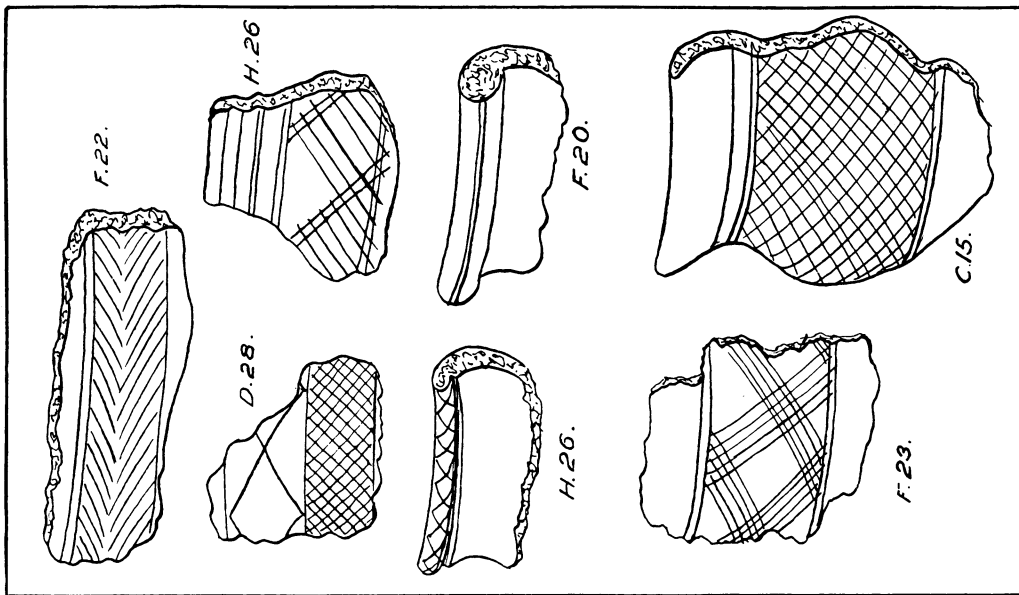


FIG. 3.



FIG. 1.

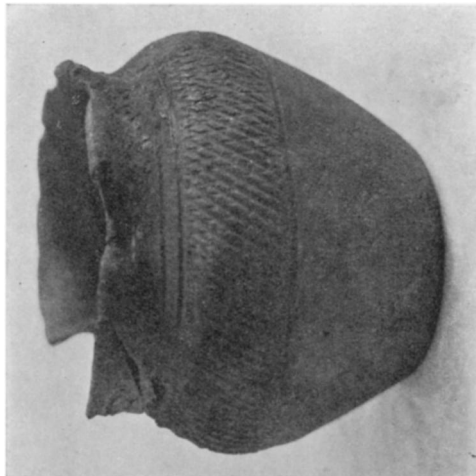


FIG. 2.

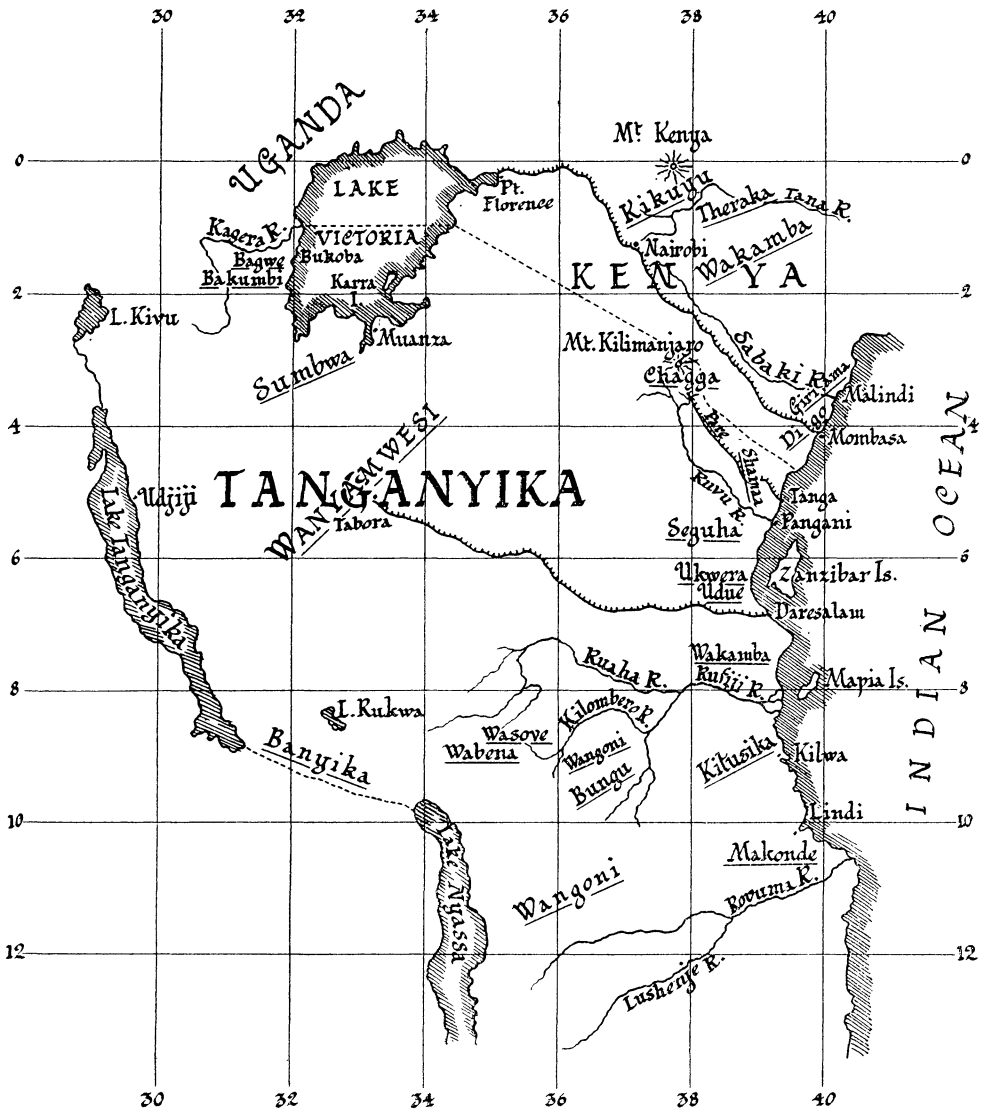
SOME EARLY BRITISH REMAINS FROM A MENDIP CAVE.

Prof. Sir Wm. Boyd Dawkins, R. A. Smith, Esq., H. E. Balch, Esq., H. St. George Gray, Esq., by their practical interest in the discovery, greatly facilitated the identification of the worked materials.

The University of Bristol Speleological Society is responsible for the execution of the work, for the photography, and for permission to use the photographs illustrating this paper.

A portion of the working expenses were met by a grant from the University of Bristol Colston Research Fund.





SKETCH MAP TO ILLUSTRATE DISTRIBUTION OF BANTU TRIBES IN EAST AFRICA.