

ST. CATHARINE'S HILL AND THE ORIGIN OF WINCHESTER

THE latest group of pottery from the settlement on the Hill has been seen to be of the La Tène II period. Its bulk is not great compared with the amount of Hallstatt-La Tène I pottery, and comparison with other sites, including the neighbouring one of Worthy Down, has shewn that the more developed types of decoration and form, which may be ascribed to the latter part of the La Tène II period, are here wholly absent. The chronology of Middle La Tène times in Britain is as yet imperfectly established, but there is no reason to suppose that the French dating for La Tène II, *viz.* 300-100 B.C., is so much too high for this country that the last group of the St. Catharine's Hill pottery may be placed much after the middle of the 2nd century B.C., and it may well be earlier.

The evidence obtained thus suggests about 150 B.C. as the safest approximate date for the destruction of the settlement, and that this is more likely to be too late than too early.

This conclusion could only be upset by one of the two following arguments. Firstly, the group of La Tène II pottery which has been in question may really be late and not early in that period, if it be denied that the typology suggested by other sites is valid for this one. The close proximity of Worthy Down, where later material occurs as well as certain close parallels to the St. Catharine's Hill group, is against this contention, as the two sites are not five miles apart, and thus the former must surely have ceased to be occupied before the latter. Secondly, pottery or other material of later types may exist undiscovered on the Hill. The number of undetected pits on the site may be quite large, and only the exhaustive trenching of the entire area could decide the point.

In default of that, this contention can never finally be refuted, but it must remain no more than a guess; the relative chronology laid down for the Entrance works is against it, as far as the evidence goes, and so is the absence of the suggested later types of pottery from among the large quantity of surface finds all over the occupied area. Thus though the bare possibility should perhaps be conceded, there can be no justification, as matters stand, for bringing down the possible date of the destruction any nearer the 1st century B.C.

Here for the moment the matter may be allowed to stand, while the features of the ensuing La Tène III period in this region are considered. Its beginning is marked not merely by an artificial dividing-line created by modern archæologists: the evidence for an entirely new immigration from across the Channel is clear enough. The new-comers, who appeared about the middle of the 1st century B.C., are characterized by brooches of the regular La Tène III type, in which a triangular catchplate, usually pierced, replaces the bent-back and attached foot of La Tène II, and by the general use of the potter's wheel for their distinctive bead-rimmed pottery. In many places, as at Casterley,¹ Oliver's Camp near Devizes,² and Winkelbury,³ they made a new and larger fortified settlement on a site where there had been previous occupation by people of the All Cannings Cross culture, or as at Worthy Down, an unfortified one⁴: in many, again, they occupied an entirely fresh site, as at the villages at Woodcuts Common and Rotherley on Cranborne Chase,⁵ and at the large *oppidum* of Silchester.⁶ Their type of pottery is the I - J class of Hengistbury Head,⁷ and the parallels with such well-known Continental sites as Haltern and Mont Beuvray, and occasionally the presence of Arretine pottery imported from Italy, conclusively fix its date in the century before the Roman conquest of Britain.

Further, there is abundant evidence that it was these people who without any racial change were incorporated at that conquest as subjects of the Empire. Now we know from the geographer Ptolemy that in the first half of the 2nd century A.D. the north of Hampshire was included in the territory of the Atrebates, and the south in that of the Belgæ, and it is a fact now well known to all students of Roman Britain that the Romans took over the tribes they found in this as in other provinces and made them the units of their system of local government. As such units, the Atrebates had Silchester (Calleva Atrebatum) as their chief town or cantonal capital, and the Belgæ had Winchester (Venta Belgarum). The former of these two towns was, as we have seen, an *oppidum* of pre-

1. Cunington in *W.A.M.* XXXVIII, p. 53 ff., esp. pp. 74-86.

2. Cunington, *ibid.*, XXXV, p. 408 ff.

3. Pitt-Rivers, *Excavations* II, p. 233 ff.: see p. 78 above.

4. *H.F.C.* X, pt. 2, p. 178 ff.

5. Various exx. in Pitt-Rivers, *Excavations*, Vols. I and II.

6. The examples in May, *Silchester Pottery*, plates LXXV—LXXXVIII, may be safely held to be pre-Roman.

7. Bushe-Fox, *Hengistbury Head Report*, plates XXII—XXIV.

Conquest date, as is shewn not only by finds of pre-Conquest pottery, but also by the existence of coins, inscribed CALLEVA,¹ of Eppillus, a prince more or less contemporary with Augustus who was the son of that Commius who figures in Cæsar's *Commentaries* and seems to have founded a dynasty in S. Britain after the conquest of Gaul. The rule of these princes, as is known from the distribution of their coins, covered at least a good part of the area in which have been found the settlements characterized by the La Tène III pottery and brooches we have been considering, with which indeed their coinage is often associated, and the clearly Gaulish provenance of the archaeological material agrees with the evidence of the tribal names in identifying this culture with La Tène III invaders from Belgic Gaul, one tribe at least being Atrebates from the neighbourhood of Arras.

Mr. Bushe-Fox, pointing out the distinction between the south-eastern region of Britain and the lands to the west of the forest of Anderida, has shewn how the former was occupied shortly before the campaigns of Cæsar by Belgic invaders known to us by the Swarling - Aylesford cremation culture, while such evidence as there is goes to shew that the latter were untouched by Belgic penetration until after the time of Cæsar.² It is certain that this penetration, which may be given the rough initial date of 50 B.C., is to be associated in the area under review with the typical La Tène III brooches and wheel-made bead-rim pottery, and probably also with the earliest local coinage; at least the earliest inscribed coinage known is that of Commius, and this fact combined with literary evidence makes the association of the whole movement with his name an attractive hypothesis.

Now of the two towns that were certainly cantonal capitals after the Roman Conquest of this western Belgic area, one, Silchester, was of pre-Roman foundation. May this not also be true of the other, Winchester?

Winchester stands on a sloping tongue of dry ground running right down to the Itchen from the chalk hills on the west, immediately opposite the steep bluff of St. Giles' Hill on the eastern bank of the river, and while this tongue rises for the most part well above the water-meadows above and below, it must be considered as a valley-site. Such sites on

1. Evans, *Coins of the Ancient Britons*, pp. 523-4.

2. *Swarling Report*, p. 30 ff.

low ground in valleys or plains, as opposed to hill or plateau sites, have often been credited with a Roman origin: such famous examples as the removal of the city of the Gallic Aedui from Bibracte (Mont Beuvray) to Augustodunum (Autun), which took place under Augustus, have suggested a regular Roman policy of deserting the old upland sites of native *oppida*, likely strongholds of national sentiment, in favour of new city sites of a more pacific character. But this has nowhere in Britain been attested by excavation, and if Winchester is a Roman foundation no such direct removal from St. Catharine's Hill can be suggested, owing to the much earlier abandonment of the latter.

On the other hand, if the first settlers on the Winchester site were the Belgæ of the 1st century B.C., it would be coeval with Silchester, and its date of settlement would be brought very much closer to that of the desertion of St. Catharine's Hill, even if not identifiable with it.

Several considerations have been advanced concerning the habitation-sites of the Belgic peoples.

Lieut.-Col. Karslake¹ credits them with a polygonal type of settlement: it is unfortunate that evidence from excavation is not yet available in sufficient quantity to test his theory, which accordingly we need not here discuss, but we must notice the remains of earthworks outside the later Roman walls of Silchester, claimed to be the defences of the Belgic city, without necessarily subscribing to the opinions based on their apparent form.

Dr. Curwen,² in considering the relation between the hill fort of the Trundle, near Goodwood, and the town of Chichester in the plain below, suggests that during the century or so of Belgic domination which preceded the Roman conquest a migration took place from one to the other. Valley-settlements, he points out, were the rule among Teutonic peoples, and if the Belgæ were of partly Teutonic blood this may have influenced the tendency to desert purely Celtic upland settlements, of which the possible supersession of the Maiden Castle by Dorchester and of Solsbury Hill by Bath may perhaps prove to be further examples. For German blood in the Belgæ we have the direct testimony of Cæsar (*B.G.* II, 4, 1-2), and it may be significant

1. *P.S.A.* XXXII (1920), p. 185 ff.; *Ant. Journ.* I (1921), no. 4, p. 303 ff.

2. *Suss. Arch. Coll.* LXX, pp. 76-7. Dr. Curwen very courteously provided the writer with a typescript copy of this passage in advance.

that it was in Belgic Gaul that he noticed the inhabitants' fondness for habitations near woods and streams (VI, 30, 3), especially as in S.E. Britain, which was, he tells us (V, 12, 1-2), peopled by immigrants from Belgic Gaul, whose houses and customs generally resembled those across the Channel (V, 12, 3, and 14, 1), he observed that woodland sites were chosen for fortified *oppida* (V, 21, 3).

Many fortified sites in N. France are in wooded country or near water, and if in the Belgic districts of Britain Bigbury (see p. 49 above) and Verulam, which Cæsar probably had in mind when he wrote, may be taken as typical woodland *oppida*—Silchester, too, is at least on the edge of forest land,—it may be that Winchester, like the other suggested examples, is situated in a valley because of the Belgic predilection for running water.

There are many 'woodland ringworks' in Southern Britain which have their analogies on the Continent, and valley-settlements were perhaps erroneously asserted by Déchelette¹ to be quite rare: they may easily be obliterated by the dwellings and agriculture of succeeding inhabitants, and Schumacher² has some interesting remarks on the continuity of habitation along the banks of the Rhine.

There is room for speculation concerning the Teutonic blood of the inhabitants of what is perhaps the most famous Continental settlement of this type, that of Manching near Ingolstadt in Bavaria,³ but that it was this strain in the Belgæ that influenced their habits in the way suggested is still likely to be a valuable notion, for fondness for valley habitation is indisputably a Teutonic characteristic.

Of course, any more definite hypothesis that is forthcoming in the future will have to reconcile this idea with the existence at this same epoch of many hill-forts; it will perhaps prove to be possible to distinguish areas of comparative peace and war, and the greater size and numbers of La Tène III hill-forts towards the west in southern Britain rather suggest a shifting hostile frontier, like that between Celt and Teuton in Germany (see pp. 80, 156) between the Belgic newcomers and the earlier-established Celtic people of the south-west. At least these latter were, as we have seen, great hill-fort builders themselves, and the theory of warfare in Somerset between them and the Belgic newcomers has already been put forward in connexion

1. Déchelette, *Manuel*, IV. p. 476.

2. *S.K.R.*, I, p. 223 ff., with taf. 10.

3. Déchelette *loc. cit.*, with ref.

with the evidence of destructive slaughter at Worlebury, the sudden end of the Glastonbury Lake-Village, and the possible occupation of such caves as Wookey Hole by refugees.¹ A great deal of excavation will have to be done before any such hypothesis can be definitely framed, but whatever the exigencies of tribal war may have been, it is permissible to believe that in the probably more peaceful regions which the sons of Commius seem to have ruled further east the pastoral and agricultural occupation of the uplands, already long established, as at such a site as Worthy Down, was continued along with an increase in the settlement of the river valleys, as on Chilbolton West Down, where close above the Test is a sizeable occupation-site dating from the Belgic period.²

At least a fairly large proportion of the finds of British coins have a lowland and valley distribution, and they are now seen to belong mostly if not wholly to the La Tène III period which we are considering. This is particularly true of such finds in Hampshire, where materials kindly supplied to the writer by Mr. G. C. Brooke enable him to speak definitely on the point. Save for one in the hill-fort of Danebury near Stockbridge, all the known coins from central Hampshire have been found off the main chalk uplands and near rivers. The sites of the finds are Alresford, Alton, Andover, Basingstoke, between Basingstoke and Odiham, Cheriton, Farnham, Petersfield, Romsey, Timsbury, Twyford and in and very near Winchester.

Though the find-spot is not in every case recorded with perfect precision, this distribution certainly suggests that the valleys were being increasingly settled and used as lines of communication, and it may well have been now that as well as the old ridgeways on the heights regular routes on lower ground, such as that later known as the Pilgrim's Way,³ began to appear.

Trade must have been growing, and certainly this last century before the Roman Conquest is a likely time for the earliest occupation of a site like Winchester, which is the natural centre, no less than St. Catharine's Hill, of a wide area, and controls a unique ford where the Itchen, a direct avenue to the coast and its important harbours, was crossed by inevitable routes of communication between east and west (see map above, fig. 3).

1. *Glastonbury*, vol. II, pp. 683, 695: *Swarling Report*, p. 33.

2. Williams Freeman, *Field Archaeology*, pp. 237, 423, with illustrations.

3. Cf. Hawkes in *H.F.C.* IX, pt. 3 (1925), pp. 324 and 330-1.

If there is anything in these contentions, a tempting theory suggests itself concerning the possible connection between the desertion of St. Catharine's Hill and the first occupation of Winchester. Returning to the idea, touched on above, that occupation on the Hill may have gone on later than the evidence actually recovered would allow, we might guess that it really did last on until the 1st century B.C. : it is then most plausible to see in the destroyers of its defences the invading Belgæ, who having ruined it to their satisfaction, proceeded, as at Silchester, to found a new *oppidum*, namely Winchester in the valley below, which the Romans a century later took over and remodelled as a provincial town and cantonal capital. This notion is attractive, but it is a mere hypothesis. Evidence may quite conceivably be found to support it, but at present it is desirable to insist on the arguments adduced above against allowing the terminal date of the Hill settlement to be put as late as that of the Belgic immigration. Given the material we have to go on, the place is far more likely to have been ruined in some nameless British tribal war. We know nothing, for instance, of the relations of the peoples of this region with their western neighbours.

There are then three possibilities as to the earliest settlement of Winchester. It was first settled either before the arrival of the Belgæ, by the Belgæ themselves, or by the Romans. That the second of these is the true one has already been seen to be quite likely on general grounds, and it cannot be considered less so if, as seems necessary at present, a gap has to be left between the abandonment of St. Catharine's Hill and the probable date of their arrival.

It is now time to review such archæological evidence bearing on the matter as is available from Winchester and the neighbourhood.

1. On St. Catharine's Hill itself, the only pieces of La Tène III pottery found were L.C. 1 and 2 (see fig. 17 and p. 138 above), which were lying unstratified in the Area, and are wholly inadequate as evidence of Belgic occupation.

2. On the N.E. slope of the Hill, 400 ft. beyond the earth-work, and 1,200 ft. E. N.E. of the clump of trees, a pit was located in 1928 by Mr. S. Ward-Evans¹ inside the Sewage Farm area. Below 18 ins. of turf and earth, a depression 21 ins. deep and 5 ft. across was found, filled with chalky soil above a

1. The finds with descriptive label are in Winchester City Museum.

black layer, which contained, besides bones, oyster-shells, flint flakes and pebbles that might have been sling-bullets, a coarse potsherd of Iron Age type, and the everted rim of a hard grey vessel of Roman date (probably 1st century A.D.). This perhaps marks the site of a peasant hovel which continued in occupation from an unknown Iron Age date into Roman times, but if so it is the only sign of habitation in the neighbourhood of the Hill after the ruin of the regular settlement upon it.

3. Directly opposite, on the other side of the Itchen Valley, is the slope of Battery Hill, where the new Winchester suburb of Stanmore has recently been built. At the earthwork called Oliver's Battery itself, no discoveries are recorded, though its prehistoric date is a reasonable presumption,¹ but some way below it to the N.E. late La Tène pottery was found near the surface in the infilling over the Hallstatt oven noticed above (p. 5, n. 1, 15), and not far from this in 1927 Mr. Ward-Evans certified the discovery of hut-circles, a large hearth formed of squared flints bedded in rammed clay, and similar pottery in association, as well as one or two flint flakes. Near by a more remarkable find was made: an oblong cist cut in the chalk and lined with clay, containing a skeleton lying extended, 5 ft. 10 ins. long: on one side of it was a tanged iron knife some 3 ins. long, and on the other a small iron sickle, with terminal flanges hammered over into a socket fastened by a rivet (greatest length under 2½ ins.). Sherds of pottery were also present, of rather coarse clay containing a certain amount of grit, but with a smoothed red-black surface: the ware is not evidently wheel-made, but the rim-fragments are clearly of the beaded type.² A La Tène III date is thus required for the burial, but it is anomalous, as the Belgic peoples regularly practised cremation at this time.³

A very similar burial is recorded at Sheepwash, near Freshwater, Isle of Wight,⁴ where in a cist formed of slabs of Bembridge limestone the skull of what had clearly been an extended skeleton was found with a typical La Tène III pot of bead-rim type with eyelet handles.

1. See fig. 3 above. Godwin (*Civil War in Hampshire*, pp. 174, 342) however suggests that this was the fort or "great sconce" built in 1644 before the battle of Cheriton by Lord Hopton, when Waller's forces threatened him from the East, and the Parliament also held Southampton. In form it hardly suggests a 17th century military work, but the Field Club's forthcoming excavations may be expected to settle the matter. For the operations of Cromwell in 1645, to which the earthwork can hardly be attributed despite its name, see below, p. 179.

2. These finds with descriptive label are in Winchester City Museum.

3. Déchelette, *Manuel IV*, pp. 520, 543.

4. *P.S.A.* XXV, p. 189.

To line a cist with clay would be natural in the Winchester district where stone is absent, and the two inhumations are clearly to be classed together; two explanations of them are possible. One is that the Belgic immigration, though it brought new fashions in pottery, did not at once change the custom of the previous inhabitants to cremation from the inhumation which they seem likely to have practised before. The other is to connect them with the Channel Islands, where several cist-burials of this type and period are known.¹ The island tradition of inhumation seems to have persisted from early megalithic times, and had its effect on immigrants, as these late La Tène people must have been, who habitually cremated. The iron weapons and La Tène III pottery found with the cist-burials of Les Issues and La Hougue au Comte, Guernsey, are unmistakable, and the same is true of those on the Catioroc in the same island, where also a sickle very like the Battery Hill specimen was found. If among the La Tène III immigrants from Gaul into this part of Britain there were some from the Channel Islands who had there learnt to exchange their custom of cremation for inhumation in cists under the influence of the immemorial island culture, the Battery Hill and Sheepwash burials would be explained.

At any rate there was clearly occupation of La Tène III date, which may justifiably be called Belgic, on this hill outside Winchester on the south-west.

4. The village at Worthy Down, 3 miles north-west of Winchester, where a regular La Tène III Belgic occupation immediately succeeded one of the previous culture of Middle La Tène and earlier date (see pp. 120, 169 above), needs no further consideration here.

5. On the slope immediately outside the west gate of the city is the open space called Oram's Arbour. Remains of earthworks formerly more extensive still exist here, and have often been guessed to be vestiges of defences of a pre-Roman settlement on the city site. That the British *oppidum*, if such there was, would be larger than the later Roman city might be supposed on the analogy of Silchester and perhaps of the Lexden earthworks outside Colchester, but the history of a site so close to a city like Winchester requires careful sifting before any such assumptions are entertained. The evidence is as follows:

1. Kendrick, *Archæology of the Channel Is.*, I, pp. 70, 90 ff., 190 ff.

(i) What may be the earliest remains on the site were discovered in the '80's of the last century in widening the railway cutting on its west side just south of Winchester Station: *i.e.* at the north-eastern end of Oram's Arbour. Six pits were found, 15 ft. in average depth, and at the bottom of each small quantities of wheat.¹

Such granary pits as are known in this country are normally of the Early Iron Age: the type is in fact that of the storage-pits found on St. Catharine's Hill, and these pits may easily be of the same date. But there is no record of associated datable objects, and of course no reliable correlation with the earthworks.

(ii) A few yards from the south end of the existing remains of the latter Mr. Ward-Evans once found some sherds of hand-made pottery at a depth of 4 ft. on land not built over till recently. This is a good way from the site of the pits, and the find by itself is, though fairly suggestive, really only slender evidence for pre-Roman occupation on the Arbour site. Anyhow there is yet no support for the theory that the earthworks belonged to a large *oppidum*.

(iii) In 1838 the cutting for the main railway line to Southampton was made all along the east side of Oram's Arbour between it and the city walls and Castle, and a large number of rubbish pits were found, from 30 to 40 feet deep.² The finds clearly show these to have been Romano-British: coins, brooches, statuettes and pottery, along with animal bones and other refuse, leave no doubt on the point. As it was in an extension of this same cutting that the supposed granary pits were found, and the whole area was plainly devoted to rubbish-shooting by the people of Roman Winchester. The question of prehistoric occupation clearly requires cautious handling, considering the nature of the evidence: all the pits may in fact be Roman. Actual discoveries, then, are not really conclusive, and certainly do not help to date the earthwork.

(iv) There is good documentary evidence for the antiquity of the earthwork, but none for a date before early Norman times. In the *Liber Winton*, or 'Winchester Domesday,' a survey made between 1103 (or very possibly 1107) and 1115,³

1. *New Illustrated Guide to Winchester* (1893), p. 109: W. T. Warren, *Guide to Winchester* (1902), p. 1: *id.*: *Notes from History of Winchester* (1914), p. 5.

2. *Gentleman's Magazine*, Oct. 1838, pp. 371-2.

3. See Round in *V.C.H. Hants*, 1, pp. 571-2. The chronology turns on dates in the known careers of the men commissioned with the survey. The writer is indebted to Canon Goodman for an opinion slightly modifying Round's view.

a *domus hauoc*, or hawk-house, is mentioned as outside the West Gate and situated '*int̃ II fossatum*'¹: clearly there was another ditch outside this gate as well as the city ditch proper at the beginning of the 12th century, and though Woodward² is wrong to suggest the assumption that it was there in the time of Edward the Confessor, it is presumably the same as the 'Bar-ditch' of the Winchester Tarrages of 1416-7,³ which extended right round the west side of the city from near St. James' Chapel on the south to a point in a field east of Hyde Street nearly half a mile beyond the north gate, and marked the boundary of the ancient City Liberty. Godson's map of 1750 shows part of the same ditch running along the edge of Oram's Arbour, where it also marks the west boundary of St. Thomas' parish.

(v) The earthwork still existing at Oram's Arbour is likely to be the remains of this, though it is much curtailed and the ditch has been filled up; the Arbour has always been an open space, but since the time of the *Liber Winton* other earthworks have been put up in it on perhaps three occasions.

In 1141 the Empress Matilda was besieged in the Castle by the army of Stephen's Queen, and it has been suggested⁴ that the Arbour earthworks were the work of the besiegers. We have seen that anyhow one ditch was in existence already, but it is a possible guess that trenches were dug on this occasion that might confuse later topographers.

Between October 1643 and March 1644 the Royalists holding the Castle greatly strengthened its defences,⁵ and it is quite likely that their outer lines trenched on the Arbour area.

In September 1645 Cromwell appeared before the Castle and spent five days making 'batteries' against it, evidently on the west. There is a fairly strong tradition for identifying these with trenches at the north-west corner of the Arbour, and perhaps all of Cromwell's work has not been obliterated. The site is thus clearly not a promising one for the identification of earthworks of any one of these several possible dates.

The evidence concerning Oram's Arbour may then be summarized as follows:—

(a) Discoveries claimed to be prehistoric are suggestive rather than conclusive, especially in view of the disturbance of the site by Roman rubbish-pits.

1. *Record Comm. Domesday*, vol. IV (Addt.), 1816, p. 537 (fol. 7 b).

2. *History of Hants*, I (1863), p. 31.

3. B.M. Add. MS. 6133, fol. 31, 33, 34.

4. *History of Winchester* (Anon. 1773), II, pp. 54-5.

5. Godwin, *Civil War in Hampshire*, pp. 123, 174, 342, cf. p. 333.

(b) Though an earthwork existed here in the early 12th century which may be identified with that which in the early 15th century ran all round the west of the city and marked the boundary of the Liberty, yet greater antiquity than this cannot be claimed for it.

(c) Possibly in the 12th and probably in the 17th century the site was disturbed by military earthworks which have been a likely source of confusion.

In fact, the satisfactory discovery of a piece of first-class archæological evidence will be required to substantiate the theory of Oram's Arbour as a prehistoric site. It is impossible to argue to the likelihood of a prehistoric date for the earthwork from the fact that it was the boundary of the City Liberty; in default of direct evidence, it can only be supposed to have been dug for that purpose in early mediæval times.

6. It has seemed worth while to devote this space to making it clear exactly how much can be affirmed about the antiquity of Oram's Arbour, in order to bring popular theory into line with fact: having now seen what evidence there is for prehistoric occupation on the slopes immediately above the city, we must consider that from the city itself.

A. As it is situated on the approach to an important ford over the Itchen, we may be prepared for a certain number of finds belonging to earlier prehistoric periods which need not be taken as evidence of anything like settled occupation.

(i). A few isolated Stone and Bronze Age implements need not here detain us, but there is one important early find which deserves mention here, as it has never been properly published, and the brief existing notices of it are by themselves open to misconstruction. When the Star Inn (83 High Street) was rebuilt in 1885, five oblong cists were found beneath the Roman level in the clayey gravel underlying the site, at an average depth of 11 ft., the deepest being at 13 ft. 6 ins., below the pavement.¹ They were plastered all round with clay, and contained skeletons buried in an upright squatting position, two of which had between their legs the skeleton of a fowl. One of the cists contained three skulls, another none. There had evidently been some disturbance, and a Roman coin, some nails, and one or two pieces of bronze brooches were suspected

1. Their lengths and breadths were as follows:—Nos. 1 and 2, 5 ft. by 2 ft.; No. 3, 5 ft. by 2 ft. 6 ins.; No. 4, 5 ft. by 3 ft. 6 ins.; No. 5, 9 ft. by 3 ft. The longest measurement was in every case from north to south.

(no doubt rightly) of being intrusive; however, this was apparently not the case with "a very elegant whetstone or hone, perforated to wear round the waist, and part of a rougher one," which may be taken as the one reliable associated find. The architect in charge was the late Alderman Stopher, a keen amateur antiquary, and two MS. memoranda, with a plan, which he made of the find, are preserved in the Winchester Public Library, the only other description being in the *Hampshire Chronicle*, June 13, 1885.¹ These documents are not wholly reconcilable with each other, and no measurements of the skulls were taken, but on such of the evidence as is reliable the cists may safely be ascribed to the Early Bronze Age, of which contracted burials and whetstones pierced for suspension are typical: such skeletons are usually huddled on one side, but an upright squatting posture is not unknown, though the presence of fowls seems to be unique. All that requires notice here is the rashness of connecting these contracted cist-burials with those known elsewhere to be of the Early Iron Age.

Of these, the Worthy Down example,² which belongs either to La Tène II or III, is differentiated by its peculiar form, the absence of grave-goods, and the position of the huddled skeleton on its back, from those of the distinctive south-western Celtic area of Britain, of which contracted burial seems at this time to be especially characteristic,³ as at Harlyn Bay, Cornwall.⁴ But whetstones have not been found in these graves, and in any case neither the centre nor the west of southern Britain produced carefully-finished and perforated whetstones at this period, as was observed both at Glastonbury and All Cannings Cross (see further p. 134), where those found were seldom intentionally shaped at all, very seldom perforated, and never in the least 'elegant,' whereas the Winchester specimen was clearly of the Early Bronze Age type described by Evans, *Ancient Stone Implements*, p. 242, and *Ancient Bronze Implements*, pp. 452-3.

These burials, then, which have so far been described by guide-books⁵ as 'of uncertain date,' are to be referred to the Early Bronze Age, like that found under St. James's Terrace

1. Gratitude is due to the City Librarian, Mr. F. W. C. Pepper, F.L.S., for kindly providing the writer with copies of these documents through Mrs. E. E. Wilde, Hon. Curator of the City Museum.

2. *H.F.C.* X pt. 2, pp. 181-2.

3. Leeds in *Archæologia* 76, p. 236.

4. Crawford in *Ant. Journ.* I, no. 4, pp. 283-4.

5. Warren's *Guide to Winchester* (1902), p. 247, and *Notes from the History of Winchester* (1914), p. 5.

associated with a beaker now in the City Museum, and they may be ruled out of our discussion of the possibility of Early Iron Age settlement in Winchester.

(ii) A Late Bronze Age bucket-urn¹ from St. Giles' Hill also requires no consideration here, though it indicates the presence in the neighbourhood of a people apparently allied to and not long preceding the settlers of St. Catharine's Hill (see p. 140 ff. above).

(iii) Similarly, a single hand-made fragment of pot-rim with finger-print decoration found by Mr. Ward-Evans below Great Minster Street does little to increase the likelihood of an occupation contemporary with that of St. Catharine's Hill.

(iv) The La Tène I brooch (see p. 127 above) found below the High Street in 1862, and now in private hands, can do no more than corroborate the obviously true supposition that the Itchen was crossed here in La Tène I times. The brooch, as belonging to the period and probably to the people of the St. Catharine's Hill settlement, is illustrated here as no. 2 on Plate IX: it was first published by Dr. Cyril Fox in *Archæologia Cambrensis*, June 1927 (p. 80, fig. 11), whence by his kind permission and the Editor's the illustration is here reproduced: it is assignable to his Phase B, and belongs probably to the 4th century B.C.

(v) There are in the British Museum four iron currency-bars of the usual British Iron Age type (double unit), recorded as being 'from Winchester,'² but no more precise record of the discovery (in 1853) exists, and in view of the well-known find of similar currency-bars on Worthy Down, it is quite possible that these came also from that site.³ In any case the discovery of such a hoard in isolation could do little towards attesting an occupation-site.

Thus finds from Winchester of earlier prehistoric periods than the Belgic immigration are neither in quantity nor character such as could afford any grounds for belief in any settled occupation.

B. We now have to consider those of the Belgic period.

(i) In 1927 building excavations disclosed a number of inhumed burials of the Constantinian age in what had clearly

1. See fig. 3 and note, p. 5 above.

2. *P.S.A.* XX, pp. 183, 185.

3. *Ant. Journ.* I, no. 4, p. 321 ff., esp. p. 326.

been a Roman cemetery alongside the Roman road to Mildenhall (Cunetio) on the north-west of the town, 80 yds. from Hyde Street. Beneath these were found 'several ancient British burials, all of which were in chambers dug in the solid chalk. Some of the cavities were clay-lined and contained crude pottery of pre-Roman date, probably 1st century B.C.; the marks on the chalk shewed that iron tools had been used.'¹ Mr. Ward-Evans is able to state that these cists contained cinerary urns of bead-rim type, and though the pottery has now unhappily been destroyed, there can be little doubt that this was a cemetery of the regular La Tène III cremation culture, which may be attributed to the Belgæ of the century before the Roman conquest. As the later Roman cemetery of Venta Belgarum was on the same site, we may guess that the people who made the Belgic cemetery lived on the site of Winchester. It is well, however, to allow for the possibility that the graves may date from just after and not just before the Roman conquest, as the pottery is beyond reach of further examination.

(ii) In the same year 'many pieces of Roman and Celtic pottery' were found sealed below the metalling of a Roman street 18 ins. thick, $7\frac{1}{2}$ ft. beneath St. Peter's Street. Such further information as is available about this pottery goes to shew that it was wheel-made coarse ware of bead-rim type, some of which might be as late as middle 1st century A.D., but the rest of which could be dated in the preceding century. Its stratification below Roman street-metalling is an important fact.

(iii) At recent excavations in the Broadway the Roman level could be clearly established at a depth of some 12 ft., and below this plain evidence of pre-Roman occupation was found, namely lumps of clay daub, several bearing wattle-marks, burnt flints, and fragments of black pottery of rather coarse manufacture but without any very characteristic features, a notched boar's tooth, an antler-tine tool, and a horn-core, piece of skull, and scapula of *bos longifrons*. The mean level of this group of finds was 14 ft.

(iv) Some light is thrown on this group by the recent discovery below the Roman level in St. Clement's Street of four sherds of similar ware associated with a fragment shewing the base of a black cooking-pot and four pieces of wheel-made pottery with bead-rims. The ware had a rather soft smooth

1. *J.R.S.* XVII, pt. 2, p. 207.

2. *J.R.S.* *ibid.*

grey surface, though there was a little grit and sand in the clay, and the pieces are clearly of the Hengistbury I - J type, which belongs to the Belgic people of round about the beginning of the Christian era.

(v) On a site in the western half of the city there has recently been found at a depth of 14 ft. (*i.e.* below the lowest Roman level) nearly half of a small bulging bowl with short everted rim and a very slightly convex base. The bowl is wheel-made and of soft grey clay, with a little flint grit in the body but a smooth surface. It resembles a piece from the La Tène III rubbish-dump at Oare (*W.A.M.* XXXVI, p. 125, pl. VI, B), and may be definitely ascribed to the same period.

(vi) A piece of a bead-rim cooking-pot resembling *Hengistbury*, pl. XXII, class I, no. 6, dated to the later 1st century B.C., was found early in 1929 below the Roman level, near the centre of the city: the ware was of the same quality as (v).

(vii) A piece of a squat bead-rim bowl, resembling the rim of *Hengistbury*, same class, no. 1, has also been found not far away at the same low level: it is wheel-made, of soft grey clay, and with hardly a trace of sand or grit.

(viii) From this low level also come two pieces of wheel-made grey ware covered with a rough comb-striated pattern (cf. *Richborough* II, pp. 97-9, with pl. XXIX).

These cannot be certainly called pre-Roman, but may quite easily be so, as the ware, though lasting into the Flavian period, was introduced by the invaders of the 1st century B.C.

(ix) Two potsherds, one shewing the base-angle of a cooking-pot resembling that from St. Clement's Street (iv), were found in 1927 at a corresponding level below the High Street near the Old Guildhall. With them were associated bones and horn-cores of *bos longifrons* and a tapering iron dagger rusted into a sheath faced with bone with an iron mouth-band, two iron rivets, and a pattern of two rows of incised circles with central dots. The breadth at the mouth is about 1 in., the length nearly 5 ins., the sides tapering slightly towards the lower end, which is bluntly curved. This is in the Winchester City Museum: its correct date is probably in the early years of the Christian era, as is indicated by the blunt end without chape: cf. *B.M. Early Iron Age Guide*, p. 108, and pl. IX, 7 (*La Tène* III scabbard from the Thames): Continental exx. in *Déchelette, Manuel*, IV, fig. 460.

(x) A recent excavation in the S.W. corner of the city has produced from below the Roman level pottery which may be of La Tène III date, associated with burnt flints, and animal bones, especially of *bos longifrons*. All these pieces of pottery resemble examples from the second period at Worthy Down, attributed to Belgæ of the La Tène III period.¹

(xi) During the underpinning of the Cathedral in 1905-12, a bronze ring was found embedded in the peat, 10-12 ft. below the surface near the south-east angle of the South Transept: it was well made and had a wavy pattern in a groove round the middle of the outside, in the 'Late Celtic' style: It was possibly a harness ring and may be ascribed to the 1st century, perhaps about 50 B.C.² It may be noted that the Roman remains found in this area were only about 8 ft. deep.

(xii) In the City Museum there is a chalk cup or lamp not unlike that from St. Catharine's Hill (fig. 15, 2) but more competently shaped. It was found by Alderman Stopher at the rear of the old Guildhall, and though definite dating is impossible, it might well belong to the same period as the pottery above considered.

(xiii) Three British coins and one Gaulish coin of the same period have been found in the City: in describing them, the writer has had the benefit of the opinion of Mr. G. C. Brooke.

(a) *Evans*, F 13. A silver coin typical of the area associated with coins of Verica, a son of Commius (see above, p. 171), and presumably of about his time (*i.e.* beginning of the Christian era). Found in Staple Gardens and preserved *perpetuo* Messrs. Warren.

(b) Another coin of base metal, with obverse inscription COMF (*i.e.* *Commi filius*) and reverse inscription perhaps of Verica, was found in the city and presented to the City Museum by Alderman Stopher. It may be assigned to the same date.

(c) *Evans*, F 4. A silver coin recently found and communicated by Mr. Ward-Evans. It is characteristic of Evans' 'south-western district': the type is the first of the five successively degenerating types, *Evans*, F 4 - F 8, which he puts among the latest of the British series. It cannot be dated much before the Christian era.

1. *H.F.C.* X, pt. 2, pp. 186-7, plates IV-V.

2. Vaughan, *Winchester Cathedral Close*, pp. 4-5. The writer is indebted to Mr. Ward-Evans for calling his attention to this passage. The ring is preserved in the Cathedral Library.

(d) The Gaulish coin (*Atlas* 9340) is silver and probably of the Helvetii; it may well be 1st century A.D., but the second half of the 1st century B.C. is the most likely date. Trade with Gaul was no doubt responsible for the appearance of many such coins in Britain at this period.

The distribution of such coins in the neighbourhood has been commented on above (p. 174): the presence of these in Winchester must strengthen the evidence for contemporary occupation. In addition, a coin, probably of base gold (*Evans* II, 7), of Tincommius, another son of Commius, was found "in the immediate vicinity of Winchester" (*Evans*, p. 169).¹

(xiv) Two finds of Egyptian Ptolemaic coins were made in the city early in 1929. One was of two coins of Ptolemy III and IV on a Roman site with a Roman pin and Roman coins, and may thus be ruled out, but the other was of a coin (*Svoronos* 974) of Ptolemy III (B.C. 249-222) discovered near the centre of the city at a low level (communicated by Mr. Ward-Evans). Though many of the Ptolemaic, Greek, Carthaginian and Roman Republican coins found in Britain certainly found their way into the country in the Roman period, or even in modern times, the possibility that some came in in the course of pre-Roman trade need not be overlooked. The bulk of them come from the southern and eastern region of the country, where evidence of such trade is to be expected (*cf.* finds of Italian bronzes and brooches), and that the presumption is reasonable, in default of evidence to the contrary, has the support of Dr. G. F. Hill: it may thus be extended to this coin.

The writer owes a deep debt of gratitude to Mr. S. Ward-Evans, who made the compilation of this list of early remains possible by permitting the inspection of specimens in his possession. It is to be hoped that his patient work of inspecting excavations made in the city will one day enable it to be considerably extended: meanwhile we are confronted with a small but noteworthy body of pre-Roman La Tène III material, which where disturbance is absent is found to underlie Roman, Saxon, and later remains. Further, as might be expected, most of the finds have been away from the marshy eastern side of the city by the river.

It is not desirable to attempt to infer too much from this evidence, but that it should exist at all on such a continuously inhabited site is surely significant. It is just the sort of evidence,

1. This is apparently the same coin as that wrongly described in *H.F.C.* IV, p. 145, as found 'at' Winchester.

for instance, which has never been properly forthcoming from London: there, as matters stand, a pre-Roman native occupation is no more than a guess, while the Winchester material, scanty as it is, is enough to point the contrast.

The earliest accepted Roman material from the city, pottery of the middle 1st century A.D., accompanied by coins of Claudius and Nero, can be readily distinguished in technique from the sherds we have been considering, and though it must of course be conceded that much native potting continued to some extent unchanged in the early years of the province of Britain, yet the pre-Roman date of most of the material here presented is confirmed by the low level at which it has been found. It would no doubt be too much to say that the case for pre-Roman occupation has been abundantly proved, but on this evidence it may be considered a fairly reasonable working hypothesis. At any rate the wattle-marked clay daub from the Broadway is adequate evidence as far as it goes, and strengthens the distinction between the settlement of the century preceding the Roman conquest and the sporadic traces of man's presence in the earlier prehistoric periods.

But it would be extremely rash to argue that the Belgæ must have established a tribal *oppidum* at Winchester. If there was a settlement there is no reason why it should have been more than what we should call a village. The argument suggested above may lead us to think that while most of the upland villages already existing, like Worthy Down, continued and flourished during the Belgic occupation, the invaders are likely to have often chosen woodland or valley sites for new settlements, and that Winchester was one of these; but the idea of a tribal capital is guesswork only.

The Belgæ of Gaul, who were descended from the mixed Celto-German population formed round the Lower Rhine as explained above (pp. 152-3), were not a tribe but a confederation of tribes, all of which may have been represented among the invaders of Britain. The Atrebates were the strongest, and their kings (the Commius dynasty) were paramount, as their coins shew; it is likely that the lands south and south-west of theirs were peopled by many small tribal groups which were only unified into a single canton by a Roman decree after the conquest, so as to form one of the regular units of local government, under the generic name common to them all. It was thus very possibly the site of one among many village

communities which the Roman authorities decided, in virtue no doubt of its geographical position, should become the cantonal city of Venta Belgarum. At least for the present we must not equate it with Silchester, already an *oppidum* of capital importance, and probably the only one in the whole district, as being the seat of the Atrebatie kings who ruled over all these Belgic peoples.

We may believe that the Romans found the site of Winchester inhabited, but no more.

As for St. Catharine's Hill, we have seen how unsafe it is on present evidence to assume any direct migration from it to Winchester, whether or no connected with the arrival of the Belgæ. For the present we had better believe that when they appeared its day was already past.

At least from the early Roman period onwards it has merely been a remarkable hill on the outskirts of a sizable city. It is credible that there were peasant holdings on its slopes, as on Battery Hill across the river, but within the old earthwork a couple of potsherds do little to suggest Belgic occupation, and in the breakage of a few Romano - British pots and the loss of a brooch and of a coin we may be content to see the relics of the picnic-parties of the citizens of Venta Belgarum, who must surely have climbed the hill for the pleasure of a summer afternoon, just as their successors of Winchester do to-day.