

NOTE ON AN EXCAVATION ON TWYFORD DOWN

LAST year some members of Winchester College discovered a prehistoric village on the northern spur of Twyford Down, a few hundred yards to the south of St. Catharine's Hill. There is a fine series of Celtic lynchets on the western and southern slopes and a bivallate track runs from the brow of the hill among the lynchets towards the Itchen. The site of the village lies on the crest but its extent is not easily definable owing to the faintness of surface indications and the lack of surface finds.

Excavation could only be selective, but certain conclusions have been suggested by the pottery (which was examined by Mr. Hawkes of the British Museum). The village seems to have been occupied during two distinct periods: the first partially coincided with the occupation of St. Catharine's Hill and lasted from Halstatt—La Tène I until early La Tène II times: the second started about 0 B.C. with a Belgic occupation which apparently continued uninterrupted until the 2nd century A.D., and was partially simultaneous with a Romano-British settlement on the southern spur of Twyford Down, just across the valley.

The Celtic fields seem only to have been ploughed by the first set of inhabitants, who used some or all of the pits on the hilltop; undecorated La Tène II pottery found on the floor of one of these suggests that the village was first abandoned in the 2nd century B.C. Anyhow, the site was unoccupied for a considerable time, as the pits had almost silted up when the Belgae came.

That the hilltop was re-occupied is shown by abundant pottery, which includes several beadrims, but no actual settlement site has been discovered. The bivallate (? cattle) track seems to belong to this period, as also does a new type of field. This latter lies along the foot of the hill, quite separated from the earlier series; as it is some 700ft. (*i.e. a furlong*) in length and about 230ft. in breadth, it may cast light on the date of the introduction of the heavy plough. Fortunately a stretch of the positive lynchet survives between two chalk quarries, in one of which an excellent section of the lynchet can be seen.

Work proceeds this year over areas in which it is hoped that the Belgic occupation site will be revealed.

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