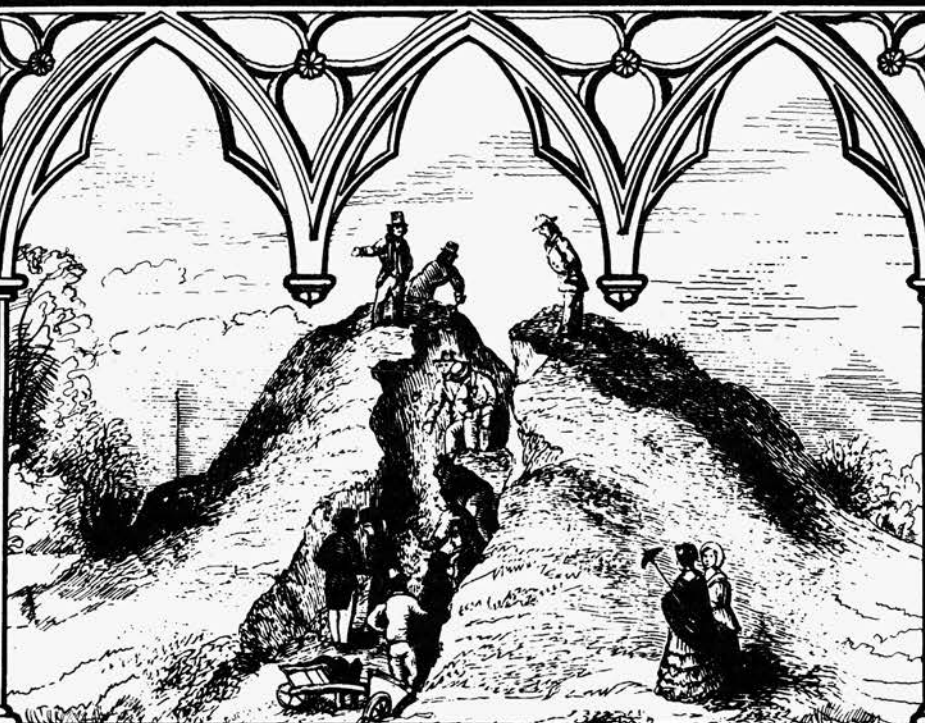


# The Barrow Diggers



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**This is to certify that the work here submitted for the degree of Ph.D. under the title 'The barrow diggers' is, both in research and writing, the work of the undersigned. All authors and works quoted are fully acknowledged.**

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## Abstract.

For most archaeologists today, barrow digging represents the archetypal antiquarian activity of the nineteenth century in particular; there has been less appreciation of its place in eighteenth-century work. Yet for all this acceptance of its importance there have been few attempts to understand the work of the barrow diggers in terms of their own aims and society. Fundamentally, then, this work has been undertaken in the hope that it will take us some of the way towards redressing the balance and, to this end, the writings of the barrow diggers have been allowed wherever possible to speak for themselves.

Although the prime motivation in most barrow digging was the collection of the objects accompanying the burial it should not be supposed that other, often more overtly academic, aims were thereby excluded. In these other aspirations, we can more clearly determine the relationship of the barrow diggers to the broader intellectual aspirations of their day. A clear watershed is observable in the third, fourth and fifth decades of the nineteenth century when the previously secure links with the topographical tradition several centuries old were severed in favour of a more tenuous association with the newly emerging social sciences. This is particularly reflected in barrow digging by a weakening dependence upon classical sources and consequent increase in the use of ethnographic examples to explain the phenomena observed during barrow digging. Further there was an emphasis on the possibilities of meaningful racial determinations from the human skeletal remains, itself a result of the increasing racial concerns in a society seeking to generate new approaches to alien cultures and peoples with the collapse of the attitudes rooted in the acceptance of slavery. The appeal of racial analyses diminished in the face of the growth of social evolutionary theory which led in the latter years of the nineteenth century to the emergence of typology in archaeological analysis. In general, the approaches to excavation and analysis, though varied, show little innovative intention on the part of the barrow diggers whose aspirations were derived from outside views rather than generated by the demands

of the material discovered. An important element in providing these views was the county societies and museums founded in the period after 1840 when antiquarian activities had become respectable in a way not known in the preceding century. The journals and other activities of these institutions both provided a wider diffusion of general aims and aspirations and enable us to determine the increasing tempo of antiquarian studies, including barrow digging, which was altogether less individualistic than it had been in the eighteenth century.

All students of man and society who possess that first requisite for so difficult a study, a due sense of its difficulties, are aware that the besetting danger is not so much of embracing falsehood for truth, as of mistaking part of the truth for the whole.

(J.S. Mill on Coleridge : Leavis, 1950, 105).



**Introduction.**

Before presenting any material it is important to define the limitations of the study, for the records do not impose the same demarcations as one would expect in a more orthodox archaeological dissertation. The available information in this case has the same limits common to all archaeological material but it does not offer equivalent opportunities for collection into a corpus. Because this work is essentially concerned with the archaeologists and not their evidence the approach and treatment cannot be so clearly rooted in the basic data. Historical studies such as this one are less obviously concerned with the presentation of all the known material. Rather the very quantity of available material demands that the aim be the selection and documentation of a series of interpretations which are themselves the product of even more basic analyses. It is to these fundamental interpretations or value-judgements that I wish to address myself in this brief introduction.

Barrows are usually defined as earthen mounds, either long or round, covering one or more burial deposits. This definition, however, excludes similar monuments in which the covering material is stone, these are termed cairns. Although this distinction has been recognised in the past, it had little significance except perhaps in the case of megalithic tombs but even these were more clearly divorced from other types on the basis of the stone structures contained within the mound rather than the material of which the mound was composed. The term 'barrow' may therefore be used, without serious corruption, to embrace all forms of sepulchral mound and it and 'cairn' become largely synonymous. Yet it does not acquire sufficient flexibility to include all sepulchral monuments and consequently I have not, except in rare instances, concerned myself with the digging of what were, at the time of their excavation, graves without physical indications of their presence. This position has necessarily excluded those prehistoric and Anglo-Saxon cemeteries for which there is some evidence that the graves may

have been surmounted by small individual barrows and indeed from which relics were recovered closely comparable to those from barrow excavations. This particular situation is rendered less anomalous when considered in the context of the barrow digger.

If a certain laxity has been shown in defining barrows for the purposes of this study,<sup>1</sup> a somewhat firmer position is offered, by way of compensation, in the assessment of what properly constitutes the activities of a barrow digger. I would reserve the term for one who excavated a barrow consciously knowing, or at least suspecting, beforehand that it was a sepulchral mound. This must exclude those persons who excavated burial deposits which were exposed by agencies not concerned so to do, even where such work led to the deliberate investigation of other, previously unexposed graves. Of course, many active diggers were involved in both kinds of work but I have deliberately limited my consideration to what, in the current idiom, would be called research rather than rescue archaeology. The man who rescued the relics from a grave exposed in the course of agricultural or industrial activities was very much on a par with someone who saved a gold torc from being melted down. Whilst they demonstrated that they had a more enlightened attitude to objects of antiquity than many of their peers, this sort of activity did not demonstrate in itself a serious motivation in those individuals to know about the prehistoric or early historic past. Moreover, if their work was solely of this kind they could only exceptionally make a serious contribution to the antiquarian attitudes of their time.

A firm emphasis on the research side of barrow digging in the past carries with it implications for the time-scale of such a study. The recognition of when the research element began in barrow digging is essentially a factor of documentation in that research necessarily

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1 Marsden, 1974, for example, has largely reserved its use for prehistoric round barrows.

embodies the aim of publication. That this aim is not achieved, as in the case of Faussett during his lifetime, must seriously impair the influence of an individual researcher on subsequent studies but it should not require his exclusion from a study like this one. More importantly, we should not allow documentation to become all-embracing or to dominate our definitions to such an extent that a starting point is simplistically sought in the earliest example of barrow digging into which one can read a research aspect. What is required is not the isolated excavation of a barrow, which may have a research aim, but a series of excavations which, by their duplication, emphasise that what we are interpreting as a research interest in the past is not mere idle curiosity finding an opportunity for gratification. Such a series cannot, I believe, be demonstrated to have been undertaken before the activities of Stukeley and his colleagues in the early eighteenth century.

It is by no means surprising that the eighteenth century witnessed the growth of a research interest in barrow digging. Developments in the approach to scientific problems in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries were revolutionary in their impact.<sup>2</sup> The subsequent interest in phenomena which, although trivial in themselves, were of some intrinsic interest had obvious implications for archaeological studies primarily concerned with the detritus of past ages.<sup>3</sup> At its best, this new attitude was to become grafted on to a pre-existing fieldwork tradition in the form of research excavation augmenting the material already acquired by the more familiar topographical methods. Of course, these topographical activities were intertwined with historical studies which had begun to show, from the beginning of the sixteenth century, an independence of political and societal needs. The collapse of the British History and

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2 Surveyed in Hazard, 1935.

3 Piggett, 1950, 1-17; Hunter, 1971.

the confrontation with, rather than the documentation of, ancient prophecies betoken the very considerable change from a cyclical to a linear view of the past.<sup>4</sup> Within this new framework, the problems of the situation in the past beyond historical sources were a good deal less avoidable than they had been with the mythological answers inherent in the previous attitudes. The topographical methodology represented a reasonable and obvious approach in the newly developing situation but it could only advance the situation so far. Schemes such as that of John Aubrey concerned with the chronology and development of English medieval architecture,<sup>5</sup> could find no echo in studies of earlier monuments for the necessary and basic information about them was not available. Thus, by the eighteenth century it was clear that in the whole field of historical studies the discernment of meaningful patterns in the past required new approaches.<sup>6</sup> In antiquarian activities, the changes were undramatic and tentative but from the time of Stukeley onwards there is a clear element of continuity in the field of excavation. This aspect remained firmly integrated into a predominantly topographical approach until well into the nineteenth century. Clearly, barrows offered good opportunities of reward for those who excavated them, since the treasure-seeking of former days<sup>7</sup> had shown that if they did not generally contain treasure they did at least usually furnish artifactual material. But, unlike the casual finds which resulted from non-archaeological activities, purposive excavation required the development of a philosophy and methodology specific to this new tool.

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4 Kendrick, 1950, 78-133; Piggott, 1956; Thomas, 1971, 510-13.

5 Colvin, 1968.

6 Thomas, 1971, 513-14.

7 Thomas, 1971, 279-80; Grinsell, 1953, 110-11.

If, then, it can be accepted that Stukeley's excavations form a suitable starting point and, perhaps less contentiously, that the publication of Mortimer's work and the transfer of the Greenwell collection to the British Museum in the first decade of the twentieth century a sensible ending, it remains to outline the approach adopted in this study. It is firmly sociological and not biographical in intent. It is concerned with defining and documenting general attitudes in contrast to a detailing of individual events. In saying this, there is no intention to deny that individual events in aggregation are a clear demonstration of general attitudes but rather to emphasise my unhappiness with the anecdotal approach. For although often entertaining, and indeed horrifying on occasions, the use of anecdotes has encouraged an explicit contrast with contemporary procedures and thought without highlighting the attitudes of the *dramatis personae*. It draws attention to the fact that work undertaken in the past has a different evidential value to that being done now without providing sufficient material to understand those differences. I have not been primarily concerned with analysing the work of past barrow diggers in terms of its value as evidence today because I do not feel this area of analysis has much to offer if it anticipates or substitutes for attempts to define the attitudes current when the excavations were undertaken. Ideally, the two aspects are interdependent but source criticism is relegated to a position of inference in this study because I believe in the primacy of defining people's concepts in the past in their own terms, itself a sufficiently complex task in this preliminary consideration, and because good source criticism has many more aspects that I have adopted here as my limited aims. It would, for instance, require the comparison of data still available with the statements of past antiquaries. My own aims are linked to the hope that this work will provide a firm basis for such analysis.



In part, the rejection of an explicitly biographical approach is a response to the source material available. The bulk of the information presently available on the activities of barrow diggers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is contained in the published reports of the actual excavations. Such reports of the discoveries met with in the course of barrow digging were consciously written in a style which affords little in the way of biographical information and in a manner which closely corresponds to that still acceptable today. These 'scientific' statements can be supplemented by published obituaries of major workers but these adopted such a eulogistic tone as to offer only the barest image of the person involved. In order to penetrate this cover, one has to have access to the letters and notes of the individual concerned. Here the situation is patchy in the extreme: the largest collection, the papers of William and Thomas Bateman, number several thousand letters whereas the Mortimer papers number some two dozen, mainly articles in manuscript, and there is no Greenwell collection as such, with the small number of surviving letters scattered through other extant collections and this despite references to the Greenwell papers in published work of the 1930s.<sup>8</sup> Further, barrow diggers did not treat their antiquarian correspondence as they would have done their business letters and so, even in the best preserved collection, there are very few copies of their replies to the correspondence which has been so meticulously preserved. Although many significant letters probably remain undetected among miscellaneous papers in both private and public collections, I have tried to consult all the relevant manuscript material. In only one instance, a small faded notebook of F.C. Lukis, are there copies of letters received and written concerning antiquarian affairs. This solitary example highlights how much one loses with only half, and usually the least informative half, of the correspondence intact. It could be argued that the correspondence between Colt Hoare and

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<sup>8</sup> Cowen, 1933, 202, although he does not claim to have seen them personally.



Cunnington provides a more meaningful and substantive example of a complete collection but the peculiarity of their relationship does not allow the interpretation of their correspondence as being that between persons acknowledging their equality even in antiquarian pursuits. Their complementary roles were so structured that Colt Hoare's position always remained the one with the authority which could, if necessary, override reasoned argument in cases of dispute. It would be difficult, therefore, to adopt a biographical approach when the evidence for a clear understanding of either the genesis and development of antiquarian attitudes or the relationship of those attitudes to a more general philosophy is, in any individual case, almost wholly absent or at best distorted. Yet, one can chart the development of general attitudes among barrow diggers and their relationship to wider archaeological concepts and, where apposite, to the feelings and views of society in general.

This is not intended as a firm advocacy of the total irrelevance of biographical data. Firm information in this field is of considerable importance but it is clear, as Marsden's recent work<sup>9</sup> has admirably demonstrated, that any attempt to use such material as the basic element in this kind of study will lack cohesion. Perhaps these biographical details do have an intrinsic value but they require a firmer framework than has generally been offered hitherto if they are to acquire some significance; to state them is not to explain their relevance. Associated with this simple stating of biographical information has been the cult of 'the first' - the searching for the first person to do or say something that finds an echo in modern practices. Of course, the definition of new ideas and approaches and the actions that reflect them is an essential part of historical analysis. Yet concern only with those aspects which have relevance for today's procedures is most unsatisfactory for it implies a more

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9 Marsden, 1974.

sequential development than can be realistically demonstrated. It is a situation not unlike that in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries when apparently prophetic statements contained in the writings of earlier commentators acquired considerable importance on the basis of the same widespread belief in the prescience of former generations. Thus, the priority cannot be the careful definition of only those elements which have the clearest kinship with contemporary practices.

The weakness of a biographical approach is further emphasised by the absence of major creative thinkers among the barrow diggers. The differentiation of major from minor figures is largely related to the number of barrows excavated and not to the individual's contribution to the development of the subject. The changes in approach clearly discernible during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are more obviously the collective reaction of barrow diggers to wider developments in archaeological thinking and hence, the concerted aims and activities of those who excavated barrows, together with the description and definition of their thoughts and works, must form the primary concern of this study. The approach I regard as essentially sociological although the word is not used in a specific fashion in that there is no close documentation through the use of numerical techniques since the data is too incomplete. But this study is attempting to explore aspects of the communication and development, in the face of accumulating information, of new ideas among men whose lack of antiquarian specialisation produced a mixture of positive and negative influences.

Finally, it is necessary to sketch out the specific framework in which I have attempted to develop this approach. In rejecting an overtly biographical treatment, I have also abandoned a chronological analysis where each chapter treats of a specific period within a larger time-scale. Instead, the chapters are thematic within the

wider themes of each section but in every chapter I have tried to maintain the chronological development of each concept as far as this is feasible. Within the confines of chronology, superimposed on a thematic approach, I have tried to organise the material at my disposal under three basic headings : the diggers, the barrows and the antiquarian society. The first is concerned with the aims and motivations of the men involved, with what they believed they were achieving in broad antiquarian terms and how they chose to present their discoveries. The second section deals with the manner in which the excavations were planned and executed and the analysis of the finds, both structures and objects, that were the product of these excavations. The final section looks at the antiquarian society of which these activities formed part. Essentially, it is concerned with the organisations, societies and museums, without attempting any summary of the general growth of antiquarian ideas. I have concentrated on the establishment and growth of the infrastructure without which the generation of new thoughts and concepts would have been slow and tedious. Few of the major figures were overtly involved with these organisations except at a national level but many of the less ambitious diggers drew much support from local societies. Their publications, for instance, provide the basis of any analysis of the efforts of these workers and it is not without significance that most of the barrow digging about which we have least information took place before the establishment of a county society in the respective areas, a feature especially noticeable in Yorkshire. It is, therefore, important to understand the social and intellectual roles of these organisations which were at one and the same time encouraging the inclinations of these minor diggers and providing the yardsticks by which they operated.

Necessarily, this interest in the organisational developments in antiquarian studies means that the final section is heavily biased towards the period after 1840. It has long been recognised that

around 1840 there occurred major changes of attitude in regard to archaeological work although less emphasis has generally been placed on the major alterations in the organisational basis of the subject than on the changes themselves. Of course, these alterations in organisation were in part reflecting and in part generating the changes in attitude but once these attitudinal changes had taken place the recently developed institutions did much to ensure the permanency of the new views on the relevance of archaeology. Before the appearance of this new organisational framework, antiquarian activities had a more individualistic air about them although remaining within the limits imposed by most antiquaries having had an education largely based on classical studies. Among the barrow diggers 1840 is a less obviously important date but its general relevance has caused me to use it as though it was of similar significance in my discussions in the first section.

The approach, then, which I have adopted is essentially sociological in that it is concerned with general views and actions and, as far as is possible, the explanations of those general developments but it does not involve the total rejection of biographical or chronological interpretations. It does, however, seek to subordinate and thereby to integrate them into a less individualistically based analysis. The premises which I am here advocating will not have the same validity throughout the whole period under consideration. The evidence available on barrow digging in the eighteenth century is such that when one speaks of a general opinion it is in terms of such a small group of barrow diggers compared to that which one would be considering in the mid-nineteenth century that it is legitimate to question the value of establishing a general opinion at all. This problem is, however, greatly reduced by the realisation that the opinions which were commonly held in the eighteenth century are less rooted in strictly antiquarian views and more in the wider society's view of the past. Even so, an effective resolution of this dilemma may demand

more concern with the individual than would be offered in the analyses of the nineteenth century but I remain convinced of the essential validity of my approach. For this reason I have attempted this initial explanation of my position and in so doing have sought to emphasise that the adoption of basic guiding tenets is not incompatible with flexibility in interpretation and analysis.

## The Barrow Diggers

1 'Curiosity or avarice' - motivation and attitudes to excavation.



'Curiosity or avarice', thought Thomas Pownall, 'has excited many persons at different periods to examine into the interior parts of those repositories of the dead; the former in hopes of recovering from the oblivion of the grave something at least which might give an insight into the manners and customs of former times, which might become a leading mark to the reviviscence of the history of those times; the other, instigated only by the sordid hope of plunder.'<sup>1</sup> Pownall's views, expressed in a paper read in 1770, were offered before most of the barrow digging with which we are here concerned had taken place but they provide one of the few expressions of the motivation and attitude to excavation among barrow diggers advanced in the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries. Since it is the excavation of burial mounds that provide the unity in this study, we must properly begin with some consideration of why certain antiquaries chose to excavate barrows and what their general attitude to this particular technique was, in order to establish as far as possible the personal factors affecting their use of excavation rather than the general aims which they believed were being furthered by its adoption. We shall not be concerned with the avaricious plunderers but can tease several strands from Pownall's embracing heading 'curiosity'.

A very few after Pownall owned that curiosity had led them to excavate in burial mounds<sup>2</sup> but in the nineteenth century it had become altogether improper to admit that this was one's motivation for, as Wylie observed in the 1850s,

No branch of archaeology appears to excite more general interest than sepulchral research in our own land, or in those foreign lands whose early inhabitants were, so to speak, kinsman of our forefathers. This widely-diffused interest of our day happily differs altogether from the indiscriminate curiosity of a preceding age.<sup>3</sup>

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1 Pownall, 1773, 237.

2 e.g. Boston, 1884, 306.

3 Wylie, 1857, 445.

Even if one can be less confident of the eradication of 'indiscriminate curiosity' there can be no doubt that the growing interest in barrow excavation meant that explanations for such work became both less necessary and more obviously couched in terms of wider academic aims. Moreover, as the results of excavations became known, there were far fewer who excavated mounds in order to establish whether they were of a sepulchral nature for this had rapidly become a basic unchallengeable assumption.<sup>4</sup> There was, then, by the nineteenth century less reason for barrows to be excavated by those with mild interest in the purpose of the mounds and more need for rather sophisticated explanations for such activities. The latter aims are discussed in the next two chapters in terms of their relationship with more general antiquarian aspirations but they do not help us to understand why it was that some antiquaries chose to further those aims with large-scale barrow excavations and even less why the occasional barrow digger, operating at one further remove from the general aims than the major excavators, should indulge in such work. Some broad suggestions, based on occasional remarks in the barrow-digging literature, are all that can be offered.

Clearly, an important factor among major barrow diggers was their seeing or taking part in barrow excavations during their youth or early adulthood with a consequent nurturing of the desire to do likewise when financial or other considerations allowed. Some interesting sequences can be developed particularly involving Douglas and Bateman. Thomas Bateman was his father's only son and because of the early loss of his mother and his own bad health he was almost entirely educated at home, circumstances which permitted his taking

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4 For an example of excavation to test the sepulchral nature of the mound see Dalrymple, 1866, 276.

part in barrow excavations conducted by his father.<sup>5</sup> These excavations were sometimes undertaken with Hayman Rooke and Samuel Pegge and this may be what Barnard Davis meant when he noted that 'B[ateman] first began bar [row] opening ... with a man employed by D[ouglas]' although there is no clear indication that Rooke and Douglas were involved in anything other than correspondence.<sup>6</sup> Further, although Rooke was working in Nottinghamshire and Douglas was 'promised the ransacking of' some mounds in Leicestershire,<sup>7</sup> which meant their work was sufficiently close geographically for collaboration to have taken place, it is unlikely that Barnard Davis would have described Rooke as 'employed' by Douglas and not have mentioned him by name. Douglas had also, more directly, encouraged Gideon Mantell in his 'juvenile explorations' among barrows on the downs of Sussex and Bateman aided the work of Samuel Carrington, who began digging with Bateman's father, and Llewellyn Jewitt.<sup>8</sup> Similarly, Dean Merewether saw his first barrow opened by Colt Hoare who, in addition to his relationship with Cunnington, gave his patronage to William Miles and Richard Iremonger and, later in the century, Pitt-Rivers began his barrow excavations with Canon Greenwell, while F.C. Lukis appears to have had his interest aroused by seeing an excavation in 1811.<sup>9</sup> Thus, there is a clear pattern of some excavators having been actively or passively encouraged by witnessing the work of already acknowledged barrow diggers. Such a factor would not have entered the lives of the two tradesmen barrow diggers, Cunnington and Mortimer, for they both lacked

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5 Goss, 1889, 172; Gents. Mag., October 1861, 450.

6 Smith, 1883, 17; Barnard Davis papers, note made between 1854 and 1858: Roy. Anthropol. Inst. Mss. 140. 4.

7 Bateman, 1852; Douglas to H.G. Faussett, 8 August 1783; Soc. Ant. Lond. Mss. 723, fol. 57.

8 Mantell, 1846, 133; Goss, 1889, 171.

9 Merewether, 1851, 27; Gray, 1905, v & xvi; F.C. Lukis, 1849, 323.

sufficient social standing to be so invited. Indeed, they represent the reverse side of the coin since achievements in barrow digging, as with any other scientific activity, offered access to a world which was otherwise closed to them.<sup>10</sup> Cunnington was much the more successful of the two, in terms of acceptance by his social superiors, after 'Doctors Fothergill and Beddoes told me I must ride out or die ... yet for 22 years I paid as great attention to business as any man I know, nor even till within these four or five years ever rode a quarter of a mile out of my way to see any Antiquities'.<sup>11</sup> The social standing which accrued to Cunnington never came to Mortimer, who, interestingly, had seen barrows opened as a child though not as a result of an invitation,<sup>12</sup> because, one suspects, of the increasing middle-class element in antiquarian matters derived from the county and national societies with the consequent erosion of the aristocratic generosity of which Cunnington was the beneficiary. That Cunnington did acquire an extraordinary social standing as a result of his barrow digging skill is shown by the hostility towards the dedication to him in Ancient Wiltshire,

In an analysis of the sentiment called delicacy, which is found in some hearts, it may fairly bear a question, whether the officious and immoderate flattery of an inferior, or the gracious and coarsely avowed condescension of a patron, be the more intolerable.<sup>13</sup>

Finally, one must recall that despite the impact of seeing a barrow opened or the social advantages which accrued from the pursuit of barrow digging or the demands of one's doctors, some diggers frankly admitted an interest in their native counties which had been

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10 The problems provided by the broadening of the scientific community are discussed in Foote, 1954, particularly p. 448-49 & 450-51. See also Foote, 1952.

11 Cunnington letters, to James Cobb, 24 January 1804.

12 Mortimer, 1905, 84, f.n.

13 Quarterly Review, 5, 1811, 114.

with them since their youth. Warne wrote of Ancient Dorset that 'the subject was undertaken from a sense of tribute to the ancient remains of my native county, which had occupied my attention from my early years' whereas Borlase was even more impassioned,

Brought up from childhood in my dearly loved county of Cornwall, where... the love of the natale solum is the predominant inspiration of life, surrounded on all sides, as soon as my rambles took me beyond the range of cultivation, by the monuments of a prehistoric past, many of which lay on my father's estate, and prompted to interest myself specially in them by the fact that I had before me, not only the example, but the actual MS. collections of my great-great-grandfather, Dr. Borlase, whose book, the "Antiquities of Cornwall", is a classic amongst works on Archaeology, it was no wonder that the interest of my life... centred itself on the elucidation of a subject to which I seemed to be by nature called.<sup>14</sup>

Necessarily, the major barrow diggers were committed antiquaries, 'as complete an enthusiast as I ever met with in my life' was Hasted's description of Douglas<sup>15</sup> but he could have been speaking of any of the major barrow excavators.. Yet it is important to recall that for all of them it was only a leisure activity, even for Faussett who was 'most sincerely sorry that [he] ever took orders',<sup>16</sup> and the recreational aspect was greater for those who were only occasionally involved in barrow digging. 'It is one of the advantages belonging to the present day', wrote a reviewer of Colt Hoare's Ancient Wiltshire in 1811, 'that men of rank and fortune have many objects, unknown in ruder times, to wean them, not only from sensual gratification, but also from amusements, not perhaps actually criminal, yet gross and inelegant. Duties there always were in that rank, as in every other, to be fulfilled; but the demands of duty are

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14 Warne to F.C. Brooke, 13 October 1875 : in my possession; Borlase, 1897, vii.

15 Nichols, 1822, 648.

16 Nichols, 1818, 557.



never unremitted : and when the peer or opulent commoner had discharged all that he owed to his country in parliament, or on the bench, and all that was due to his family or dependents at home, many irksome voids would remain which could scarcely be filled up but by the pleasures of the chace and the table'.<sup>17</sup> It is not too fanciful to interpret barrow digging, as this reviewer has, as a more elevated pursuit than other field sports but sharing many elements in common. Borlase reiterated the point when speaking of 'those same wild granite hills, where in the winter time the sportsman may delight himself in the destruction of the living, the antiquary during many a long summer's day may engage himself, perhaps almost as pleasurably, in the resuscitation of the dead'.<sup>18</sup> Others were similarly to extol the 'active exercise on the breezy downs' or write of barrow digging in terms that suggested that its pursuit was not far removed from other sports.<sup>19</sup> Indeed, the description of Greenwell's barrow diggings in the Times became so sporty as to draw a sharp rebuke from Llewellyn Jewitt who felt 'the whole matter ... no better than an archaeological battue, the object of which is to destroy the largest number of barrows in the least possible time, and to "bag" the spoils in order that the unenviable achievement may be duly chronicled in the Times and other Journals'.<sup>20</sup> Notwithstanding Jewitt's finer feelings, the excavation of a barrow did afford the opportunity for convivial and like-minded company in an open-air setting strongly reminiscent of other, more orthodox sports;<sup>21</sup> one even invited one's friends and neighbours just as might be done for a day's shooting.<sup>22</sup> Further, the digging was approached with feelings

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17 Quarterly Review, 5, 1811, 111.

18 Borlase, 1872, x.

19 Thurnam, 1866, 336; Pennington, 1877, 13.

20 Jewitt, 1868a, 80.

21 See Greenwell & Rolleston, 1877, viii for some apposite comments.

22 e.g. Bateman correspondence, J.J. Briggs, 2 May 1857.

akin to those associated with field-sports, success was encouraging, especially early in one's career, but not assumed.<sup>23</sup> Yet excavation was not to be undertaken haphazardly without any prospect of success as Pitt-Rivers discovered when he proposed an excavation in Dane's Dyke for he did not receive 'much encouragement from [his] archaeological friends, most of whom thought, and with much reason, that the chance of finding anything in the small portion excavated was too remote to warrant the undertaking'.<sup>24</sup>

Success is a key word which occurs constantly in the writings of barrow diggers and provides a clear indication of one of the prime motivations in barrow excavation since it is invariably associated with the finding of the burial and its accompanying objects. Nowhere does any barrow digger explicitly state that his reason for excavating was primarily to discover and collect the objects associated with the burials, with the exception of Raphoe who was asked by his neighbour Sir Walter Synnot to open a cairn 'in expectation of discovering some urns'.<sup>25</sup> Yet the constant adoption of the finding of the interment as the criterion of success or failure shows that this must have been so and one has only to recall the very considerable collections, which Bateman, Greenwell and Mortimer amassed,<sup>26</sup> for example, and the prestige which accrued to their owners in the antiquarian world, to understand the motivation which this gave to their excavations. Both Bateman and Mortimer, whose interests and collecting habits were encouraged by a visit to the Great Exhibition of 1851, were collectors as boys and Mortimer, at least, seems to have gone in for barrow digging in order to expand the range of his collection.<sup>27</sup> Almost from

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23 Hoare, 1812, 82; Pennington, 1877, 26.

24 Pitt-Rivers, 1882, 463.

25 Raphoe, 1806, 409.

26 Now respectively housed in Sheffield, the British and Hull museums.

27 Goss, 1889, 172; Mortimer, 1905, vii-ix.



the beginning of serious barrow digging there was a distaste for the mere collector, Douglas used the term as one of condemnation of Lord Winchilsea in 1785.<sup>28</sup> Greenwell, was a good deal more aggressive in his statements about collectors,

still more [barrows] have been destroyed under the influence of a curiosity almost as idle, be persons indeed of better education, but who have thought that enough was gained if they found an urn to occupy a vacant place in the entrance hall, or a jet necklace or a flint arrow-point for the lady of the house to show, with other trifles, to her guests requiring amusement<sup>29</sup>

and Warne voiced these sentiments in a similar tone.<sup>30</sup> The distinction between the collectors and the accusers was never very clearly drawn although the willingness to publish the results of their efforts, the recognition of other reasons for excavation and the clear formulation of wider academic aims to separate the major barrow diggers from the collector. However, a degree of cynicism is in order when reading the pious attacks on the collecting fraternity especially in view of the petty squabbling in which many, even the most senior, barrow diggers indulged.<sup>31</sup> Despite the clear concern with the acquisition of the burial goods there is little indication that barrows were dug for the immediate pecuniary profit to be gained from the sale of the finds although this might be an explanation of William Chaffers, the well-known dealer's, barrow digging in the 1840s since the minimal nature of the publication does not suggest he was much motivated by any academic aims.<sup>32</sup>

Additional factors for which evidence is available are less specifically relateable to barrow digging except in giving added emphasis

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28 Douglas to H.G. Faussett, 4 February 1785; Soc. Ant. Lond. Mss. 723 fol. 62.

29 Greenwell & Rolleston, 1877, v.

30 Warne, 1866, mopr, 2.

31 See Evans, 1943, 123 for an account of such a squabble between Greenwell and one of the Mortimer brothers, probably Robert in view of his published remarks, Mortimer, 1868.

32 Chaffers, 1844.

to the points outlined above. Not surprisingly there was a good deal of sensitivity towards the past among many barrow diggers, 'in truth there were many things in the interior of these old-world burying-places to set the thoughtful man thinking, and the speculative man imagining, guessing, reconstructing' wrote Rev. J.C. Atkinson<sup>33</sup> but whether the hazy images which such thought conjures up were anything more than an affinity for the past is difficult to establish. Usually such thoughts form part of an explicit contrast with the present<sup>34</sup> and one feels could have been prompted by any scene or object of antiquity without being overly related to barrow excavations. Just occasionally are we afforded a glimpse of a thought, uniting past, present and future, which must have crossed the minds of many diggers throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. 'On these [mounds], ' wrote R.S. Ferguson, 'more than one would-be explorer has cast longing eyes, and dreamed of great finds of British, Roman, English or Danish antiquities, which would hand his name down to posterity along with those of Belzoni or Greenwell',<sup>35</sup> surely a statement encapsulating a thought which only the most diffident of barrow diggers would not have had lurking among his motivations.

There was little discussion of the advisability of excavation and what there was was restricted to eighteenth century diggers while in the nineteenth century the matter received the unquestioning acceptance that there could be 'no certainty without prying into and examining the bowels and contents of them, and even that is hardly sufficient in all cases'.<sup>36</sup> Such a position was supported by the widespread appreciation of a high level of destruction of prehistoric monuments, a

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33 Atkinson, 1891, 147.

34 Greenwell & Rolleston, 1877, 233-34; Mortimer, 1905, xii.

35 Ferguson, 1888, 117.

36 Pegge, 1785, 139. See also Douglas, 1793, 137.

justification for excavation not altogether unfamiliar today. The threat came from the builders of turnpikes<sup>37</sup> and later railways<sup>38</sup> but most importantly it derived from agricultural and industrial activity. The relative significance depended upon the area in which the barrow digger worked, F.C. Lukis singled out the granite industry and Borlase mining while Warne and Mortimer thought of agriculture as the primary destructive agent and Greenwell noted the greater dangers to stone cairns than earth mounds.<sup>39</sup> Woodruff felt that the 'more advanced state of cultivation' in Kent explained why so few barrows were found there in comparison with Yorkshire, Wiltshire or Dorset.<sup>40</sup> This recognition of the dangers seldom led to excavation in advance of destruction although a few cases are documented<sup>41</sup> in which this clearly was the prime motivation. More often, the presence of such threats was used rather as an explanation or justification for work that would have been undertaken in any case since the failure of most diggers to structure their research in a manner which responded to the threats in a specific way demonstrates the lack of commitment to any form of rescue excavation.

The motivation behind individual excavations is occasionally contained in the literature but it is generally the more bizarre or unrealistic hopes that are so recorded. Though clearly important in demonstrating the range of motivations that caused people to excavate burial mounds they offer little or no insight into the reasons behind the more important barrow diggers' work. Among the more reasonable

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37 Bray, 1785, 178.

38 Smith, 1848, 235-36; Joass, 1864b, 311.

39 F.C. Lukis, 1849, 324; Borlase, 1872, ix; Warne, 1866, mopr, 1-2; Mortimer, 1905, ix-x; Greenwell & Rolleston, 1877, 378.

40 Woodruff, 1874, 17.

41 Glover, 1814, 326; Lewis, 1857, 296; Warne, 1866, mopr, 46; Fortey, 1885, 445; Money, 1885, 18.

justifications were previous finds,<sup>42</sup> the unusual external appearance of the barrow<sup>43</sup> and the attempt to establish the relationship between barrows and adjacent non-sepulchral field monuments.<sup>44</sup> A few diggers were actuated either wholly or in part by specific research aims as with human skeletal material which Thurnam and Bryce sought as their primary objective and which Rhind thought of as a subsidiary but nevertheless important result of his digging.<sup>45</sup> These were quite legitimate aspirations related to current beliefs and research aims but even contemporary thought must have been alarmed at the excavations of a cairn to discover whether it covered the body of Trahearne ap Caradog or that 'the name, "Clacharie", in Celtic signifying "Stones of Judgement" incited us to dig there'.<sup>46</sup>

Without anticipating the wider discussion of techniques contained in chapter four some observations can be usefully made at this point on the general attitudes to excavation prevalent among barrow diggers. We have already noted that the value and correctness of excavation as a technique did not receive much consideration and it is, therefore, important to assess the consequences of this failure in both procedural and attitudinal matters. Before attempting any detailed analysis it will be valuable to look at a description of a day's barrow digging written by Rev. S. Isaacson to Charles Roach Smith:

Like a good resurrection man, I was up yesterday at five or before six; - masticated my mutton, donned my sexton's livery - shoulder'd spade; - poised my pick axe, and vaulted into the vehicle, destined to convey the corpus of a living I-saxon to the grave of the departed Saxon or British. The morning was very

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42 Douglas, 1793, 91, 99, 157; Stuart, 1866a, 99.

43 Mander, 1776, 274; Warne, 1866, mopr, 28.

44 W.A. Miles to Rev. T. Rackett, 21 May 1868 : Dewar, 1965, 54-55; Goudie, 1873, 215.

45 Thurnam, 1869a, 49; Bryce, 1903, 59; Rhind, 1854, 103.

46 Davies, 1857, 304; Simpson, 1864, 222.



much like the generality of mornings, and appeared totally unconscious of the mighty works about to be undertaken - the sun paid no marked respect to Isaacson, not an extra ray or a higher degree of caloric. The... lambkins as we progressed looked up vacantly, resumed their ... labours, and really appeared to consider us merely ordinary bipeds. What stolidity amongst things animate and inanimate! If they had been looking at Albert Way and Bromet they might have been forgiven!!

The country through which we passed was to me at once novel and interesting. The hills of a strikingly bold character, and almost every one possessing that object of attraction, that archaeological magnet, a visible barrow. After a pleasant ride, diversified by agreeable discussions on men and manners, bones and bon hommie :- and taking a Plutarchal view of the merits of Smith and Way, Wright and Bromet, and such distinguished parallels, at the third watch, ... we reached the goal and at once set to with hearty good [cheer] - Bateman worked like an Ajax unlike the degenerate diggers of our day - I, Stephen the Saxon, used both my eyes, which were intently fixed upon the operations, and soon extracted from the soil a rat's tooth! This was speedily followed by dental and tibial portions of other animals - which prepared us for the kist-which was duly developed - but of a rather peculiar character, having a large stone running through the centre, herein we discovered the bones of several children, and portions of the skull, etc. of one adult, a large portion of a dark coarse urn and one flint. On excavating at another spot, which appeared like a hive of barrows, we met with human debris and two flints, one a saw, and the usual accompaniment of rats bones in vast quantities. Whilst we, the aristocrats of antiquaries, were thus engaged, we had an outlying picket at work in the distance, at a barrow of most imposing appearance, for never did anything promise better, or produce worse. But then the operatives were not conservatives, and did not work like practical and scientific barrow-knights. Bones well picked reminded us, however, of the calls of nature - and Mrs. Bateman's contributions to our excavation comforts were duly lauded : pie fit for a pope - beer and brandy worthy of Baronial halls - and cigars of a quality to gratify a Count's lips and nose, were discovered - and then to work upon a mountain, for such was in truth our post-[lunch] cairn - here Bateman, again, like a giant refreshed with wine, made the masses of rock vanish at

his magic touch, or stalwart blows - and a small [piece] of brass was the reward. Thereupon we retired to the good woman at Stearndale - as the headless female in front of the hotel is maliciously styled - offered an excuse of tobacco, and a libation of brandy to the [deceased] we had disturbed, returned to our virtuous couches, and slept the sleep that honest and industrious antiquaries can alone enjoy.<sup>47</sup>

It has been thought worthwhile to make this extensive quotation not only because the passage invokes the general feelings of barrow diggers for their activities but also it contains allusions to more specific attitudes with which we are here concerned. Despite the facetious and punning tone which marks it as the work of the author of Barrow Digging by a Barrow Knight, Isaacson has captured the supreme air of confidence and rectitude that barrow diggers had from the early Victorian period and which provided the basis of the problems that were to bedevil their work during the rest of the century. The use of the phrase 'resurrection men', echoed later in the century by Pennington's remark that his friends called his work 'body-snatching', reflects the absence of any of the social sanctions clearly implicit in Douglas's description of spade and pick-axe as 'unceremonious despoilers of the enshrined dead'.<sup>48</sup> The weakening of these social controls combined with the upsurge of interest in antiquarian matters in the 1840s inevitably precluded an orderly establishment of acceptable procedures and attitudes as more and more were attracted to 'that archaeological magnet, a visible barrow'. The dangers were plain to the most perceptive of antiquaries and even by 1845 F.C. Lukis was noting that 'the value of these means [excavations] can scarcely be questioned, but the careful and judicious use of them must be impressed on the mind of the student, who, in his zeal after hidden

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47 Isaacson to Roach Smith, 17 May 1845 : 2nd Br. Archaeol. Assoc. Congress papers, Soc. Ant. Lond. Mss. I supplied those words in square brackets to maintain flow where the original word is illegible.

48 Pennington, 1877, 26; Douglas, 1793, 132.

treasures, may mar or ruin the most interesting points of his practical researches' and he appealed for 'every little fact to be noted, every detail to be given, during the exploring of those few remains which have escaped the ravages of time for our contemplation'.<sup>49</sup>

Yet the impact of these appeals was negligible, mainly because the 'zeal after hidden treasures' dominated all other considerations in a way finely exemplified by Charles Warne's remarks,

The examinations were carried out under the superintendence of my late friend, and frequent collaborateur, Charles Hall, Esq., who was a most enthusiastic antiquary - yet, unfortunately, not given to "taking notes"; had he paid the same careful attention in recording the particulars of his researches, as he bestowed on the preservation of such objects as he obtained, we might now have been in possession of facts most useful to the antiquary from their practical character, whilst at the same time his collections would have been invested with a far greater amount of interest.<sup>50</sup>

Things had not improved by the end of the century when John Ward described Micah Salt as

before all things, a digger - careful, observant, patient. If I were asked to suggest him a motto, it should be : "I dig for facts, let others theorise". But because he has preferred the spade to the pen, it must not be thought that he is unmindful to the study of this branch of knowledge. He takes a keen interest in prehistoric archaeology, and his comments on the drafts of my papers have always been worthy of careful consideration.<sup>51</sup>

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49 F.C. Lukis, 1845a, 143; 1845b, 223.

50 Warne, 1866, tovp, 74.

51 Ward, 1900, 210.



Ward's enthusiasm was not shared by Hercules Read who had earlier remarked of Salt's excavations that some barrows 'had not been thoroughly explored' and 'he strongly deprecated the opening of barrows by any but competent explorers'.<sup>52</sup> Similar feelings had been expressed during the previous fifty years<sup>53</sup> but their credibility was weakened by the pragmatic attitudes of even the most influential barrow diggers. Isaacson's description, quoted above, indicates the lack of supervision exercised on the 'outlying picket' and the consequent disparity in standards. Similarly, Greenwell, who consistently attacked the idly curious, could embody in his major production such statements as 'on account of the large size of the mound, and from its having been one of the first barrows I opened in Yorkshire, I did not make the same exhaustive examination I have since judged it necessary to carry out'.<sup>54</sup> Such statements of unimpeachable honesty did not serve to encourage the casual diggers to believe that appeals for high standards, care and diligence were anything more than lip-service to an expendable ideal, especially since the works that contained them also gave descriptions of a day's digging in which more slip-shod techniques were adopted as the day wore on in order to maximise the number of barrows excavated. It is hardly surprising then to find small-scale diggers like Rev. Robert Munro castigating the work of a Mr. Mackay some sixteen years previously for the haphazard manner in which it was conducted and yet following this with remarks describing his own efforts as 'a hurried exploration ... in long cairn No. 3' and noting that 'on digging several feet I observed some deep holes below; but as the stones were very loose and dangerous, and my time limited, this matter could not be satisfactorily made out'.<sup>55</sup>

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52 Proc. Soc. Ant. Lond., 2nd Ser., 17, 1897-99, 316.

53 Warne, 1866, mopr, 7; Greenwell, 1874, 19; Hutchison, 1880, 151.

54 Greenwell & Rolleston, 1877, 484.

55 Munro, 1884, 229 & 232.

All this was reinforced by the almost flippant way diggers described their activities. We have already noted Llewellyn Jewitt's condemnation of Greenwell for just such a thing and even the normally sober and restrained F.C. Lukis used the phrase 'our exploring mania'.<sup>56</sup> It was a good deal more restrained than some but taken in conjunction with the eminent antiquary, J.Y. Akerman's remarks concerning the excavation of prehistoric barrows there was little indication that the oft-stated aims of antiquaries could not be fully satisfied by mere recovery of the objects accompanying the burial. Akerman was interested and involved in the excavation of Anglo-Saxon barrows and flat cemeteries but one might have supposed that his close and important association with the Society of Antiquaries of London would have encouraged a more sympathetic interest in the earlier barrows than is shown in the following:

Notwithstanding the obscurity in which the early history of Britain is enveloped, the antiquary still fondly clings to the hope that some additional light may be cast upon it by the acquisition of monumental evidence. Accident sometimes produces relics which keep alive this hope, and induce a further investigation of the sepulchral mounds which yet abound on our downs and uncultivated land. These however, unlike the grouped tumuli and graves of the Saxon period, offer but few provocatives to explore them. Their frequent large size, their compact construction, the time occupied in a proper investigation of their contents, and their situation frequently in lofty or exposed districts, render this description of barrow-digging at once tedious, irksome and laborious.

Experience had taught me not to anticipate great things from these contemplated excavations. I had learned long ago, that a rude and crumbling urn, or a simple heap of ashes and calcined bones, were the frequent result of a whole day's digging in these early sepulchral mounds, besides the possibility of our working long in

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56 F.C. Lukis, 1848, 14.

one which had been explored by some previous investigator more intent on the acquisition of treasure than the procuring of antiquarian relics.<sup>57</sup>

Clearly, the whole tenor of this statement conveys the impression that the 'procuring of antiquarian relics' is a legitimate aim in itself and that success or failure is to be measured by the degree of achievement of this aim - a position similarly taken by Akerman in his other publications.<sup>58</sup> Further, it marked a shift in emphasis from the attitudes of the diggers earlier in the century not so much in terms of what constituted success or failure, for that had always been judged on the basis of the collection of objects, but more in the sense of the attitudes to failure. Richard Iremonger had written to Cunnington in 1805 about his barrow excavations remarking that 'none of them proved of any importance, but I cannot allow myself in the smallest degree intimidated by this failure & trust, when the harvest is concluded, to resume it with redoubled vigour'.<sup>59</sup> This was a philosophy which by the middle of the century would have represented something akin to obstinacy. More typical of this period was W. Wynne Ffoulkes who, though claiming that his barrow digging motto was 'nil desperandum', was nevertheless discouraged by the confused state of one cairn which suggested that no treasures awaited him and equally common was the abandonment of work when no burial was quickly revealed.<sup>60</sup> The greater emphasis placed on success in the second half of the nineteenth century, as the barrow digging fraternity increased in numbers, represented a weakening of the links between excavation and the wider antiquarian aims as the diggings became often nothing more than a means of collecting.

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57 Akerman, 1853, 480.

58 e.g. Akerman, 1855, 175 & 182.

59 Cunnington letters, Richard Iremonger, 9 September 1805.

60 Ffoulkes, 1852b, 100; Borlase, 1872, 107; Pennington, 1877, 20.

The concentration here on the period after 1840 is not intended to suggest that the barrow diggers of the eighteenth century and early nineteenth century were other than collectors or saw their excavations as other than the means of recovering prehistoric material, but they maintained a much greater degree of unanimity both in attitude and technique than occurred after 1840. Natural science in early Victorian England served 'to baptize fresh-air fun'<sup>61</sup> and as antiquarian pursuits came within the ambit, giving purpose to such fun, there was an inevitable increase in barrow digging. Yet barrow digging was at that stage without clearly defined procedures and attitudes. Moreover, the inconsistency of the leading exponents, coupled with the improved communication of the societies' journals, encouraged the lowest acceptable standards to be construed as a desire to recover antiquarian relics rather than seek for treasure. It was a flimsy distinction, one suspects, in the minds of many diggers and certainly encouraged a multiplicity of techniques, all of which were justified with the vaguest possible expressions.

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61 Cannon, 1964b, 487.

## **2 Attitudes and presentation before 1840.**

Barrow diggers in the period before 1840 were very much more individualistic than their counterparts after that date. Numerically small, their contacts with each other were largely informal since they lacked an institutional framework until the second half of the nineteenth century. The Society of Antiquaries neither sought to provide that structure nor did it and, until the commencement of the publication of Archaeologia in the early 1770s, there was no specifically archaeological journal offering nationwide communication of thoughts and information. Travel was becoming easier but still remained sufficiently arduous to deter the country antiquary from visits to the capital outside his normal season so that the value of the Society of Antiquaries was minimal to other than metropolitan antiquaries. No amount of letter-writing could evolve the wide dispersal of views which was possible through the printed periodical. The absence of such a journal before Archaeologia, for the Gentleman's Magazine was very much a vehicle of record<sup>1</sup> and the Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society rarely contained antiquarian information,<sup>2</sup> means that we cannot look back much beyond 1760 and then only imperfectly. Thus, it is difficult to assess the amount of work being done in a particular field or indeed the attitudes that lay behind such activity as each worker established his own standards in terms of degree of effort and level of expectation. Some did not set their sights very high : 'for what purpose this tumulus was raised, and how the stratum of soft mouldering earth, above described, was laid within it, I cannot account', wrote Head, 'and therefore leave to others better skilled in these matters'.<sup>3</sup> Further, individual attitudes or actions do not necessarily amount to widespread adoption. A truism for all periods, but especially relevant here in the face of such claims as that made by the Lynches that Stukeley 'was largely

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1 A fairly full selection of such pieces is given in Gomme, 1886.

2 Hunter, 1971, 115, f.n.

3 Head, 1773, 56.



responsible for the establishment of a method of barrow excavation' for 'he introduced the technique of cross-sectional excavation supplemented by profile drawings'.<sup>4</sup> While arguably correct as a bare statement that he used trenches to excavate barrows and did, on at least one occasion, draw a section if that is what is meant by 'profile drawings', the implication of 'establishment' and 'introduced' is that he was followed in this by others. Such a suggestion is almost wholly without foundation for Stukeley's efforts remained unequalled for many decades and, moreover, he did not choose to publish either his section drawing or his analyses of external form. With these cautionary remarks in mind, the approach can only be the attempted establishment of an uneasy alliance between general attitudes,<sup>5</sup> of which we find echoes in the barrow digging literature, and explanations, wherever possible, of individual idiosyncracies. Inevitably, because of the available sources, the emphasis is on the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Speaking at the 1845 Winchester Congress of the British Archaeological Association, Pettigrew claimed that 'to instance the advance that has been made in archaeological inquiry, I need only refer you to the subject with which, of late years, we have been rendered so familiar, the opening of barrows'. It was, he went on with gross overstatement, 'but a very short time since and all these were deemed to be either Roman or Danish'. Finally, lest his hearers derived too long a chronology for all this, he singled out for mention Messrs. Lukis, Bateman and Warne,<sup>6</sup> all barrow diggers who were at that time not much more than started on their excavation and publishing careers. Leaving aside the irreverence for earlier achievements which was a

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4 Lynch & Lynch, 1968, 45.

5 For an understanding of these I have relied heavily on Lovejoy, 1936; Manuel, 1959; Willey, 1962; Voget, 1967.

6 Pettigrew, 1846, 3.



necessary part of British Archaeological Association attitudes in those early years, one is still faced with explaining how Pettigrew could see the efforts of previous workers as so insignificant. In large measure, the answer lies in the fact that he was standing on the opposite side of the watershed in public attitudes to antiquarian endeavours from most of those earlier antiquaries. That which separates Hoare, Cunnington, Douglas and Faussett from Lukis, Bateman, Warne and Greenwell is primarily the difference in society's feelings about their work. Awnsham Churchill could describe barrow digging to Faussett as 'so laudable a pursuit'<sup>7</sup> but there would have been relatively few who agreed with him. It is difficult to assess the feelings of antiquaries in the face of the ridicule which was the normal reaction to their activities because it is seldom commented upon by them. Douglas described the Society of Antiquaries in 1785 as 'conducted on a very extensive plan and it is now become one of our most fashionable weekly rendezvous's. Instead of old square toes you now behold smooth faces, and dainty thin shoes with ponderous buckles' but there is little to support his views in the near-contemporary print by Rowlandson of the reception of a new member.<sup>8</sup> Many of the caricaturists' efforts were a good deal more venomous than this one, Rowlandson himself producing 'Death and the antiquaries',<sup>9</sup> a plate which questions the propriety of some antiquarian endeavours and is closely matched by George Cruickshank's 'Meditations amongst the tombs' published in 1813. More usual, however, were prints suggesting the other-worldliness and absurd pretensions of antiquaries, the best known example of which is Cruickshank's 'The Antiquarian Society'.<sup>10</sup> Yet, it was not

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7 Churchill to Faussett, 16 May 1772, Soc. Ant. Lond. Mss. 723, fol. 2.

8 Douglas to H.G. Faussett, 4 February 1785, Soc. Ant. Lond. Mss. 723, fol. 62; Evans, 1956, pl. XIX.

9 Coombe, 1816, ii, 271; Evans, 1956, pl. XVIII.

10 Evans, 1956, pl. XXVII. Fuller details of identification are given in George, 1949, 171-72.

just outsiders who viewed antiquarian matters as a fit subject for ridicule since Francis Grose had produced a series of prints in the late eighteenth century which suggests that he for one did not take the subject too seriously and the president of the Society of Antiquaries, the fourth Earl of Aberdeen, noted in a letter to Hudson Gurney, 'the moderate folly of their pursuits'.<sup>11</sup> This is not to suggest that all antiquaries treated their interest in the subject in such a lighthearted way and such satire was, moreover, produced in an age when jibe and jest were wholly acceptable in a manner not tolerated during the Victorian period. Nevertheless, during the whole of the eighteenth and into the nineteenth century, antiquaries formed a community the smallness of which emphasised individuality and inhibited the generation of widely accepted views.

Yet this small group of antiquaries had close links with other men of science and the study of antiquities came within the ambit of all interested in 'natural history' even if today we can usually only recognise those for whom it was the primary interest. A fine example is provided in the person of Sir Joseph Banks, whose only recorded barrow digging was published by Low.<sup>12</sup> Banks, who became President of the Royal Society, had a life-long interest in antiquities although he seems to have collected and written little. However, in 1772, having decided not to repeat his voyage around the world as a member of Cook's second voyage, he hired a brig, the St. Lawrence and set sail for Iceland via the Hebrides. On the return journey, he stopped at the Orkney Islands where, in the company of George Low, he spent a day opening two barrows. This was, as far as we know, almost his only barrow digging<sup>13</sup> which, in

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11 Grose et al., 1807, i, 16 : one of the plates is published in Evans, 1956, pl. XXV; Balfour, n.d., ii, 10.

12 Low, 1776. Recent studies of Banks' antiquarian activities are Lysaght, 1972; 1974, the latter with some egregious topographical errors.

13 He was present at some of Douglas's excavations : Douglas, 1793, 56, f.n.

consequence, defies serious categorisation but it shows that there were men, primarily remembered for their other scientific interests, to whom barrow diggers could apply for help and advice. This was particularly so in the case of Colt Hoare whose baronetcy opened most doors in society anyway. In 1808 he wrote to Cunnington,

I shall be at Heytesbury on Friday next - but shall leave it the next day on my way towards London. It will be necessary for me to take up the stone hatchets, etc. found at Knook & Upton Lovel, etc. to show to Professor Davy - as I must give the best account I can of their texture, etc. - also one of the square perforated slatey stones. I wish also to show the most perfect of the little grape urns to Wedgewood to know if he could copy it. It will be very safe in his hands, and if you could have a little deal box made, and pack it round with wool, I could convey it in perfect safety.<sup>14</sup>

Such contacts cannot of course be interpreted as normal for men with less social standing like Cunnington but even he had acquired friends like Hoare as a result of his antiquarian interests as did William Smith from his geological activities. Moreover, Gage's ability to obtain a report on the scientific aspects of the finds from the Bartlow Hills by Michael Faraday<sup>15</sup> shows that access to major figures was not exclusive to Hoare. Indeed, the presence at the Bartlow excavations of such people as Henslow and Whewell demonstrates further the wide spectrum of study which could promote a passing attraction for barrow digging. This catholicity of interests disappeared after 1840 as science itself increasingly fragmented into specialised disciplines and the middle classes began to participate in antiquarian research. The wider scientific contacts, then, became largely exclusive to the leading group of archaeologists, men like Lubbock, Evans and Pitt-Rivers. In this increasingly hierarchial structure there are no obvious counterparts for the friendship of

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14 Cunnington letters, Hoare 51, 30 January 1808.

15 Gage, 1836, 306-10.

Cunnington and Douglas with William Smith or for Cunnington's work first being brought to the attention of the antiquarian world through the good offices of A. B. Lambert, the botanist.<sup>16</sup>

In part, this broad spectrum of interlocking interests derives from the similarity of education which most had received. A study of biblical and classical sources formed the basis of this education without which no gentleman was ready to play his rightful part in current affairs. Although the Bible offered no direct information concerning the earliest history of Britain, it did provide a general model of explanation and it particularly imposed the very short chronology for the history of the world which found its foremost exponent in Archbishop Ussher. Within such a limited time-scale, it was natural that the amplification of descriptions contained in Caesar or Tacitus should become an important aim in antiquarian research, particularly in the face of the Johnsonian dictum that of the past 'we can know no more than what old writers have told us'. Thus, Pennant felt it right to observe, in connection with barrows, 'we have no certainty of the ceremonies used by the antient Britons on these mournful occasions; but, from many circumstances which we continually discover in our tumuli, there appear many, analogous to those used in antient Greece and Rome'.<sup>17</sup> Similarly, Rooke argued

It seldom happens, that interment and urn burial are to be met with in the same barrow. The former is undoubtedly the most ancient, and has been handed down to us by sacred history and authentic records. We find also, that the practice of burning the body was of great antiquity, and here the same ancient weapons were found deposited with both; I therefore think there is great reason to suppose that this barrow was of very remote antiquity.<sup>18</sup>

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16 Cunnington letters, Douglas, 26 November 1810; Cunnington, 1806a; 1806b.

17 Pennant, 1778, 385.

18 Rooke, 1795, 331.

There is more than a hint in these remarks of Hayman Rooke that field data was properly subordinated to information acquired from literary sources. Yet this cannot be considered wholly reflective of contemporary attitudes and particularly not of Cunnington whom Hoare had described after his first meeting as 'an ingenious inhabitant and tradesman'.<sup>19</sup> As a man of trade, Cunnington had not had the same educational opportunities as most of those involved in the production of Ancient Wiltshire and while early in his antiquarian career he was inclined to be deferential to the views of those who had, his increased experience led him eventually to question the relevance of classical sources or rather to suggest that such information was not superior to that derived from excavation. 'I have ever had the highest respect for people who have had a liberal education like yourself', he wrote to Thomas Leman in 1809, 'but the information to be gathered from Caesar and Tacitus relates to the Britons in their times - therefore all theories drawn from such sources in regard to our Celtic Britons are ever at war with facts'. Such radical thoughts were, however, tempered by the additional remark that 'the Book which best illustrates British Antiquities is the Bible'.<sup>20</sup> The importance of the excavated data was also recognised by Hoare who, in the same year, wrote to Cunnington : 'I agree with you that our friend the Divine [Thomas Leman] is often hasty in thought as well as expression, and I am sure he is no Briton. Whenever I mention the subject, he avoids it, and returns to Roman ground where he is more at home. . . . We shall gain so little information from him on the subject of our researches that I would advise you not to send him any more papers'.<sup>21</sup> Leman, who was an acknowledged authority on Roman material, had acted as archaeological mentor to both Hoare and Cunnington and the two letters just quoted

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19 Hoare, journal for 1801 : Cardiff Public Library.

20 Cunnington papers, IX, 1.

21 Cunnington letters, Hoare 70, 1809.



represent the tacit admission by the two 'pupils' that Leman's classical knowledge was not appropriate to the information they were gathering. Even so, Hoare's published work does not particularly reflect his private admissions to Cunnington which may have been intended more as reassurance than an expression of firm belief.

The relevance of literary sources for the analysis of burial mounds is further shown by the problems of deciding on the correct attribution. Pennant despairingly remarked that he could not 'establish any criterion by which a judgement may be made of the people to whom the different species of urn and tumuli belonged, whether they are British, Roman, Saxon, or Danish and Horsfield was no more optimistic fifty years later, writing, 'It is pretty certain that the ancient Britons, the Romans, the Saxons, and the Danes, all erected such monuments in commemoration of the virtues of the dead; and as all adopted more or less the practice of cremation, and deposited the ashes in urns, it is difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain by which of those nations any particular barrow was raised'.<sup>22</sup> But, in contradistinction to these rather Johnsonian views, Pegge believed that some advance could be made by 'prying into and examining the bowels and contents of them'.<sup>23</sup> A similar view was held by Milner:

The most simple and natural kind of Sepulchral Monument, and therefore the most antient and universal, consists in a mound of earth, or a heap of stones, raised over the remains of the deceased. Of such monuments, mention is made in the book of Joshua, and in the poems of Homer, Virgil, and Horace; and of such, instances occur in every part of this Kingdom, especially in those elevated and sequestered situations where they have neither been defaced by agriculture nor inundations. It has often been a subject of surprize to me, that, in an age marked by its taste for Antiquarian researches, greater attention should not have been paid to these most antient and genuine records of past ages, so far, at least, as to

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22 Pennant, 1778, 383; Horsfield, 1824, 41.

23 Pegge, 1785, 139.

ascertain to which of the successive inhabitants of this island they are to be ascribed, or whether, in fact, they are the work of more than one people - This can only be done by an examination of the contents of several of them in different counties, and in different situations, by persons whose learning, ingenuity, and attention, qualify them for the task.

He went on to ascribe the barrows he excavated in Dorset to the ancient Britons because the rudeness of the finds did not compare favourably with Roman material he had discovered elsewhere. The Danes were not settled in this area until after their acceptance of Christianity which precluded their using cremation and the Saxons were not, on the evidence of Tacitus, disposed to accompany their funerals with much pomp and ceremony such as Milner believed had been employed during the erection of the barrows he excavated.<sup>24</sup> As in the case of Milner's rejection of the Danes, the location of the mounds excavated was of considerable importance in these attributions. Hoare noted that the contents of one of his barrows bore a marked similarity to the first barrow described by Douglas in Nenia Britannica where similar barrows were attributed to the Saxons but, concluded Hoare, 'as we well know that the Britons had the use of iron when Caesar first invaded our island, I see no reason why this barrow might not have contained the remains of a Belgic warrior' for it was, after all, much easier to explain the presence of Belgic rather than Saxon warriors in this location.<sup>25</sup> However, no serious thought was ever given to whether these historically defined 'nations' were the appropriate framework against which to fit the information acquired from barrow digging. This failure is partly explicable by the very short chronology which fundamentalist Biblical interpretations required but equally it reflects the late eighteenth-century disquiet concerning attempts to systematize the data or to indulge in new speculations.

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24 Milner, 1790, 897, 899-900.

25 Hoare, 1812, 47.



'The natural historian', remarked Ferguson, 'thinks himself obliged to collect facts, not to offer conjectures', a view which Hoare endorsed with his claim at the end of the first volume of Ancient Wiltshire : 'I have related with accuracy ... the details of our subterraneous researches; I have wandered as little as possible into the regions of fancy and conjecture, and I have endeavoured throughout my whole progress, to adhere most scrupulously to my motto, and to **SPEAK FROM FACTS, NOT THEORY**'.<sup>26</sup> It was not a claim that wholly satisfied the contributor to the Quarterly Review who thought that 'nothing surely could be more unfortunate than the choice' of this motto 'for it is in the introduction alone, that the author, unhappily for himself, indulges in that very spirit of theory, which is here disclaimed, and for which, assuredly, he is not eminently gifted, either by nature, or the train of his studies. In the body of the work he has every where proved himself an accurate observer, and distinct reporter of facts. From this unlucky abandonment of his own principle, he has rendered the introduction extremely weak and assailable'. It is clear that these criticisms are not related to a difference in philosophy but rather to an estimation of the level of achievement. The reviewer goes on to suggest that Hoare should 'have confined himself to facts recorded by others' and 'remembered the convincing force of reason, or bewitching wildness of imagination, with which these few data have been expanded by Whitaker, Stukeley, and Borlase. It is not for a man of ordinary abilities to touch the confines of their Druid temple:- within that circle none can move but they'.<sup>27</sup> Yet, to penetrate the time for which historical sources were few, controlled use of conjecture appeared to offer the finest hope. 'It is the province of the Antiquary', wrote Crocker, 'to admit of every doubt and difficulty in a subject under discussion; and History, as far as it goes, is a natural foundation for him to stand

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26 Ferguson, 1767, 3; Hoare, 1812, 254.

27 Quarterly Review, 5, 1811, 114.

upon; but where such documents cannot be obtained, reasonable conjecture must fill up the chasm, and the mountain must be made to go to Mahomet, if Mahomet cannot go to the mountain'.<sup>28</sup> The solution hinged upon securing a fair estimation of what constituted 'reasonable conjecture' since it was widely accepted by the end of the eighteenth century that Stukeley's conclusions, for example, would not have fallen within the limits of that phrase. Even for those educated by a wholesale immersion in biblical and classical texts the constrictions which they imposed on a study of the prehistoric past were fully appreciated. But the wholly unsatisfactory efforts of antiquaries earlier in the century, similarly seeking to use historical texts as a springboard into the distant past, induced a considerable amount of caution. Safety was sought in relating 'a plain unvarnished narrative ... leaving readers to form their own opinions, and ... not indulging in conjecture',<sup>29</sup> but always this provoked dissatisfaction in the writer who surely felt that a little more insight than could be provided by a bare retelling of the facts was in order.

The use of conjecture was not a problem confined to antiquaries but involved those philosophers, predominantly Scottish, who were seeking to contribute to a natural history of man. Kames had faced up to the problem in the 1750s when considering the historical development of law,

In tracing the history of law through dark ages unprovided with records, or so slenderly provided as not to afford any regular historical chain, we must endeavour, the best way we can, to supply the broken links, by hints from poets and historians, by collateral facts, and by cautious conjecture drawn from the nature of the government, of the people, and of the times. If we use all the light that is afforded, and if the conjectural

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28 Cunningham letters, P. Crocker 4, 3 February 1804.

29 Miles, 1826, 13.

facts correspond with the few facts that are distinctly vouched, and join all in one regular chain, nothing further can be expected from human endeavours.<sup>30</sup>

Kames' work was not particularly well received by his fellow savants but it did enjoy a fair degree of popularity. Moreover, the reasoning which he here employs is very similar to that adopted tentatively by some antiquaries later in the century but they do not seem to have been attracted by the empirical associational psychology, stemming from Locke and so beloved of the late eighteenth-century progressivists.<sup>31</sup> Douglas, for example, contented himself with the statement that 'no position in the work has been assumed on mere conjecture; and when deductions have been made, they have been founded on a scrupulous comparison of facts; but, free to form his own opinion, the work has been arranged under such heads, that the reader may frame his own conclusions, without any apprehension of being involved in the confusion of self-opinionated theory. All nations deriving their origin apparently from one common stock, have used, in many respects, the same funereal customs; but the progress of society having evidently produced many specific distinctions, they may be methodically arranged, and the identity of a people recognised'.<sup>32</sup> The solution then, for antiquarian research, was a limited attempt at the methodical arrangement of the data but only with a view to the solution of historically derived questions.

The systematization of antiquarian material was not, however, without its difficulties or its dangers, nor was it something that could be undertaken other than by those with considerable barrow digging experience since the amount of published material was too small. In January 1804, Hoare wrote to Cunnington asking 'have you visited the

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30 Kames, 1761, 22-23. cf. Ross, 1972, 203.

31 Voget, 1967, 140-41.

32 Douglas, 1793, vi.

Barrow he [Richard Fenton] opened near Frome, which from his account of it to me appeared curious & unlike ours in Wilts. There seems so much variety, and so little uniformity in the construction & contents of all our barrows, that I almost despair of forming any regular system respecting them. We have however the satisfaction of gaining daily information respecting them'.<sup>33</sup> Despair, however, fast turned to suspicion which provoked Cunnington to complain, 'you recommend that when I take the field I leave all my Systems at home & at the same time recommend me to a System of Mr. Lemans - which System I received from him some years ago - I bow with gratitude before Mr. Leman - yet a great deal in his System of Camps, trackways, etc. cannot be supported by the slender data he brings forward'.<sup>34</sup> Hoare replied in soothing terms that 'when I talked to you about Systems I can assure you I had formed none : either on Mr. Leman's opinions or my own : I only wished you to be perfectly unbiased, and to judge only from certain proofs',<sup>35</sup> but the fear never quite left Hoare that to systematize was to prejudge the evidence. Douglas he described as 'a very pleasant & well-informed Man, fertile in imagination, but too devoted to system', the latter remark provoked by his assessment of the British villages as the 'settlements of a roving clan' which was clearly incompatible with the finding of 'so many articles of refinement & luxury amongst them'.<sup>36</sup> Yet, although he did offer some observations on barrow forms and burial types in Ancient Wiltshire, both points on which Cunnington's opinion was solicited although to what effect is not known, Hoare clearly did not regard these as amounting to a system but rather as merely legitimate deductions from observed data since he remarked later in his text that

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33 Cunnington letters, Hoare 1, January 1804.

34 Cunnington letters, to Hoare 20, 31 March 1806.

35 Cunnington letters, Hoare 21, 9 April 1806.

36 Cunnington letters, Hoare 74, 1809.

round barrows 'display such a variety in their external design, and internal deposits, as to confound all system, provided we were inclined to form one'.<sup>37</sup> Even if Hoare did not feel his remarks constituted a system, this was not the general reaction to his efforts: the reviewer already quoted felt that 'he has reduced the subject to System, and has nearly invented a technical language in which to describe it' while Miles thought that 'after the minute researches of Sir R.C. HOARE, it is impossible to throw a clearer light upon the subject of British antiquities; his arguments are drawn from actual facts; his opinions as to the habits and customs of the Ancient Britons are forcibly conclusive; he has so minutely detailed his proceedings ... that little more can be advanced upon the subject'.<sup>38</sup> These remarks illustrate how remarkably limited were the expectations of antiquaries at this time. Most of what Hoare offered was a contribution to fieldworking analyses without a too vigorous attempt to integrate his excavated material. But what of Douglas whose Nenia Britannica Hoare thought showed 'great perspicuity' while Roach Smith, with the advantage of hindsight, could more accurately note that although 'well published and illustrated' it 'failed in enlisting followers among his contemporaries'?<sup>39</sup> This failure is largely to be explained by Douglas' obsession with magic which pervades the whole work and his frequent quotations from astrological textbooks such as William Lilly's History of his life and times, views and sources which had been rejected almost a century before, largely as a result of developments in the natural and social sciences, the growth of urban communities and the spreading ideology of self-help.<sup>40</sup> Consequently, they were far from amenable ideas for other antiquaries who, if not the vanguard of scientific and intellectual

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37 Cunnington letters, Hoare 49, November 1807; Hoare, 1812, 92.

38 Quarterly Review, 5, 1811, 118; Miles, 1826, 9.

39 Hoare, 1812, 19; Smith, 1858, 42.

40 Thomas, 1971, 765-800.



developments, were at least sufficiently in touch with these changes to find many of Douglas' views wholly unacceptable.

This has delineated, thus far, a rather dismal picture of limited aspirations accompanied by an unwillingness to venture. Stukeley had by the fantastic suppositions of his later life made most of his observations unpalatable to the next generation of antiquaries, Faussett declined to publish at all, Douglas involved himself in outmoded interests and attitudes, Hoare remained ever cautious lest he step beyond the limits of his evidence while Hayman Rooke and Samuel Pegge published insufficient of their evidence to support general statements.<sup>41</sup> How then are we to explain their interest and involvement? There were two elements which provided the framework for their activities, first the idea of progress and second the topographical tradition which was by the end of the eighteenth century, over two hundred years old. What we are witnessing throughout the eighteenth century, is an attempt to graft on to broader aims and attitudes the results of an experimental technique, excavation, without the willingness to acknowledge that the use of this new method offered the opportunity for a parallel stream of data and further that this new data was not easily subordinated to older philosophies.

The idea of progress has received such considerable study<sup>42</sup> that it does not require much comment here. However, Ferguson's remarks again provide a valuable background for the views of the antiquaries under consideration here. 'Nations', he thought, 'distinguished by the possession of arts, and the felicity of their political establishments, have been derived from a feeble original, and still preserve in their story the indications of a slow and gradual progress, by which this

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41 Pegge, 1785 does contain some rudimentary analysis.

42 Most notably Bury, 1920.

distinction was gained. The antiquities of every people, however diversified, and however disguised, contain the same information on this point'. Therefore, 'if in advanced years, we would form a just notion of our progress from the cradle, we must have recourse to the nursery, and from the example of those who are still in the period of life we mean to describe, take our representation of past manners, that cannot, in any other way be recalled'. Using such an approach, Ferguson decided that 'the inhabitants of Britain, at the time of the first Roman invasions, resembled, in many things, the present natives of North America : they were ignorant of agriculture; they painted their bodies; and used for clothing, the skins of beasts'.<sup>43</sup> Leaving aside the relative accuracy of Ferguson's final analogy, this was a most persuasive hypothesis. Hoare used it as the basis of his researches which were intended 'to throw some new light on the history of those Britons who formerly resided on our hills; to point out the sites they selected for habitation, and to mark their gradual progress from the bleak hill to the fertile valley, and from barbarism to civilization'.<sup>44</sup> It was a fine philosophy, eminently reasonable in broad outline, but the difficulties began with attempts to apply it to specific instances. As the quotation from Ferguson shows, analogies with non-European peoples were rarely very exact and antiquaries generally avoided them although Miles did draw a parallel with the inhabitants of the Friendly Islands.<sup>45</sup> Individual similarities were discernible but resemblances across a wide range of social actions and values were altogether problematic. To transform the general view of progress into a useful explanatory model required the development of a 'system' on the basis of the excavation results and it was perhaps his inability to achieve this that caused Hoare to be so sceptical about the desirability of systematization. For example, the

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43 Ferguson, 1767, 112, 114, 122.

44 Hoare, 1812, 1.

45 Miles, 1826, 4.



idea of progress embodied a crude chronological sequence, which Hoare himself used in his statement on the Deverel urns,<sup>46</sup> that demanded that the 'rudder' an object was, the older it was but, despite the subjective judgements involved, the essence of the matter was constantly in conflict with the associational evidence from the graves. Thus it was considerably more satisfactory to leave one's material as a series of unsystematized facts which substantiated the idea of progress in the most general way.

What may loosely be termed the topographical tradition is most readily seen in the manner of presentation adopted by barrow diggers. Fieldwork, stretching back through the activities of John Aubrey to William Camden and Edward Lhwyd, was the established method of antiquarian inquiry when the eighteenth century opened and through it the topographical record, embracing architecture, genealogy and heraldry as well as antiquities, had been greatly expanded. It did not become obsolete with the emergence of excavation as a separate methodology, although the latter required more specific aims than the collection of miscellaneous information which had characterised topographical fieldwork up to that point. Stukeley's excavations are the only ones which can be genuinely interpreted as undertaken to amplify his fieldwork observations and, even so, the issue is confused by the encouragement of his patron, Lord Pembroke. Thereafter, the relationship between excavation and fieldwork was less clearly defined in the efforts of the barrow diggers who nevertheless felt unable to abandon or ignore the demands of topography. In particular, most fieldwork was conducted on a county basis and gave rise to the production of lavish folios appropriate for the libraries of country houses, many of whose occupants would be suitably lauded in their pages.

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46 Miles, 1826, v.

Thus, when Douglas came to publish Nenia Britannica, the first English book wholly devoted to barrow digging, it was only fitting that he should have adopted the format in which all previous antiquarian information had been published. The tromp d'oeil affectations in some of the plates and the alteration half-way through of the system of foot notes may have been suggestive to some of a lack of organisation and idiosyncrasy on the part of the author but it was not in other respects remarkable. Moreover, despite the aspirations present in the title it remained essentially a local history book since most of the material discussed came from excavations in Kent. Since there is so little that is innovative in Douglas' style of presentation, it is somewhat surprising to find his work quoted as the model for Hoare's Ancient Wiltshire.<sup>47</sup> Before considering this further, let us first look at Hoare's presentation since he provides a more detailed exposition of the thinking behind his format than any other barrow digger in either the eighteenth or nineteenth century, with the possible exception of Pitt-Rivers. Hoare felt the obligation to publish very strongly and he chose to bring out his work in parts for two reasons: 'first, my anxiety to fulfil the promise I have long made to my friends, and the literary community. Secondly, to alleviate, as much as possible, the expense attending a work, where so many maps, and other engravings are absolutely necessary towards its proper illustration'. Such an approach was particularly feasible because of the manner in which he organised the book. 'In the proposed arrangement of this Work', he wrote, 'I shall divide our county into different stations, from which, as from head-quarters, I shall make as many digressions as distance and time will allow of for one day; and in naming them, I shall take the liberty of anglicizing a Latin word, and call them Iters'. Further, he went on, 'as an historian and topographer I think it a duty incumbent on me, so to lay down each track, and so to note each individual tumulus and earthen

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47 Woodbridge, 1970, 227; Atkinson, 1975, xiv.



work, that have occurred during my progress through the county, that the follower shall experience no difficulty in tracing out any particular object which may excite his curiosity. To effect this purpose, I must have recourse to maps, one or more of which will be affixed to each station'.<sup>48</sup> Hoare was, then, quite deliberately intending his book to be part of the mainstream of topographical writing and he specifically describes himself as a 'topographer' although, in view of the size of his volumes, one wonders how realistic his hopes were. Yet, none of the elements that Hoare singles out is present in Douglas' work, the latter's maps being rudimentary or non-existent and his descriptions of individual tumuli having no obvious geographical order. Moreover, there are clear signs of the influence of Nenia Britannica in Horsfield's book, where a similar ground-plan of a burial is to be found<sup>49</sup> as well as closely comparable vignettes, but this use of Douglas' book as a model only emphasises the disparities between it and Ancient Wiltshire. The latter is more closely akin to Baker's Northamptonshire or Nichols' Leicestershire than to Nenia. Similarly, the influence of topographical publications is to be seen in the format of the two journals of the late eighteenth century, Archaeologia and Archaeologia Scotica. Publication of such material was, as Hoare remarked, an expensive undertaking and Ancient Wiltshire cost him some £1342.<sup>50</sup> Towards the end of 1812 William Miller, the publisher of volume I, wrote to Hoare : 'the sale hitherto has not come up to our expectations, but the work is local - its an expensive one, not suitable to everyone's purchase - & its early days at present - & the times have been adverse'.<sup>51</sup> Unlike Ancient Wiltshire, Douglas' Nenia Britannica was published by John Nichols whose firm remained, throughout the late eighteenth and early

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48 Hoare, 1812, 1-5.

49 Horsfield, 1824, pl. v.

50 Accounts for Ancient Wiltshire.

51 Miller to Hoare, 30 November 1812 ; Wilts. CRO, Stourhead archive, 383. 907.

nineteenth century, by far the largest publisher of topographical literature, a fact explained not only by the Nichols' family's continuing personal interest in such studies but also by their position as one of the Parliamentary printers.<sup>52</sup> The profits from this would have more than covered the losses incurred with the topographical books. Undoubtedly, the considerable costs of the folio topographical format was a significant factor in its demise towards the middle of the nineteenth century.

In attempting to analyse some of those factors which lay behind the work of barrow diggers in the period before 1840 there has been considerable concentration on the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century figures, particularly Douglas and Hoare who dominated barrow excavations at that time. After Hoare, barrow digging waned, in company with all other antiquarian activities, until the renewal of interest after 1840. Several factors caused this decline, principally the ineffectual lead in antiquarian affairs given by the Society of Antiquaries under their president, the Earl of Aberdeen, and the feeling, expressed by Miles and already quoted, that Hoare had taken barrow digging as far as it was possible to go. The next significant group of barrow diggers was composed of men like Lukis and Bateman who did not see their excavations as part of a topographical study but placed instead the whole emphasis upon the value of excavation as an antiquarian methodology in its own right.

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52 Alford, 1965, 99.

### **3 Attitudes and presentation after 1840.**

The period after 1840 is characterised by a greater diversity of attitudes, not necessarily mutually exclusive, although none can be said to have resulted specifically from the study of material recovered in barrow excavations or indeed any other archaeological activity. They are rather adaptations from more general modes of thought current at the time. We are here concerned, of course, only with those which barrow diggers found particularly useful, while consideration of aspects which contributed to the general development of antiquarian activities is reserved for the final chapters. Equally, it is important to realise that this wider diversity did not represent a wholesale rejection of positions habitually adopted before 1840 but led instead to their modification and amendment in the light of the newer philosophies. Four aspects appear as significant factors in barrow digging attitudes after 1840 : induction, ethnology, race and social evolutionary theory. They are closely interrelated and did not find the clear demarcation which their treatment in this chapter might suggest.

Few barrow diggers make explicit reference to 'inductive reasoning' or 'inductive investigations'<sup>1</sup> but there can be little doubt that there was widespread support among such diggers for the efficacy of an inductive approach, if by that phrase we understand a belief in a pattern of reasoning which enables one to pass from statements of particular pieces of information to general pronouncements which not only summarise the matter contained within the statements of information but also expand our understanding beyond that summary. By far the firmest statement on the value of induction came from Thomas Bateman,

... we look forward with confidence to the time  
when ... the immense mass of invaluable facts and  
observations already accumulated, compared and

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1 For examples of those that did see Du Noyer, 1869; 40, Wake Smart in Warne, 1872, i and Mansel-Pleydell, 1884, 20.



generalized, and subjected to a process of induction, shall yield conclusions on questions that have hitherto been merely subjects of hopeless speculation. Such facts are obviously afforded by well authenticated and carefully described discoveries of remains existing in the tumuli or other burial places of an ancient people, ...<sup>2</sup>

It is unclear whether such figures as Bateman acquired their attitudes directly from the works of John Stuart Mill and like-minded men or through an intermediary source but there can be little doubt that 'a process of induction' held out the glittering prospect to antiquarian workers of transcending the mere description of discoveries and cataloguing of facts and arriving at a broader and deeper understanding of prehistoric man. Thus could the major barrow diggers give a firm intellectual air to what was otherwise an activity orientated towards collecting. Hoare had earlier in the century declined to excavate in north Wiltshire on the same scale as he had in the south of the county because 'though a further exploration might add new articles to our museum, it would not probably procure much additional information respecting the funeral rites of the Britons'.<sup>3</sup> Although his reasons for inactivity were undoubtedly more complex than he suggested, Hoare has touched on an important aspect of barrow digging for, without a change in philosophy and aspirations, it could only have become more blatantly a collecting activity bolstered by sterile justifications based on improved technique. The appeal of induction was that it offered just such a change and, moreover, at its heart lay the feeling that the more information one acquired the greater was the potential for that knowledge which was other than a summary of the facts.

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2 Bateman, 1861, iii.

3 Hoare, 1819, 93.

In this context it is valuable to recall Medawar's characterisation of inductivism : 'let us first assemble the data; let us by observation and by making experiments compile the true record of the state of Nature, taking care that our vision is not corrupted by preconceived ideas; then inductive reasoning can go to work and reveal laws and principles and necessary connections'.<sup>4</sup> Although Medawar admits that it contains an element of 'rhetorical overstatement' there is in this depiction a fine summary of how many barrow diggers saw the problem. Indeed the highly sequential nature of the procedure is inherent in Bateman's statement quoted earlier and nowhere in his work does he actually claim that he is subjecting the material to 'a process of induction', merely that when it is so subjected wider views will result. Bateman, like most of his barrow digging colleagues in the nineteenth century, was concerned with observation and assemblage of data but it was given meaning by the potential of inductive reasoning. Equally all barrow diggers in the second half of the nineteenth century, no matter how large or small their own **efforts were**, could feel that theirs was a valuable and worthwhile contribution. Such feelings lie behind the emergence of the doctrine of recording details, however slight, which dominates all archaeological work. Akerman, who remained unsympathetic to the excavation of prehistoric barrows, was 'nevertheless persuaded that such examinations are not altogether profitless, and that the gradual accumulation of the minutest facts regarding the use and object of these mounds may, in the end, materially enlighten the archaeologist'.<sup>5</sup> This was not an attitude that would have found much favour earlier in the century yet it is clearly implicit in Greenwell's remarks, some twenty years after Akerman's, that his own excavations were 'carefully and minutely observed and accurately recorded' and that,

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4 Medawar, 1969, 40.

5 Akerman, 1853, 482.

in the case of unrecorded work, 'what otherwise might have grown into an almost invaluable collection of facts has been entirely lost to archaeological science'.<sup>6</sup> That similar views prevailed until the end of the century is shown by Ward's approving suggestion that Micah Salt's motto should be : 'I dig for facts; let others theorise', for Salt was, after all, 'a digger - careful, observant, patient'.<sup>7</sup> Examples could be given endlessly from the barrow digging literature of the later nineteenth century with the same emphasis on facts recorded with a vision uncorrupted with theory. The acceptance of the notion that a viewpoint untainted with preconceived ideas, something inherent in the inductive process, was a real possibility perhaps explains the weak methodological criticism observable in even the highest levels of antiquarian thought during the nineteenth century. Greenwell, acknowledged doyen of barrow digging,<sup>8</sup> offered only the mildest rebuke to ignorant treasure-seekers and mere collectors<sup>9</sup> although we know from contemporary descriptions that he was a most forthright person in attitudes and speech.<sup>10</sup> This reluctance is not to be solely attributed to the gentility of the age for some, particularly W.C. Lukis, gave vent to their feelings but rather to the view, encouraged by a belief in inductivism, that correct motivation was the desirable quality and not an understanding of the range of possibilities based on a firm knowledge of previous work.

This is perhaps overstating the importance of the emergence of inductive reasoning and it would certainly be wrong to imply that the pre-eminence of motivation over methodological expertise was

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6 Greenwell & Rolleston, 1877, v.

7 Ward, 1900, 210.

8 See, for example, Ferguson, 1888, 117 and Parker, 1889, 338.

9 Greenwell & Rolleston, 1877, v.

10 See Bruce, 1905, 327-28 and Evans, 1943, 123-24.

universally recognised. One writer in 1853 asked,

... why not have a club of "delves", an exploration society, with its corps of engineers, draughtsmen, and scientific observers, whose business it should be to examine the primaeval sepulchres of the country, not idly, not irreverently, not as desultory diggers - but with due care, circumspection, and caution; noting down every peculiarity, making accurate measured drawings, and depositing, in a central museum, the crania, the arms, the implements, and ornaments, sure to be discovered in abundance?<sup>11</sup>

Equally, Mrs Armitage at the end of the nineteenth century felt that

... one of the great lessons of General Pitt-Rivers' work is that the spade, and the spade only, can decide the date of an earthwork or a barrow. The spade, moreover, must be an intelligent and instructed spade, or it will only destroy the evidence it is seeking to reveal. An amateur cutting into a barrow, or an earthwork, does not know what the questions are which have to be answered, and so he obliterates the answers to them. Minute observation is one of the most essential conditions of successful exploration.<sup>12</sup>

These are, however, representatives of relatively rare statements amid a welter of indifference to mastery of technique. Although both writers felt that matters might be improved, the difference in tone is particularly indicative of the changed attitudes which resulted from Pitt-Rivers innovative techniques. But the vast majority of barrow diggers worked before Pitt-Rivers and in the firm belief that a diligent and unbiassed approach would facilitate the maximal recovery of facts.

Moreover, it must be remembered that inductive reasoning was largely an attempt to synthesise scientific method and from that basis, to widen

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11 Graves, 1853, 296.

12 Armitage, 1895, 40.

the area of application of the same procedures and structure of laws as had been achieved in the natural sciences. Thus it formed part of the desire to construct an all-embracing science of man and, despite claims to the contrary by barrow diggers who necessarily saw their own activities as of fundamental importance, the excavation of burial mounds was largely peripheral to these wider aims. We cannot be surprised, therefore, that attitudes in the field of barrow digging tended to bear only tenuous links with the more general aspirations and hopes. Inevitably, this wish to study the totality of man involved prehistoric archaeology finding a more fruitful relationship with ethnology than with the more historically orientated medieval studies with which it was formally allied in the county and national societies.

Ethnology's contribution was two-fold for barrow diggers. The first may be summarised by a quotation from J.W. Lukis's account of the Gavv' Innis chambered barrow :

In considering the customs of an extinct race, we are led to examine those which prevail among the present natives of the south seas and other parts of the world, in order to find a degree of civilisation corresponding with this ancient people. In viewing the designs on the stones of Gavv' Innis, we are at once reminded of the tatooing on the face of the New Zealander.<sup>13</sup>

This is not, of course, a particularly new theme although the more explicit comparisons did accompany the newly-appearing and better-documented studies of non-European man. Indeed, Lukis's remarks are significant in their embodiment of a general statement before the particular parallel is drawn whereas later writers treat such remarks as understood and therefore unnecessary; Greenwell's work is studded with references to ethnological (or anthropological as it would, by then, have been termed) data, the appropriateness of which he

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13 J.W. Lukis, 1848, 277.



nowhere feels compelled to justify.<sup>14</sup> The barrow digging literature of the second half of the nineteenth century is characterised by gradual replacement of historical sources by ethnological information as the standard material with which to amplify and support both general and specific statements. The use of biblical and classical sources was not dramatically stopped but becomes of an altogether subsidiary nature. Bateman, in his second major work, combined ethnological and historical data although he expressed doubts about the validity of the latter material whereas Warne was altogether more traditional in his introduction with a much heavier reliance on classical sources.<sup>15</sup> Such a contrast is easily understood for Bateman was the major advocate of the new relationship with ethnology. Although not found in his earlier book published in 1848 he seems to have realised its importance soon after<sup>16</sup> and relatively quickly following the British Association's recognition of the individual status of ethnology in 1847.

The second contribution of ethnology was of an altogether different scale in its concern with general aims and attitudes for barrow digging thus acquired an involvement with considerations of racial theory and later a belief in social evolutionary theory. The latter received considerable impetus from the publication of Darwin's ideas in 1859 but it became part of the fabric of archaeological thought through the work of ethnologists and anthropologists like Lubbock and Pitt-Rivers. Before the mid-1860s, therefore, ethnology's integration with archaeology was almost wholly involved with racial matters and although never explicit, Bateman was clearly concerned with this

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14 e.g. Greenwell & Rolleston, 1877, 10, 17, 120.

15 Bateman, 1861, i-xiv; Warne, 1866, mopr, 1-26.

16 See Bateman, 1851.



aspect when he observed that 'quite recently ethnological science has been called in to contribute to the elucidation of matters hitherto considered as pertaining solely to archaeology, and that from this union of the two, discoveries may ultimately be expected, which will cast most unexpected light upon the early and pre-historic portion of the times occupied in the colonization of the western hemisphere'.<sup>17</sup> Paradoxically, the use of classical authors remained more firmly entrenched among discussions of racial history<sup>18</sup> because of its associations with philology which had earlier in the century been wholly concerned with Greek and Roman authors.<sup>19</sup> Bateman, though not ~~un~~influenced by philological ideas, was clearly sceptical of their relevance for barrow digging and, apart from Lyson's remarkable book and Wake Smart's equally remarkable chapter in Warne's Ancient Dorset which combines philological and racial interpretation in a wholly out-moded chronological framework, comparative philology seems to have been considered relevant only in the most general way by the majority of barrow diggers.<sup>20</sup>

Racial theory, particularly that concerned with the history of man, became a subject of great concern in the mid-nineteenth century so there is little surprising in its interest and appeal for those working in such a relevant field as barrow digging. For men like Thomas Bateman and Daniel Wilson, it offered major new opportunities to barrow diggers who through their work could contribute important statements regarding the early history of Britain and yet, some fifteen years later, Lubbock delivered only the most general and qualified remarks on the matter. Greenwell and Rolleston, some ten years later,

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17 Bateman, 1851, 210.

18 See, for example, the identification of prehistoric skulls with provincial Roman tribal names in Davis & Thurnam, 1865.

19 Burrow, 1967, *passim*.

20 Bateman, 1861, ii; Lysons, 1865; Warne, 1872, i-xxiii.

were scarcely a shade more positive<sup>21</sup> despite the work of several craniologists including Thurnam, whose conclusions Greenwell and Rolleston's data largely supported. What we should, therefore, be concerned with is not the appearance of racial arguments in the barrow digging literature but why the study did not become more obviously racially orientated. The answer lies partly in the direction racial studies took and partly in the organisational difficulties that accompanied the newly-emerged ethnological science.<sup>22</sup>

At the time when Bateman began extolling the value of a link between archaeology and ethnology in the early 1850s the benefits seemed real enough because the standard ethnological orientation, exemplified in the attitudes of Prichard and Latham, was essentially characterised as linguistic ethnology. There was little doubt in the central belief of original human unity (monogenesis) and the role of ethnology was to demonstrate that unity by providing information on the time between the dispersal of man across the earth and the beginnings of historical material for each nation. Such documentation relied heavily upon diffusionist and historical explanation, particularly comparative linguistics, with dependence on environment factors to clarify the problem of contemporary variations. Within this general viewpoint it is easy to understand how Bateman and others' enthusiasm for archaeological aspirations were in parallel with central ethnological aims. Yet even as this alignment was being formed it was being threatened by the emergence of a more strongly physical and anatomical approach to man together with the resurgence of belief in polygenesis or a multiplicity of races of man. Both Bateman and Wilson used the physical approach as demonstration of what ethnological methods could achieve without appreciating that it reduced the interest and value of data from the narrow confines of British prehistory for central

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21 Lubbock, 1865, 90-91, 116-17; Greenwell & Rolleston, 1877, 126-30.

22 Specific points not otherwise documented in the following section are more fully discussed in Bolt, 1971, 1-28 and Stocking, 1971.

ethnological questions, something that would not have resulted if the orientation had remained more obviously cultural. The apparent initial successes with the anatomical analysis of human remains from burial mounds disguised the fact that such an emphasis was leading into an ethnological dead-end.

Both monogenesis and polygenesis had considerable histories by the middle of the nineteenth century and, although polygenist thought had acquired support in France and America, the alternative hypothesis had remained the orthodox Christian viewpoint and accepted British attitude. The re-emergence of this old controversy took the emphasis away from matters to which British archaeology could make any contribution. Further, the polygenesisists, including Davis and Thurnam, were largely associated with the more physical, 'anthropological' approach using pre-Darwinian techniques from comparative anatomy. Although Bateman remained a supporter of monogenesis,<sup>23</sup> the adoption of polygenesis by Davis and Thurnam, who became the leading exponents of the ethnological methods in barrow digging circles, meant that the relative importance of racial analysis of material from burial mounds was dependent upon the supplanting of monogenesis by polygenesis as the orthodox position. This it failed to do for, although polygenist thought continued after and indeed felt supported by the publication of Darwin's views,<sup>24</sup> the latter provided the essence of a new approach based on cultural evolution. To argue this is to question Stocking's view that the emergence of more strictly physical, often harshly racist, approaches combined with an increasing interest in antiquities to give impetus to ethnological thought.<sup>25</sup> Nowhere do antiquaries suggest such a fundamental role despite their wish to invest their

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23 Bateman, 1861, iii-iv.

24 Stocking, 1968, 42-68.

25 Stocking, 1971, 374-75.

interests with importance and meaning but instead the emphasis is always on what ethnology has to offer antiquarianism. Moreover, to treat Davis as in any way representative, which Stocking does, is to ignore the fact that his interest and views, never orthodox even among those who shared them, held little appeal for his fellow-antiquaries who waited to be convinced of the efficacy of his approach. The essential weakness of such an approach as Davis and Thurnam adopted was that it required expertise not available to the normal antiquary, a factor which could only be overcome by the generation of a firm link between the racial information acquired from the skeletal material and the associated objects. Indeed Thurnam's later work, particularly the two long papers in *Archaeologia*,<sup>26</sup> can legitimately be interpreted as the search for just such a link as racial aspects' importance warned in the face of social evolutionary theory.

These discrepancies between ethnological and archaeological aims and methods were exacerbated by the institutional upheavals within ethnology. The Ethnological Society's foundation in 1843 has been generally interpreted as the result of a 'student party' breaking with the 'missionary party' in the Aborigines Protection Society<sup>27</sup> and although Stocking would see this view as oversimplified he accepts that there was a conflict 'if not of faction, then at least of purpose'.<sup>28</sup> The roots of the Aborigines Protection Society lay in the earlier efforts by Evangelicals and Quakers to secure the abolition of slavery, the achievement of which, in the early 1830s, left this essentially humanitarian society with the role of attempting to secure an improved attitude to the native peoples in British colonies. This was an altogether more difficult task for these new aims were less specific and consequently coherent, united policies were less easily formulated.

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26 Thurnam, 1869b; 1871.

27 Keith, 1917, 14; see also Curtin, 1964, 329-31.

28 Stocking, 1971, 371.

Failure to influence the Select Committee of 1842 appointed to look into colonial affairs led some to see the way ahead in concern with scientific rather than humanitarian considerations; the Ethnological Society aimed to satisfy this feeling and 'to complete the circle of Scientific Institutions' in London.<sup>29</sup>

Although active in the late 1840s the new society was in decline during the 1850s and by 1858 it had only thirty-eight paying members, of whom seven attended the anniversary general meeting.<sup>30</sup> There was a revival in the years following 1859 with Christy, Evans and Lane-Fox adding their names to a membership role that already included Davis, Thurnam and Beddoe. Quite the most important change, however, was the appointment of Hunt as joint secretary with Thomas Wright early in 1860. Within three years Hunt had resigned to form a separate organisation because of differences specifically related to issues of race. The issue itself was a trivial one involving the depiction of natives of Sierra Leone in the Society's publication but underlying it was Hunt's polygenist fervour, derived from Knox, in an organisation which had remained steadfastly dominated by believers in monogenesis.

Hunt's new society, the Anthropological Society of London, was to place much heavier emphasis on the distinctions between human races, in line with its founder's views, and to involve itself in more controversial matters relating to colonial affairs. Although Davis and Thurnam were attracted to this society and some of Thurnam's major works are to be found in its publications, the assumption of a more general role in political controversy weakened the chances of an explicitly racial approach taking over barrow digging studies. Later events suggest that Hunt's motivation was the establishment of

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29 King, 1844, 15-16.

30 Keith, 1917, 18.



a society which he could dominate and, despite internal dissension and frequent resignations, he succeeded in building a successful society which was fiercely antagonistic to the older Ethnological Society. It was not simply a hostility based on differences of attitudes to racial problems but a contrast in political involvements, compounded by varying reactions to Darwin. Hunt's resignation from the Ethnological Society coincided with Lubbock's election to its presidency and all the leading Darwinians remained in the older society, implacably opposed to many of the views and certainly the style of the Anthropological Society. Although numerically inferior, they represented a formidable opposition who successfully prevented Hunt and his followers from acquiring the status of orthodox scientific thought to which their support might have entitled them for Hunt's views found ready support in contemporary French, German and American anthropological thought and were not as heterodox as the ethnological faction's characterisations would suggest.<sup>31</sup> The success of the Darwinians is best understood in the context of the 'intellectual aristocracy' which has been noted as emerging at this time. By and large, it was composed of relatively wealthy men from an Evangelical or Nonconformist background who had turned to science and were, in the mid-nineteenth century, in the process of creating an intellectual elite who would become part of the scientific establishment over several generations.<sup>32</sup> The link was provided by allegiance to Darwin's evolutionary theory and, apart from Pitt-Rivers who was not primarily an excavator of burial mounds, only Greenwell of all the barrow diggers came close to penetrating their ranks, a fact which helps to explain why he became the accepted expert in the field of barrow exploration when his publications have so little to differentiate them from those of his contemporaries, other than perhaps length.

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31 Erickson, 1974.

32 Annan, 1955.



Various moves were initiated during the period of estrangement of the Ethnological and Anthropological Societies to bring them back into union. Huxley, who had been actively reinvigorating the Ethnological Society, was one of the leading participants in these developments. Perhaps to judge from his sympathetic treatment of Thurnam's views<sup>33</sup> he was, as something of a propagandist himself, less appalled by the Anthropological Society's postures and attitudes than his colleagues. These attempts failed, despite Hunt's death in 1868 and the succession of the more mild-mannered Beddoe, until a compromise was finally agreed in late 1870 and early 1871, and the first meeting of the new group, the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, took place on 31 January, 1871. Although they had compromised on the use of the term 'anthropological', something which long offended Lubbock, the ethnological faction seems to have offered little else for although the first few years were marred by dissension they managed to retain effective control of the new organisation. Thus, in this organisational development we can see anthropology shedding first its association with practical philanthropy and then after a more determined struggle its involvement with political racism and becoming, under the leadership of the Darwinian 'ethnologicals', a middle of the road science owing primary allegiance to social evolutionary theory. Necessarily then those who, like Thurnam, without being involved with the political racism of the Anthropological Society chose to support those who were, found the importance of their anatomical work minimised in barrow digging circles in favour of the new orthodoxy of cultural evolution.

The emergence of social evolutionary theory<sup>34</sup> as the dominant theme in anthropological thought during the last thirty-five years or so of the nineteenth century precluded the continuing development of racial

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33 In Laing, 1866, 83 & 85.

34 Specific points in this section, not otherwise noted, derive from the fuller discussions contained in Murphree, 1961 and Burrow, 1966.

studies as part of the mainstream of anthropological work. Tylor put the point quite bluntly in Primitive Culture :

These pages will be so crowded with evidence of such correspondence among mankind, that there is no need to dwell upon its details here, but it may be used at once to override a problem which would complicate the argument, namely the question of race. For the present purpose it appears both possible and desirable to eliminate considerations of hereditary varieties or races of man, and to treat mankind as homogeneous in nature, though placed in different grades of civilization. The details of the enquiry will, I think, prove that stages of culture may be compared without taking into account how far tribes who use the same implement, follow the same custom, or believe the same myth, may differ in their bodily configuration and the colour of their skin and hair.<sup>35</sup>

Although this is a firm statement of belief in the essential unity of mankind there are some indications that the preceding monogenesis-polygenesis debate had an impact on evolutionary anthropology.

Pitt-Rivers spoke of the usefulness of his collection in deciding the issue of 'the MONOGENESIS or POLYGENESIS of certain arts :

whether they are exotic or indigenous in the countries in which they are now found'.<sup>36</sup> These are suggestive terms in which to formulate

the question of diffusion or independent invention and Stocking notes that the cultural evolutionists, in adopting the idea of plurality of origin in the notion of independent invention, turned the polygenist argument on its head by making such diversity into evidence of unity of psychic make-up, the very thing which the polygenists rejected.

Such aspects, however, should not disguise the fact that the evolutionary anthropologists did not recognise race as an issue of substance.

The essentials of the evolutionary approach and their particular relevance to archaeological material were summarised by Lane-Fox

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35 Tylor, 1871, 7.

36 Flier describing the Pitt-Rivers collection : Pitt-Rivers Museum archives quoted in Stocking, 1971, 385-86.

in his description of the principles of classification which formed the basis for the arrangement of his own collections:

... it follows that, in studying the evidence of intellectual progress, the phenomena which we may expect to observe are firstly, a continuous succession of ideas; secondly, that the complexity of the ideas will be in an increasing ratio in proportion to the time; and thirdly, that the tendency to automatic action upon any given set of ideas will be in proportion to the length of time during which the ancestors of the individual have exercised their minds in those particular ideas.

Further,

if these savage races have been degraded from a higher condition of culture, then, seeing that sequences of ideas are necessary to the existence of any ideas whatever, we must inevitably find traces in their arts of those higher arts from which they descended. But if, on the other hand, they have risen from a lower state, and their present savage condition arises from their having advanced less rapidly than those races which are now above them in the social scale, then what are the conditions which we must expect to find prevailing amongst them?

We shall find, firstly, that the forms of their implements, instead of showing evidence of having been derived from higher and more complex forms, will, in proportion to the low state of their civilization, show evidence of being derived from natural forms, such as might have been employed by man before he had learnt the art of modifying them to his uses; and secondly, we shall find that the persistency of the forms is proportioned to the low state of their culture.

Now this is found to be the case with nearly every race of savages of whose condition we have any knowledge.

And finally, it must be noted that,

what the palaeontologist does for zoology, the prehistorian does for anthropology. What the study of zoology does towards explaining the structures of extinct species, the study of existing savages does towards enabling us to realize the condition of primeval man. To continue the simile further, the propagation of new ideas may be said

to correspond to the propagation of species. New ideas are produced by the correlation of previously existing ideas in the same manner that new individuals in a breed are produced by the union of previously existing individuals. And in the same manner that we find that the crossing of animals makes it extremely difficult to trace the channels of hereditary transmission of qualities in a breed, so the crossing of ideas in this manner makes it extremely difficult to trace the sequence of ideas, although we may be certain that sequence does exist as much in one case as the other.

Progress is like a game of dominoes - like fits on to like. In neither case can we tell beforehand what will be the ultimate figure produced by the adhesions; all we know is that the fundamental rule of the game is sequence.<sup>37</sup>

This statement, though long, contains many nuances which cannot be reproduced in a modern summary. In particular, the allusions made to zoology emphasise the clear kinship of these formulations with Darwinian ideas in biology although there is no simple parentage which can be inferred; Darwin, notes Burrow, 'was certainly not the father of evolutionary anthropology, but possibly he was its wealthy uncle'.<sup>38</sup> Indeed there were those, such as Bastian, who rejected Darwin but accepted cultural evolution.<sup>39</sup> This theory contained three elements of relevance to anthropology, although all were controversial. The first was that man was not outside nature but a part of it through sharing a clear relationship with the animals. Secondly, his views appeared to support those aspects of racial theory which saw differences in terms of environmental factors acting over a long time span. Finally, there was the principle of natural selection which entered sociology and anthropology in the unfortunate 'survival of the fittest' viewpoint. Of course behind Darwin was Lyell's uniformitarianism outlined in the Principles of Geology. Lyell's work assumed

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37 Lane-Fox, 1875, 299, 301, 308.

38 Burrow, 1966, 114.

39 Lowie, 1937, 30-38.

a continually operating law, the effects of which are still observable and from which could be inferred past processes. Further, his hypothesis necessitated an enormous time scale. The achievement of Lyell and Darwin was to show how the presently determinable laws of nature could indicate the causes of even the largest changes, provided a sufficiently long time scale could be accepted. The final part, as far as evolutionary anthropology was concerned, in this scientific support system was provided by the acceptance of a high antiquity for man following Prestwich and Evans' visit to the Somme gravels.

This series of *analogous* developments within the accepted spheres of science was important for the acceptance of such evolutionary theory by archaeologists for they too were seeking to have their subject sheltered under the prestigious umbrella of science and were, therefore, predisposed to adopt views, clearly applicable to their work, which furthered their aims. Such a position has, however, to be tempered by Burrow's observations that given the 'armchair' nature of Victorian anthropology the range of possibilities in the generation of new theory was strictly limited. Apart from Pitt-Rivers, sufficient of whose remarks have already been quoted to show his allegiance, the principal archaeological advocates of the new theories were not barrow diggers but those members of the anthropological establishment whose interests were strongly archaeological, Lubbock and Evans. In their works,<sup>40</sup> particularly those of Evans, can be seen the beginnings of typological analysis based on evolutionary premises that found its greatest expression in Abercromby's work on Bronze Age pottery.<sup>41</sup> For most barrow diggers these typological studies were an altogether too sophisticated

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40 Lubbock, 1865; 1870, Evans, 1864, 17-32; 1872; 1881; 1897.

41 Abercromby, 1912.



response to the new approach which was interpreted rather crudely as a resurgence of belief in progress, with the general implication that the 'ruder' an object was the greater its antiquity. There can be no doubt that the racial debate earlier in the century had temporarily weakened the appeal of progress as a chronological mechanism of explanation; Thurnam questioned Hoare's view that the greater simplicity of barrow form in north Wiltshire was attributable to the higher antiquity and greater poverty of their builders, preferring to see it as indicative of a different race.<sup>42</sup> Once again, however, it could be felt, as Ward did, that a study of archaeology emphasised man's progress towards civilisation.<sup>43</sup> Some workers adopted a less simplistic attitude. Stanley and Way felt that beakers, being 'beautiful vessels', should 'be assigned to a race that had comparatively made advancement in civilisation', remarking that 'it were scarcely needful to observe that careful comparison of the habits of savage races, within recent times, frequently presents to the ethnographer a clue amidst the dense obscurities of our own prehistoric age'.<sup>44</sup> While Greenwell thought that,

The great labour and pains bestowed upon the burial of the dead, the large mound, the deep grave, the various attendant ceremonies of the funeral, may not necessarily show any high advance in civilisation ... But, making allowance for this, we cannot look upon the barrows and their varied contents without being impressed with the belief that the semi-savage state had been well-high passed...

On the other hand,

There are ... some features pointing to a condition of things which ill accords with much advance beyond savagery.<sup>45</sup>

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42 Thurnam, 1860, 334.

43 Ward, 1874, 215.

44 Stanley & Way, 1868, 56 & 73.

45 Greenwell & Rolleston, 1877, 119.



Clearly, for Greenwell there were problems in applying the new doctrines but these difficulties must not be allowed to divert attention from the basic tenets and framework within which these remarks are framed. Indeed, such statements are consonant with Tylor's claim that

By comparing the various stages of civilization among races known to history, with the aid of archaeological inference from the remains of pre-historic tribes, it seems possible to judge in a rough way of an early general condition of man, which from our point of view is to be regarded as a primitive condition, whatever yet earlier state may in reality have lain behind it. This hypothetical primitive condition corresponds in a considerable degree to that of modern savage tribes, who in spite of their difference and distance, have in common certain elements of civilisation, which seem remains of an early state of the human race at large.<sup>46</sup>

Further, the mutual dependence inherent in Tylor's hypothesis did not cause much heart-searching among anthropologists or archaeologists nor weaken its appeal for either group.

Although the factors discussed above clearly influenced the attitudes of barrow diggers we cannot expect to see them strongly reflected in the ways chosen to present the material. Yet all are related to science because, for the Victorians, that was an ever-more prestigious pursuit, the club to which archaeology must acquire entrance if it wished to be recognised as intellectual effort of worth and importance. Scientific modes and attitudes became part of the fundamental philosophy and these aspects were reflected in the format adopted for communication between archaeologists, particularly the idea that the progress of a subject was to be measured in terms of accumulation, that knowledge once acquired remained immutable.<sup>47</sup> This was the belief that

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<sup>46</sup> Tylor, 1871, 21.

<sup>47</sup> Dingle, 1952, 98.

bolstered Mortimer when a correspondent in the Yorkshire Post described his barrow digging as 'a sacrilegious feeding of a vulgar curiosity' for 'scientific research is satisfied as to our British graves'. His reply was that 'almost every fresh barrow opened by competent hands discloses some new facts which had not previously been observed, thereby adding fact to fact, and thus increasing our knowledge of the people who inhabited these islands in the far distant past, and connecting them more closely with our own times. Moreover, when all barrows have been destroyed, a time 'fast approaching', the records of these excavations would form, together with museum objects, 'the only infallible proofs of the past existence of man and of his state of culture in prehistoric times ... and we need not ask what sentence the enlightened generations of the future will then pass upon the sentimental protests of our friend in the Yorkshire Post, and on all who sympathize with such narrow and unenlightened views'.<sup>48</sup> The responsibility of every barrow digger then was to record the facts since, as we have noted above, the impartiality of the evidence recovered was an important theme in the principles of induction; barrows were 'unexceptionable guides, speaking with no faltering accent, appealing to every man's senses, most reliable, and beyond suspicion of error, as unpolluted by transcriber or commentator, in short, the most credible and unsuspected witnesses we could desire'.<sup>49</sup>

Such attitudes inevitably hastened the break with long established topographical traditions in presentation for now antiquarian information was no longer one of those miscellaneous sections which comprised topography. Instead prehistoric material formed an important part of the science of archaeology and required documentation in a manner

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48 Mortimer, 1894, 23.

49 Smith, 1866, 98.

appropriate to its new position. Certainly, the topographical antecedents were not toally ignored after 1840. They can be seen in the range of information which Bateman sought to assemble in his Vestiges or in the large format adopted, to little other point, by Charles Warne in Celtic Tumuli but one may range against these Bateman's Ten Years' Diggings and Greenwell's British Barrows as examples of just how radical the changes were. In these latter two works there is no concern for integrating information into a continuous, flowing narrative and they were clearly considered by their authors to be primarily factual records, the comprehensive nature and importance of which was self-evident. Nowhere is the relationship between the two viewpoints better illustrated than in the work of Warne who was nurtured in an age of topographical studies but published almost all his work when the scientific approach was dominant. He made gestures to both sides and satisfied neither : Ancient Dorset was clearly intended as a piece of topographical description, 'undertaken from a sense of tribute to the ancient remains of my native county',<sup>50</sup> yet it opens with a section by Wake Smart entitled 'an introduction to the primeval ethnology of Dorset'. It was even financed by the then out-moded method of assembling a list of subscribers.

A similar dichotomy of aims is to be observed in the journals of the county societies. On the one hand they were conceived originally as repositories of miscellaneous fact supplementing earlier county histories<sup>51</sup> but on the other, the association which many societies enjoyed with natural history and the prevalling tenor of the age led them into a role whereby they became the principal publication medium for archaeological research. These journals form the single most

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50 Warne to F.C. Brooke, 13 October 1875 : letter in my possession.

51 cf. Surrey Archaeol. Collections, 6, 1874, vii-viii.

important innovation in the publication of archaeological data effected in the period after 1840 but, paradoxically, they were not the heralds of new or improved standards in terms of the material published. Their significance lies in the greatly increased opportunities they provided for the publication of small-scale work, a matter of great concern in a field such as barrow digging where this work might in aggregation amount to a considerable and valuable assemblage of information. Clearly, the willingness of county journals to publish small excavation reports encouraged both their production and the work that necessitated them, although some workers felt diffident about committing their results to print,<sup>52</sup> but equally the broader philosophy which laid great stress upon the importance of every fact lent considerable support to the concept of publication by societies. By the final decades of the century, the periodicals regularly carried notes written by those who felt that 'for the sake of recording all that is known of the history of British Barrows it is sometimes desirable to mention those cases (by no means infrequent) in which the antiquary is disappointed in his search for relics of the ancient burial'.<sup>53</sup> Unlike the volumes produced by the older national societies, the county organisations adopted the smaller, cheaper octavo size for their volumes which were after all mainly to grace middle-class homes not aristocratic libraries and there was a ready willingness to adopt the improved production techniques.<sup>54</sup>

Illustrations of the period have already been considered within the framework of a history of archaeological draughtsmanship<sup>55</sup> and only a few, brief supplementary remarks need to be offered here. In comparison with the preceding work, there is increasing use of the plan and section after 1840 although there is no clear relationship to

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52 e.g. Mawson, 1876, 14.

53 Cunnington, 1885a, 340.

54 Surveyed in Plant, 1965, 269-419.

55 Piggott, 1965.

the emerging 'scientific' outlook. Their use was certainly erratic and unsystematic while Greenwell never introduced them into his work even though this resulted in absurd demands being made on the reader:

In order to make the structure of the mound and the position of its contents intelligible, a point of measurement was taken from the centre of an imaginary circular mound at the east end of the north limb, making it 75ft. in diameter, which was the width of the mound itself at this part; and to this central point all the measurements quoted in the following account refer.<sup>56</sup>

Where plans and sections do occur, they have a very notional and idealised quality with the edge of the barrow being almost invariably drawn with a pair of compasses, a convention continuing right to the end of the century for it was a technique adopted by Mortimer in Forty Years' Researches, and excavated areas given a regularity which all other evidence suggests the original trenches never had. Often the illustrations are never referred to in the text and they are never other than crude diagrammatic expressions of the interpretations advanced. Equally capricious was the representation of small finds, the vast majority of which are not shown. This is an approach difficult to reconcile with the avowed intentions of recording every fact but is partly to be explained by the large categories in which contemporary analysis grouped finds and the failure to appreciate the typological elements inherent in the evolutionary anthropological approach. Earlier illustrations of the period, particularly those in Bateman's Vestiges and Warne's Celtic Tumuli show the influence of the topographical approach where an emphasis on crudeness and irregularity was itself an historical statement. It is not perhaps without significance that the most consistently accurate illustrations, fully integrated with the text, in an archaeological work before

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<sup>56</sup> Greenwell & Rolleston, 1877, 497.



Pitt-Rivers' lavish volumes, are the human skulls in Crania Britannica. There is no need to re-emphasise here the magnitude of Pitt-Rivers' achievement in terms of presentation in his series on Cranborne Chase. They were recognised at the time as 'epoch-making' although their immediate influence was small partly, thought the same commentator, because they were privately printed.<sup>57</sup>

I have tried in this chapter to tease out some of the strands from Victorian thought which barrow diggers found applicable to their work and which, unconsciously perhaps, moulded their attitudes. It can only be attempted in a generalised manner since so few excavators felt it useful or desirable to formulate statements concerning their philosophical attitudes to their interests. Clearly though, there was a distinct shift in emphasis away from historical approaches towards a greater unity with the social sciences in the field of prehistoric studies and this had considerable ramifications for the growth of the subject.

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57 Armitage, 1895, 35.



Their activities

#### 4 Planning, survey and excavation.

## 1 Planning

Planning, that is the long term organisation of barrow digging on a systematic basis, is very little discussed by barrow diggers, largely one imagines because their activities lacked the coherence necessary for the definition of specific goals. Only Colt Hoare and Pitt-Rivers ever undertook schemes which could be said to have been planned within the terms of the above definition and it is important to note that Colt Hoare was in no way interested in the collection of antiquities, that Pitt-Rivers collected with aims that wholly transcended the act of collecting and that both positions are unique amongst major barrow diggers.

Colt Hoare's planning procedures are already well described<sup>1</sup> but some points can be usefully made in order to emphasise his divergence from other workers. The scheme for a history of ancient Wiltshire was not his but it did provide sufficient of an idea for him to begin the development of a suitable framework to bring it to fruition. He organised the project and thereby gave direction to the activities of others : his remarks that some of the barrows 'had been explored a few years ago, by Mr. Cunnington, at a time when no idea was entertained of prosecuting his researches to the present extent, and when no very regular account was kept of his discoveries'<sup>2</sup> emphasise the aimless quality of much of the work before he took control and his claim to Cunnington that 'now we have got the business of exploring out of my friend Coxe's hands, we shall go on better and more rapidly. Crocker and I shall do more in one day

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1 Woodbridge, 1970, 187-234; Cunnington, 1954, 215-25; Annable & Simpson, 1964, 1-5.

2 Hoare, 1812, 166.

than he would have done in a week'<sup>3</sup> was no piece of idle bravado. Colt Hoare rapidly established a team of workers, each fulfilling some particular role. Furthermore, there is no doubt that a team-spirit was deliberately fostered by him for Phillip Crocker wrote to Cunnington of some digging at Everley which the latter had been unable to attend, in just those terms,

Well might you say how much you wished to have been with us - nor can I describe how repeatedly we all wished for you - such a feast of reason, and flow of soul I have seldom, if ever, enjoyed, nor perhaps ever shall again - The establishment was - as Sir Richard humorously expressed - "the most complete he has yet had" :- no less so than a Priest to grant us absolution - a Poet to immortalise, and raise in luring verse, the ashes of the Britons - A Bard to still the souls of departed heroes - an Artist to restore the costume of two thousand years, and a Patron of all that is good and great, to show the world thro' the dark labyrinth of long lost ages.'<sup>4</sup>

Yet the operations of this team were never to acquire rigidity such that, when Duke proposed his barrow openings at Lake, Colt Hoare wrote to Cunnington, 'I should not wonder if they were [to] apply to us at last for assistance - as this is the case I shall alter our plans and open no more barrows 'till I can attend myself in the autumn.'<sup>5</sup> Individual schemes as well as the furtherance of the general aims remained subordinate to the availability of personnel. It is in this light that we must interpret Colt Hoare's remarks that 'many a fine shaped barrow [at Avebury] courted my attention : but in vain. The system of British sepulture had been most completely investigated in South Wiltshire; and though a further exploration might add new

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3 Cunnington letters, Hoare 2, 1 April 1804.

4 Cunnington letters, P. Crocker 35, 1806.

5 Cunnington letters, Hoare 18, 23 March 1806.

articles to our museum, it would not probably procure much additional information respecting the funeral rites of the Britons'.<sup>6</sup> Although this argument has some substance, Colt Hoare is in effect acknowledging that the death of Cunnington in 1810 had robbed him of his barrow digging capability. Even before Cunnington's death, Colt Hoare had not been afraid to stop digging long barrows or barrows in low-lying, damp conditions after his experience had shown they did not provide sufficient information.<sup>7</sup>

All of these features are repeated in Pitt-Rivers' planning, his development of a team working within a framework of specific objectives and his flexibility which caused him to dig barrows in order to benefit from the experience of George Rolleston on a visit to Rushmore.<sup>8</sup> But his search for totality of information provided the difference since it led to the formulation of new excavation techniques. The influence of these techniques was initially small but it prevented future generations ignoring the sophistication of the whole approach by indulging in a welter of criticism directed at excavation techniques which was the fate of Colt Hoare. Moreover, major barrow digging was almost completed by the time of the publication of Pitt-Rivers' work.

For other barrow diggers John Merewether's diary provides a suitable summary of the lack of planning among them. On 18 July 1849, he arrives at the Waggon and Horses at Beckhampton and from there 'went to Avebury, after an interval of 30 years.' The next day was 'employed in visits to the tunnel [at Silbury Hill] and in obtaining leave to open barrows, successfully and without loss of time ...; made a circuit over the downs east of Avebury, Bye Hill Down, and

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6 Hoare, 1819, 93.

7 Hoare, 1812, 40, 65 & 92.

8 Pitt-Rivers, 1888, 1.

Hacpen, to select barrows for examination.' On the 20 July, he opened his first barrow in this expedition.<sup>9</sup> A similar lack of planning is observable in Mortimer's activities, which are exceptional in that they are well detailed in his publication. A comparison of the years in which he was active with the groups which he himself defined (fig. 1) shows that in most years his work was spread across several groups and that most groups were excavated in during at least five separate years, sometimes not even consecutive years. There could, of course, be exceptional reasons which would help to explain such an approach but the overall pattern is consistent with a lack of firm planning on Mortimer's part, together with the absence of any published statement explaining either his procedures or his activities. Such an interpretation would fit the more limited data available for other diggers and suggests that similar patterns to those of Mortimer would be presented by the activities of other serious barrow diggers.

## 2 Survey

No other aspect of barrow exploration emphasises the differences in approach of the early barrow diggers and those working in the mid- and late nineteenth century better than the attitudes to survey. Stukeley's fieldwork was primarily concerned with survey so it is not surprising that he relates some of his excavated barrows to his fieldwork illustrations.<sup>10</sup> The influence of the topographers, among whom is numbered Stukeley, is reflected in the small maps which Faussett included in his manuscript to show the location of his excavations<sup>11</sup> but flowers again with the work of Colt Hoare. Hoare had served a long apprenticeship in topographical affairs before he

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9 Merewether, 1851, 18.

10 Stukeley, 1740, 44.

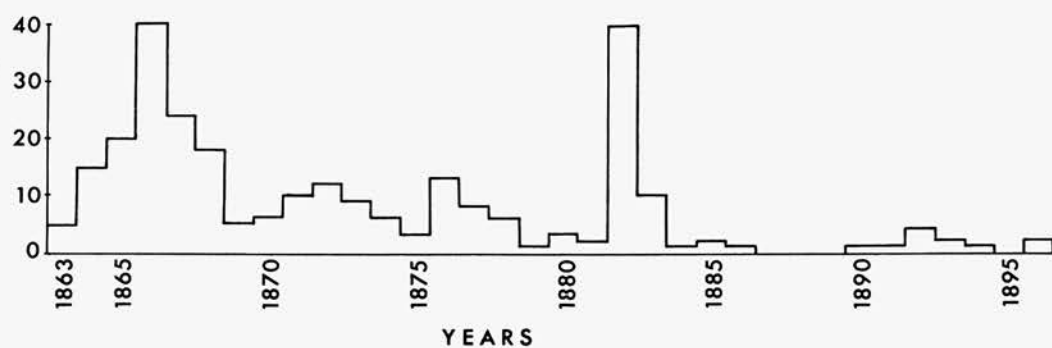
11 e.g. Smith, 1856, 134.



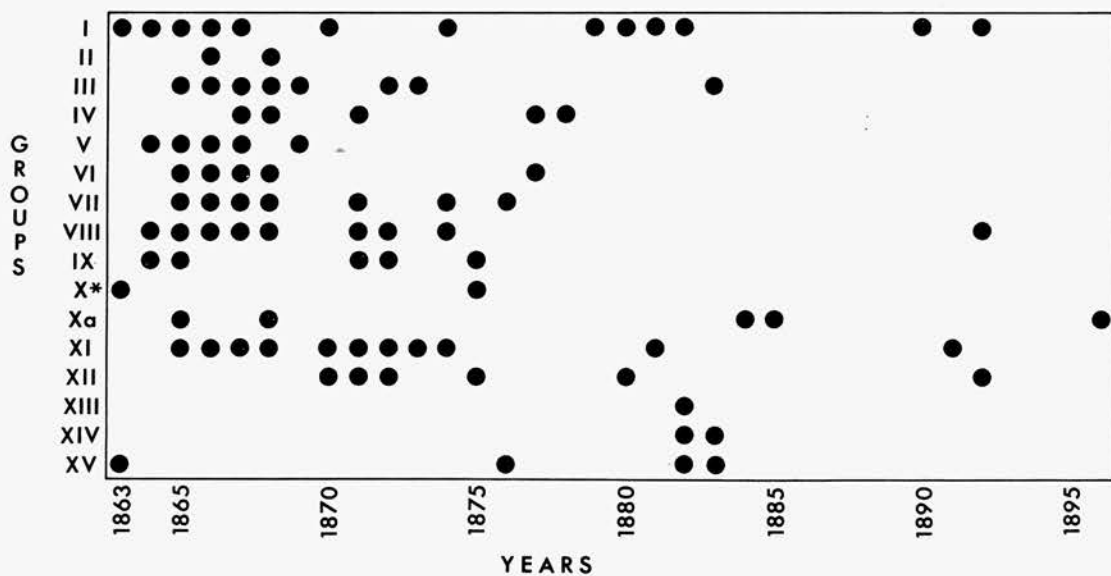
## J.R. MORTIMER : BARROW DIGGING CAREER

( Source : Mortimer, 1905 )

### BARROWS EXCAVATED EACH YEAR



### GROUPS WORKED IN EACH YEAR



\* This group contained only three barrows.

fig. 1

came to his work among the remains of ancient Wiltshire but his own inclinations were reinforced by the existence of an important group of topographers among whom the idea for some form of study of Wiltshire had originated. Several pieces of survey had been projected by these topographers before Hoare took much interest in his native county. Coxe had employed Abraham Crocker and his sons to survey Roman roads between Old Sarum and Winchester in 1801<sup>12</sup> and in 1802 John Britton had written to Cunnington,

It would be extremely interesting & important to take a correct map of the country for 1 or two miles round Stonehenge, and if I am not decidedly opposed by one or two learned antiquaries of the county I will certainly do it next summer, or employ some person to do it - showing the barrows, embankments, etc.<sup>13</sup>

Coxe may have believed that Colt Hoare had become 'barrow mad',<sup>14</sup> as a result of his interest in Wiltshire antiquities but he did not let this madness interfere with the survey work for the projected study. Seasonally, each year Hoare would personally ride sometimes accompanied by Phillip Crocker<sup>15</sup> who was to do the actual surveying and drawing of the sites discovered, to determine what was to be noted and which sites were to receive an individual survey. Crocker then undertook the work, often with leave from the Ordnance Survey for which he worked,<sup>16</sup> and Colt Hoare would then check the surveys on the ground. The latter process was no mere formality as his remarks to Cunnington show,

I have had another delightful ride this morning - first to Battlesbury where I examined Crocker's corrected plan attentively, & found it so incorrect that I must have him there in person again. It is quite provoking to find so many corrections necessary...<sup>17</sup>

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12 Woodbridge, 1970, 197-98.

13 Cunnington letters, John Britton, 10 December 1802.

14 Cunnington letters, Coxe 40, 1 November 1803.

15 Cunnington letters, P. Crocker 9, 23 March 1806.

16 Woodbridge, 1970, 212.

17 Cunnington letters, Hoare 53, 1808.

Hoare's remarks take on some significance in view of W.C. Lukis's remarks concerning the plan of Avebury of which he could not 'help thinking that Mr. Crocker was content to construct portions of his plan with Stukeley's before his eyes, and was not at the trouble of making a careful and independent survey of the entire monument for his magnanimous employer.'<sup>18</sup> Notwithstanding Lukis's comments, the results of Hoare and Crocker's cooperation were the remarkable maps and plans in Ancient Wiltshire which mark one of the high points in the integration of survey and excavation.<sup>19</sup> Hoare's interests in such matters led to his helping with the identification of antiquities on some sheets of the first edition of the Ordnance Survey 1 inch maps - 'Sir Rd. Hoare, to whom I gave a proof for correction, is delighted with the work and particularly with the antiquities, to which all the persons employed on the Survey of that Quarter have paid particular attention...'<sup>20</sup> In the decades after Hoare, as prehistoric studies moved away from a topographical base towards a closer alliance with anthropological research, the accurate survey of a barrow's location came to seem unimportant and few felt, as Barrow did, that a map of the layout of barrows excavated was a valuable adjunct to an account of the diggings and one which would 'form a most useful reference in regard to future excavations.'<sup>21</sup> W.C. Lukis was one of those in agreement with Barrow<sup>22</sup> and his interest in survey is admirably demonstrated by his large-scale work surveying megalithic sites with the sponsorship of the Society of Antiquaries of London<sup>23</sup> which, in view of his close connection with Greenwell, who

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18 W.C. Lukis, 1883a, 151.

19 For the accuracy that these surveys could achieve see the comparison between one of them and an air-photograph in Woodbridge, 1970, pl. 50b & c.

20 Mudge to Colby, 1 September 1818 : quoted in Close, 1926, 69.

21 Barrow, 1854, 162.

22 e.g. W.C. Lukis, 1867a, fig. opp. 85.

23 For details see Evans, 1956, 337-38.

supported his application to the London society,<sup>24</sup> makes it surprising that he was unable to prevail on Greenwell the efficacy of such work in his barrow excavations. With the inevitable exception of Pitt-Rivers<sup>25</sup> this disinterest in general survey continued until the end of the nineteenth century and such surveys as appeared were often only indirectly associated with excavation.<sup>26</sup> Alone of the major barrow diggers in the second half of the nineteenth century, Mortimer provided a map showing the barrows he excavated but he may have been influenced in this by his belief that the layout of mounds in barrow groups was related to constellations in the night sky,<sup>27</sup> an idea which found little support among his contemporaries.

Attitudes to the individual mound present a somewhat different pattern from that outlined above. Until the middle of the nineteenth century, there is little indication that other than the most cursory measurements of circumference or dimension and height were taken. An apt summary is provided by a small drawing in the Carrington papers showing a man pacing around the circumference of a mound to which is attached the wry title 'measuring the mound with calipers' and the accompanying text contains a discussion on how to measure the height of the mound which ends with the conclusion that 'one practical guesser is worth seven raw mathematicians.'<sup>28</sup> Some were making tentative moves towards a more comprehensive record of the mound before excavation. F.C. Lukis's practice had been to take 'an accurate plan and sketch ... of such appearances as present

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24 Lukis papers, personal correspondence, W. Greenwell to W.C. Lukis, 29 August 1882.

25 Pitt-Rivers, 1888, pl. XCIV.

26 e.g. Hutchinson, 1880, 151.

27 Mortimer, 1895b.

28 Carrington papers, The Barrow Diggers' Restitution, 9 & 126.

themselves before working' and the precept was adopted by his sons,<sup>29</sup> but it remained a commonplace to do no more than establish the cardinal points and take a few rudimentary dimensions before beginning the excavation.<sup>30</sup> Disinterest in the form of the mound is to be understood while the central shaft method was primarily in use for it did little damage to the external shape, even though most diggers recognised the alteration in barrow profiles that agricultural techniques were effecting and so could not justify their indolence on the grounds of it being a task for future workers. But as excavation became more extensive and the difficulties of accurate restoration more considerable, disinterest in the barrow's external form and a consequent belief in the unproductiveness of such matters are the only explanations for the failures to survey the mounds. Pitt-Rivers began the reversal of these trends, although initially he only took a profile across the mound with aid of a 'spirit-level'.<sup>31</sup> However, he adopted contouring in his work at Cranborne Chase,

The contours of this, as in all other cases, show accurately the form of the slopes before the Barrow was touched, and it will be seen, that very slight trace of a ditch is perceivable, the contours being in 2 inches vertical height. So shallow indeed was the depression of the Ditch upon the surface, that by the eye only, it might easily have remained unnoticed; but contouring brings to light hollows which to an inexperienced eye are scarcely perceptible.<sup>32</sup>

This represented a major development when compared to Faussett's use of low sunlight to recognise low features<sup>33</sup> but it came too late to influence many of the barrow diggers in this study. St. George Gray,

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29 F.C. Lukis, 1845b, 223; Lukis papers : F. du Bois Lukis in *Collectanea Antiqua*, 5, 398.

30 Llewelyn, 1856, 64.

31 Lane-Fox, 1877a, 280; 1877b, 290.

32 Pitt-Rivers, 1898, 136.

33 Smith, 1856, 99.

one of Pitt-Rivers' assistants, did use it in the first years of the twentieth century but even he was prepared to sacrifice such surveys in the face of limitations of time and cost.<sup>34</sup>

### 3 Excavation

Few barrow diggers were prepared to venture beyond a bald statement of the technique employed when presenting reports of their activities. Although they often criticised their predecessors for their inadequate efforts, usually in a completely unspecific manner, there was a general unwillingness to advocate a cogent argument for any particular technique. Experience was the factor that controlled technique, both collective and individual contributing although in differing degree depending on the number of barrows opened. The individual who opened barrows on a small number of occasions seems to have been wholly influenced by the collective experience, particularly after the mid-nineteenth century when it could be easily shared through the county journals, whereas the more important barrow diggers often experimented in their early days but refined and narrowed their range of techniques as their experience grew. The interlocking of previous research and personal knowledge is finely illustrated by Joseph Anderson who, speaking of the long cairn at Camster, wrote,

Looking at the cairn sideways, it had the appearance of a number of hummocks of stones joined on to each other along the ridge. This turned out to be the key to the interior arrangement, but having in former instances found the chamber opening midway between the horns at the highest end of the cairn, we set to work there in the belief that there the entrance passage would be found.<sup>35</sup>

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34 Gray & Prideaux, 1905, 8 & 25.

35 Anderson, 1869, 221.



While nine years later he said of his work on the round cairn at Collessie,

As this the first cairn of the Bronze Age that I have examined, ... my experience among the Stone Age cairns (which has been somewhat peculiar) was of no use on this occasion, and it was more a happy chance than anything else that led to the finding of the deposit with the dagger-blade on the first day's digging.<sup>36</sup>

Although it deserves strong emphasis there is little surprise in experience performing this role but more important is the identification of what factors brought about changes in technique. Given that the basic motivation in all barrow digging in the period under discussion was the exposure of the burials and the accompanying objects the natural technique to adopt was the central shaft on the assumption that barrows covered a single burial beneath the apex of the mound. The growing realisation after 1820, in a rather hazy period of barrow digging, that mounds could and generally did cover more than one burial, perhaps aided by Miles' discoveries in the Deverel barrow and by increasing degradation of mounds by agricultural techniques, led to a multiplicity of techniques including the trench across the mound, which although criticised occasionally as inadequate,<sup>37</sup> became by far the most popular of methods. A very few antiquaries realised the improved chances for structural analysis that such practices offered<sup>38</sup> but it was in the main a pious adoption of new techniques to achieve the same goal. Some justification for the new methods was found in discoveries made during the re-opening of mounds 'inadequately opened' by another technique on a previous occasion. Multiplicity of burial logically pointed towards total excavation but this was not seriously advocated as a standard

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36 Anderson, 1878, 445.

37 Neville, 1847, 359.

38 W.C. Lukis, 1867a, 85-87.

procedure until Pitt-Rivers proposed it in 1898<sup>39</sup> because scholarly aims had to be reconciled with the expenditure of time and money.

The techniques which came into common use after 1840 were a compromise between research and cost. James Ruddock, who, exceptionally, did his work without labourers on most occasions,<sup>40</sup> demonstrates this compromise. His work, as detailed by Bateman, show that large mounds were always excavated by the quickest procedure, a central shaft, as were most of the barrows excavated during the winter months when daylight was shortest. Similarly, the regular and almost ritualistic advocacy of accuracy and care<sup>41</sup> was not allowed to influence matters when shortness of time demanded unorthodox techniques or when no signs of a burial were apparent.<sup>42</sup> Clearly, when the prime motivation was so specific and the general aims so ill-defined much technique was an uneasy and unrealistic compromise between such aspects and the more practical matters concerning time and expense.

#### i The central shaft.

The sinking of a central shaft from the apex to the base was the earliest and simplest form of opening a barrow. It owes this priority to its being 'the shortest way of arriving at the probable place of deposit' as Thomas Wright succinctly remarked in his description of some of Edward Tindall's barrow excavations in Yorkshire.<sup>43</sup> This method is the one most firmly established in modern minds as the

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39 Pitt-Rivers, 1898, 138.

40 Bateman letters, W. Bowman, October, 1849.

41 e.g. Douglas, 1793, 50, f.n.; W.C. Lukis, 1871, 124-25.

42 e.g. Bateman, 1848, 75; 1861, 119.

43 Wright, 1861, I, 25.

typical technique of the pre-twentieth century barrow diggers but such an interpretation is insecurely based in the evidence. Its use was rare after the mid-nineteenth century and although it had been heavily predominant before that time there had been no exclusiveness about its employment.

Stukeley has left insufficient record of the technique he used but where he does discuss the matter he appears not to have used a central shaft, perhaps because he felt the latter method too obvious to require comment. Such would seem to have been the case with Faussett who could not have examined the number of graves in a day that he did without a simple central shaft technique. Other diggers in the eighteenth century have left ample record that this was their normal procedure and as such required little more than a bald statement confirming its use.<sup>44</sup> The method remained popular with excavators early in the nineteenth century. Colt Hoare, speaking for himself and Cunnington, describes how 'adopting our usual maxim of *in medio tutissimus*, we attacked its centre';<sup>45</sup> lesser diggers did likewise, particularly in Dorset where there seems to have been much ill-recorded digging in the early decades of the nineteenth century.<sup>46</sup>

But the impending decline of the method is signalled in a note by Woolls to The Barrow Diggers,

The way to open a Barrow, is either to remove the mound of earth entirely, or to make a section through it at least six or eight feet wide from north to south, or from east to west, or to sink down the centre from top to bottom.<sup>47</sup>

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44 Preston, 1776, 273; Douglas, 1793, 99-100 (Dr. Mortimer) & 160-61 (himself); Milner, 1790, 898-99; Bateman, 1852, 185-86, 188 (Hayman Rooke); Warne, 1866, tovp, 6 (Mr. Hawkins).

45 Hoare, 1812, 195

46 Repton, 1812, 354; Rackett, 1814, 332; Cunnington letters, P. Crocker 46, 18 December 1807; Rackett papers, W. Miles, 21 May 1828, D. Solly, 1840 : Dewar, 1965, 54-55, 76-77.

47 Woolls, 1839, 54.

The prominence given in this quotation to total excavation and trenching in preference to a central shaft indicates the weakening of the latter's appeal as an appropriate procedure. During the next twenty years, its use was to be reduced to a minimal amount. Some who had commenced their barrow digging career earlier in the century continued to favour it as did Merewether in his diggings in north Wiltshire during 1849, when he even sought to adapt its use to the excavation of long barrows,<sup>48</sup> but it became more and more the technique of the beginner and the ignorant. Bateman and Mortimer employed a central shaft occasionally in their work but both later recognised that by so doing the barrows had been 'imperfectly opened' and a second opening was usually attempted, while Hutcheson records its use at the end of the century by a landowner exploring a cairn at West Mains of Auchterhouse.<sup>49</sup> Similarly, Warne and his friends in Dorset continued to adopt a central opening until into the second half of nineteenth century.<sup>50</sup>

Although criticism of the technique mounted during the second half of the century it failed to eradicate the use of a central shaft. Much of this criticism was cogently argued particularly by W.C. Lukis, despite his father's adoption of the method for his excavations at Bircham,<sup>51</sup> but much just referred to the mound being left 'very often terribly mutilated and blundered'.<sup>52</sup> Only Thurnam sought to answer the developing attack,

A few words may be added on the mode of opening barrows. Like Mr Cunningham and Sir R. C. Hoare, our plan has been to dig a hole, ten or twelve feet square, in the centre of the mound; and

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48 Merewether, 1851, 19, 21, 41.

49 Bateman, 1848, 35 & 48; 1861, 71; Mortimer, 1905, 46 & 106; Hutcheson, 1898, 206.

50 Warne, 1866, mopr, 41, cfpf, 6 & 10 (Shipp), 16 (Wake Smart), 25 (Barnes).

51 F.C. Lukis, 1843, 14.

52 e.g. W.C. Lukis, 1867a, 85-87; Atkinson, 1891, 139.

to sink a shaft from the top to the bottom, until the undisturbed chalk rock is reached, and the original interment disclosed. By this method, when carefully filled up and the turf replaced, the external form of the mound is hardly at all affected; and, as Sir R. C. Hoare observes, barrows so opened scarcely bear the appearance of any examination. It is the more desirable to allude to this point, as in the adjoining county of Dorsetshire, the much more costly and tedious method of cutting a trench through the entire mound seems to be the plan still usually adopted. The external form of the barrow is by this means much more defaced; though except in rare cases, such an extensive section cannot be requisite for the full disclosure of the contents of the tumulus.<sup>53</sup>

Leaving aside the erroneous claim for Dorset diggers which seems largely based on seeing the Culliford Tree barrow excavated but not backfilled, it is not difficult to understand why Thurnam flew so much in the face of contemporary antiquarian attitudes in this matter. His prime concern was the establishment of correlations between barrows and the racial definition of their builders through a study of the skulls. This necessarily required the acquisition of such remains from the primary burials associated with the construction of the mounds which experience had suggested occupied a central position on or under the old land surface and further, this study had led to a realisation, for the first time since Colt Hoare, that external form might well have some significance. Thus, for Thurnam, the central shaft offered the most satisfactory manner in which to acquire the important evidence consonant with the minimum disturbance of the external form of the barrow. It was not an argument that appealed to his fellow antiquaries.

But the use of a central shaft continued in three specific types of excavation, where there was insufficient time for any other method, presumably on the principle that some excavation was better than no excavation,<sup>54</sup> where the barrow was particularly large and could only

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53 Thurnam, 1860, 335.

54 e.g. Parfitt, 1880, 121; Cunnington, 1860b, 163.



be opened by this method within the demands of time and cost,<sup>55</sup> and finally in the excavation of chambered and unchambered cairns. Cairns clearly offered more difficult problems than barrows in terms of excavation and the creation of a central shaft with sloping sides retained its attraction, at least for some, as a relatively safe and efficient method of digging.<sup>56</sup> These characteristics applied even more forcibly to chambered cairns where there could be quite dramatic savings in effort resulting from breaking into the chamber from above,<sup>57</sup> even when the chamber's collapse was suggested by the apex not being 'by any means clearly defined'.<sup>58</sup> The chambered cairn could, of course, be more legitimately excavated by a central shaft because its contents were restricted to readily definable structural features.

## ii The trench

Trenching was the technique of the second half of the nineteenth century when it became the recognised mode of barrow opening, although it had been used occasionally earlier than this.<sup>59</sup> As has been already noted, the reasons for it supplanting the central shaft are obscure, for while a few excavators were beginning to appreciate that structural information might be obtained from the excavations, most diggers gave no indication of having this appreciation and yet still adopted the trench as their normal method. These two groups were perhaps not as separate as their writings would suggest since the advantage of the trench may have been connected with the

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55 e.g. Beldam, 1861, 306; Borlase, 1873, 426.

56 e.g. Jopling, 1846, 451; Ffoulkes, 1852a, 65; 1852b, 97; 1852c, 215; Anderson, 1872, 294.

57 Raphoe, 1806, 409; Anderson, 1869, 217.

58 Rhind, 1854, 102.

59 e.g. Head, 1773, 55; Low, 1776, 276; Preston, 1776, 273; Riggs, 1869, 157 (John Bell in 1815).



improved opportunities for the early recognition of the grave. This particular structure was always the prime interest of barrow diggers and there is good reason to believe that little care was exercised until signs of a burial were come upon, witness the explanation for the breaking of a bead accompanying a Saxon burial in Stand Lowe : Bateman remarked that 'there being no indication of bone, or change of colour in the soil, the scrupulous care, so necessary on these occasions, was not used.'<sup>60</sup> Such indications as did not obligingly present themselves to Bateman on this occasion would be more easily discernible in the face of a trench being cut through the mound than in the floor of a central shaft.

Almost every point of the compass was chosen for the excavation of a trench although the cardinal points were particularly popular and trenches lying east-west or north-south are commonly described in the literature, possibly because this became a short-hand approximation for the orientation of the trench. Most popular, however, were trenches aligned north-west/south-east : 'we made a wide cutting', wrote Greenwell, 'from the south-east side, in the hope of coming upon secondary interments, which are usually found in that position.'<sup>61</sup> Presumably this is the explanation of other trenches so aligned. Petrie cut his trenches north-east/south-west, an uncommon orientation because that was 'the direction in which I had frequently found the cists.'<sup>62</sup>

Once generally accepted, four major forms of trench excavation are definable. First, the most common form was a single trench excavated from the side of the mound towards and embracing the

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60 Bateman, 1848, 75.

61 Greenwell, 1874, 22.

62 Petrie, 1857, 59

centre.<sup>63</sup> Second, less common but still popular was a trench across the mound from one side to the other.<sup>64</sup> Third, two trenches cut from the edge to form a right angle at the centre of the mound<sup>65</sup> and fourth, two trenches forming a cross at the centre of the barrow<sup>66</sup> were altogether rare. There were, of course, many individual variations on these four basic approaches as when, on one occasion, Samuel Carrington chose to excavate a barrow by three parallel trenches.<sup>67</sup> Further, many of the final patterns formed by the excavations were the product of circumstance. Failure to find an interment often led to further trenches being cut and this is particularly emphasised by trenches which were cut from the centre towards the periphery, presumably after a central shaft had been made. The pragmatism involved in the use of trenches and the clear correlation between their use and the absence of discoveries, together with the adoption of many barrow diggers of two or more techniques often on the same day's digging, weakens any argument that a change in technique is a reflection of new philosophies or aims. One must be cautious in accepting statements concerning technique at their face value : Greenwell described his technique thus,

My practice has always been to drive a trench, the width of the barrow as it was originally constituted and before it was enlarged by being ploughed down, from north to south, through and beyond the centre. I have not always thought it necessary to remove the whole of the north and west sides,

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63 F.C. Lukis, 1843, 13; Bateman, 1848, 28, W.C. Lukis to F.C. Lukis, 2 October 1870 : Lukis papers, Pre-Roman period, Great Britain, 2; Warne, 1866, mopr, 28; Pennington, 1875b, 378; M'Crie, 1881, 71; Anderson, 1891, 22; Atkinson, 1891, 142; Evans, 1901, 8; Goddard, 1902, 224; Coffey, 1905, 14.

64 Chester, 1859, 264; Warne, 1866, mopr, 47; Lane-Fox, 1877b, 290; Read, 1895, 243; Hancock, 1896, 22-23; Abercromby, 1905c, 179; Mortimer, 1905, 1.

65 Davies, 1857, 302-03; Brodie, 1872, 151; Hall, 1886, 251-52; Hamilton, 1891, 25.

66 Llewelyn, 1856, 65; Lee, 1858, 170; Hall, 1867, 155; Parfitt, 1880, 120; Stewart, 1884, 376; Fortey, 1885, 445; Goddard, 1894, 280; Abbott, 1896, 132.

67 Bateman, 1861, 116.

as they are generally found to be destitute of secondary interments; in very many cases, however, I have turned over the whole mound.<sup>68</sup>

Such a clear statement that Greenwell primarily used the trench was prompted by a condemnation of central openings only, yet recent re-excavations of mounds opened by Greenwell show his diggings were often only a central opening;<sup>69</sup> the trench is the least precisely defined of all barrow digging techniques.

Trenches had always been in vogue for the opening of long barrows in which the position of the interments was less easily predicted. Lord Winchelsea had used them in his excavations at Juliberries' Grave early in the eighteenth century and Cunnington and others had done likewise.<sup>70</sup> This unanimity in the use of this technique was broken only by Pitt-Rivers, controlled by his desire for totality, in his work on Wor Barrow.<sup>71</sup> Similarly, it is possible that those working mainly in Anglo-Saxon tumuli adopted the use of trenches earlier than those concerned mainly with prehistoric mounds, influenced by the need for trenches in flat cemeteries for Akerman makes the passing remark that 'when opening several barrows on the South Downs, some years since, we found one which had been partly explored, two trenches having been cut through it at right angles, perhaps by some person who had been accustomed to researches in Anglo-Saxon tumuli.'<sup>72</sup>

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68 Greenwell & Rolleston, 1877, 27, f.n. 1.

69 e.g. Coombs, 1974, 4, fig. 3.

70 Douglas, 1793, 103; Cunnington papers, III, 26.

71 Pitt-Rivers, 1898, 74.

72 Akerman, 1847, 15, f.n. 25.

### iii Excavation of the central area.

Excavation of a rectangular or square central trench, often of considerable dimensions was most often used by Mortimer, who adopted this procedure in fifty-six percent of the barrows he dug where he provides any indication of the technique employed. It was not, as has been claimed,<sup>73</sup> a method he favoured in his early excavations but one which he used throughout his digging career;<sup>74</sup> the apparent bias towards his early years is a product of the high level of his activity in those early years (see fig. 1 ). Mortimer was quite willing to cut small trenches if his initial large trench failed to disclose the burials and he often employed probing as means of discovering the interments in his central excavation.<sup>75</sup> On occasions he first delineated the square by a narrow trench around the borders but it is unclear whether this was the normal procedure.<sup>76</sup>

The method was merely a rather more sophisticated version of the earlier central shaft, coming as a response to the recognition of the possibility of a multiplicity of burials under a mound. Cunnington's intended large square cutting in the Hatfield barrow,<sup>77</sup> although probably aimed at ensuring that a burial was discovered, can be interpreted as an early version. Carrington used it occasionally on some of the Staffordshire barrows he excavated and it was adopted intermittently by others.<sup>78</sup> Certainly, the larger excavated area and the neatness suggested by the squareness of the cutting has

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73 Marsden, 1974, 109.

74 He was still using it in 1894 : Mortimer, 1905, 350.

75 Mortimer, 1905, 45 & 131.

76 *idem*, 122.

77 Hoare, 1819, 6.

78 Bateman, 1861, 164 & 167; Woodruff, 1874, 21; Abercromby, 1903, 181.

meant that this method has not attracted the opprobrium heaped on to the central shaft, a technique to which it is clearly akin.

#### iv "Turning over".

Turning over is a phrase which occurs occasionally in the published reports of barrow excavations, more especially in those of Greenwell and Mortimer, and it generally involved the total excavation of the mound. The procedure was not Greenwell's regular practice but it was done 'in very many cases'.<sup>79</sup> Its use seems to have been, at least for Greenwell and Mortimer, primarily reserved for those mounds so reduced and distorted by agriculture that it was no longer possible that the centre, as they saw the mound, bore any relationship to the original apex or else for mounds which did not produce burials when investigated by more regular techniques,<sup>80</sup> although Faussett had had to resort to its use with a low bank at Beakesbourne which he knew contained burials but which offered no indications as to their disposition.<sup>81</sup>

Other workers used the method occasionally but what prompted its adoption is unclear. Certainly, its infrequent use produced some rather bizarre adaptations - Cantrill turned over a circular area sixteen feet in diameter while leaving an annular border three feet wide around the outside untouched when he excavated a cairn at Ystradfellte and F.G.H. Price turned over all of a barrow at Colwinston, Glamorgan except 'a small portion at the north-west end which, judging from the former experiences of diggers rarely contains any remains of burials'.<sup>82</sup> Both H. Smith and J. Ward

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79 Greenwell & Rolleston, 1877, 27, f.n.

80 e.g. Greenwell & Rolleston, 1877, 202; Mortimer, 1905, 71 & 81.

81 Smith, 1856, 150.

82 Cantrill, 1898, 249; Price, 1887, 433.



turned over barrows while at the same time excavating others by more usual techniques.<sup>83</sup> Just exactly what turning over meant is suggested by Robert Mortimer's account of the excavation by Greenwell of barrow XLIX at Helperthorpe in November 1866. 'The tumulus was', he wrote, 'trenched over with four-tined forks and shovels in a hurried manner by six or seven men as if by 'takework', a method not at all suitable for making antiquarian researches on a scientific principle'.<sup>84</sup> This may not have been wholly typical since Cantrill claimed the basal deposits of his cairn 'and upper six inches of the underlying gravel' were 'thrown out and searched a spadeful at a time'.<sup>85</sup>

#### v Tunnelling.

Tunnelling was, of course, the rarest technique employed in barrow digging since few mounds were of sufficient size to justify its use, but its use demonstrates the very considerable lengths to which some were prepared to go in order to explore a particular burial. It is all the more remarkable when one considers that Colt Hoare and Cunnington's work, undertaken before the first recorded use of a tunnel, had shown that there was no correlation between the size of the barrow and the richness of the interment beneath. Three of the four instances when the use of a tunnel was contemplated were, therefore, connected with barrows which, not surprisingly, held particular attraction for the excavators : the appeal of Silbury Hill, the largest apparently sepulchral mound in Britain, for Dean Merewether and of the remarkable Bartlow Hills in Essex for John Gage (later John Gage Rokewode) is easily appreciated whereas

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83 Smith, 1870, 66; Ward, 1888, 50.

84 Quoted in Hicks, 1970, 310.

85 Cantrill, 1898, 249.

Gib Hill, 'connected with [Arbor Low] by a serpentine ridge of earth', had been 'ever reckoned ... to be of more than common importance' by Thomas Bateman who believed 'that a successful excavation of it might yield some approximate data respecting the obscure period of the foundation of the neighbouring circle'.<sup>86</sup>

Both Merewether and Gage were faced with little practical alternative to the adoption of tunnelling if they wished to explore the mounds which particularly interested them and consequently their approach was a good deal more sophisticated. Gage began with a section cut into the mound to a depth of sixteen feet before commencing on a tunnel,

fifty three feet long to the aperture of the place of sepulchral deposit, six feet two inches high, and three feet wide in the average, until within thirteen feet of the deposit, when the width ... increased to seven feet : nearer the centre, the aperture [took] a semicircular course, which was intended to be pursued in order to give a better opportunity of finding the deposit.

Measures were taken to secure the tunnel from collapse and it was sealed with a door.<sup>87</sup> Merewether was equally well organised with three gangs of labourers working in eight hour shifts throughout the twenty four hours under the direction of an engineer, Mr. Blandford. Unlike Gage, Merewether did not use the old land surface as the floor level of his tunnel but kept it instead,

2 feet below the ceiling of the tunnel; inasmuch as there could be little doubt that whatever deposit might be found would be either on the surface of the original ground near the centre, or in a cist formed immediately below that line.<sup>88</sup>

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86 Bateman, 1861, 17.

87 Gage, 1836, 301.

88 Merewether, 1851, 11.

Neither Merewether nor Gage took much interest in the actual digging of the tunnels and both galleries were well advanced at the time of their first visits.<sup>89</sup> However, the Dean did not hesitate to take over the direction of his labourers when the engineer considered his contractual obligations fulfilled with the tunnel close to the centre of the mound.<sup>90</sup>

In comparison with these prodigious efforts, the work of Bateman and Evans, the only other two diggers to have contemplated tunnelling, appears to have more than a tinge of foolhardiness and desperation about it. Bateman began conventionally enough with a trench across the central area of the barrow. Only when this had been enlarged to an area twenty five feet by eighteen without revealing any burial was a tunnel

driven from the west side of the excavation, in the hope of discovering an interment; but after proceeding a few feet it was deemed insecure, the supporting timbers were knocked away, and the whole suffered to fall in; by which, much to the surprise of all present, a square cistern was exposed to view, ...<sup>91</sup>

Clearly, the reward for determination. Similarly, Evans employed first a trench on the barrow at Youngsbury, Hertfordshire but when this did not disclose an interment he 'directed that a tunnel should be made in the lower part of the face of soil in the hope that we might prove to have been mistaken in our measurements'.<sup>92</sup> Fortunately, the grave was rapidly revealed for Evans seems to have been completely unprepared for his 'tunnel' to be anything other than a minor undercutting. Only Gage was to use tunnelling more than once as a technique for barrow exploration.<sup>93</sup>

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89 Gage, 1836, 301; Merewether, 1851, 11.

90 Merewether, 1851, 15.

91 Bateman, 1859, 152.

92 Evans, 1890, 289.

93 Rokewode, 1842, 1.

vi The organisation of the excavation.

The organisation of the actual excavation of a mound appears to have received little forethought or consideration and seems to have been controlled by such factors as availability of workmen, freedom from other commitments and mere whim. It is clear that barrow diggers did not always attend in person and occasionally the labourers were left entirely to their own devices : Bateman remarks of a barrow on Hind Lowe that

a cutting was made through the centre, without the effect of discovering the primary interment. Probably the labourers (being left to themselves) were not sufficiently careful in their researches and overlooked it.<sup>94</sup>

and Hutchinson records that Kirwan was attending a meeting of the Devon Association while his labourers dug barrows for him.<sup>95</sup> The absence of any supervision for the labourers is a thing few would have admitted to and is, therefore, probably grossly under-documented. Few seem to have felt, with W.C. Lukis, that labourers should be given 'careful supervision'.<sup>96</sup> More often, control of the excavation was delegated by the person who would claim responsibility for the excavation. At one end of the scale there was delegation in the sense of financial support as Cunnington was offered by Colt Hoare and Carrington by Bateman or leaving the work to a close collaborator as Mortimer did with his brother.<sup>97</sup> In these and similar cases there was little difference in standards and ability between the two parties but there are such firm cases of inconsistency as to suggest an absence of clearly defined principles in the area of barrow digging. Bateman employed Carrington but

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<sup>94</sup> Bateman, 1848, 62.

<sup>95</sup> Hutchinson, 1880, 133.

<sup>96</sup> W.C. Lukis to F.C. Lukis, 2 October 1870 : Lukis papers, Pre-Roman period, Great Britain, 2.

<sup>97</sup> e.g. Mortimer, 1905, 1 & 3.

he also used one Peter Banton to open some barrows in Northamptonshire on his behalf even though Banton had written,

I have sent for permission to open the barrows but shall want to know before I commence what width the opening should be, whether it is desireable to commence at the extreme edge of the circumference and whether it is better to have two or more labourers. ... Excuse me troubling you about this but it may save expense if I go to work in the best way.<sup>98</sup>

Hardly an experienced excavator one feels. Londesborough was similarly haphazard in who dug for him, using William Bowman, an illustrator and friend of Bateman, for some of his work in Yorkshire while one of his successors used his gamekeeper, who 'being ... an uneducated man, ... was unable to preserve notes of the contents of each grave [at Bifrons], and of the positions and circumstances in which the relics were found'.<sup>99</sup> Similarly, Mortimer accused Greenwell of having left the work in the hands of an 'amateur assistant'.<sup>100</sup> Few can have been quite so off-hand in their delegation as Petrie who 'requested the farmer to open some of the barrows, and, if he came to a cist, to send [him] notice'.<sup>101</sup> It is impossible to assess how much delegation was done by those who produced the published reports but the indications are that it was extensive : in 1902 a barrow was opened by John Watson Taylor who asked B.H. Cunnington to superintend the work which was published by E.H. Goddard.<sup>102</sup>

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98 Bateman letters, P. Banton, 12 August 1858.

99 Bateman letters, W. Bowman, 19 September 1851; Godfrey-Faussett, 1876, 301.

100 Mortimer, 1905, xlviii, f.n.

101 Petrie, 1866, 411.

102 Goddard, 1902, 224.



Nothing better indicates the absence of careful preparation in the organising of a barrow excavation than the attitudes displayed towards time. Both the inability of even experienced diggers to estimate accurately what could be achieved in a given space of time and the determination to spend the allotted time in barrow digging emphasises this strongly. Bowman's comments to Bateman on some excavations sponsored by Londesborough are particularly appropriate:

I have finished at Driffield and shall describe as well as I can all the affair. Those pack of asses Thurnam & co originally intended to go to Driffield on Monday night and commence early on Tuesday morning, finish the barrow there by noon, fly over to Danes Graves, open four or five of them and return to York by the last train. The first barrow took us a week and the Graves a day but on Wednesday they all bolted and left me alone to finish. I had 3 & 4 men all the time so you may think the things they have got were not procured for nothing.<sup>103</sup>

Aside from the incidental suggestion that Thurnam was not always the devoted barrow digger that his published works would lead one to suppose, Bowman's remarks give a valuable insight into the disorganised way in which much excavation was undertaken and which was completely disguised in the published reports. Bateman himself showed remarkable honesty when he wrote of one excavation,

Owing to the shortness of time allowed by the length of the day after the opening of the other three tumuli, nothing decisive could be ascertained, except a conviction of the impolicy of attempting to explore so many barrows in one day.<sup>104</sup>

His descriptions contain other examples when insufficient time or excavation by candlelight, a practice also adopted by Greenwell on

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103 Bateman letters, W. Bowman, c. September 1849.

104 Bateman, 1848, 63.

at least one occasion, are stated reasons to explain the lack of a thorough search.<sup>105</sup>

The problem was not just one of insufficient time. Surplus time could lead just as easily to impromptu digging. Hoare, 'having time at command', had 'ordered our pioneers to make a trial' of a barrow near Shepherd's Shore while Bateman records that 'to occupy the afternoon, we worked a little in the large barrow' after failing to discover an interment in another mound and Borlase did likewise in similar circumstances.<sup>106</sup> Equally, a failure to secure the expected permission could lead to similarly unplanned excavation: Bateman describes such a situation in which he says 'we amused ourselves with some unsuccessful digging in the Cauldon Hill group of tumuli'.<sup>107</sup> The wording is interesting in that it is not that used by Samuel Carrington in his description to Bateman<sup>108</sup> but it helps to explain the lack of organisation in indicating the clear kinship between field sports and barrow digging. This similarity was reinforced by the area in which the work was undertaken which was almost entirely confined to the locality in which the digger lived. In the case of Colt Hoare and Bateman it was a case of digging on one's own estate or those of one's friends; for diggers like Mortimer the acquisition of a patron who could obtain permission was essential. Only occasionally was barrow digging outside of the home locality undertaken without a friend's country house providing a base.<sup>109</sup>

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105 Bateman, 1861, 44 & 115; W. Greenwell to A. Way, 6 December 1847: Soc. Ant. Lond. correspondence, 1844-48 quoted in Jessup, 1961, 70.

106 Hoare, 1819, 92; Bateman, 1861, 67; Borlase, 1872, 107.

107 Bateman, 1861, 154.

108 Carrington says only 'we contented ourselves with examining some mounds': Carrington papers, T. Bateman, 28 August [1849].

109 Milner, 1790, 899; Gray & Prideaux, 1905, 7. Both camped at the site of the barrows.

This underlying sporting-like feeling is seen also in the number of occasions where barrow digging was organised as a social event, something that was present from the beginning of serious barrow excavation.<sup>110</sup> After the middle of the nineteenth century and the growth of county and other archaeological societies, the specific opening of a mound to coincide with the visit of a society on one of its excursions became common,<sup>111</sup> occasionally with disastrous results for the excavation:

So large a slice of the afternoon, however, was consumed at the splendid collation in the tent near the six-mile stone, together with many other slices of a variety of good things, that there was no time left to complete the examination of the barrow, or even open the kist-vaen. A trench from the south margin to the centre, and beyond the centre, had been run into this barrow the day before the meeting, in anticipation of the visit ... and the black mould cleared away, down to the crown of a cairn or kist-vaen of flints. ... It was intended to open the cairn or kist-vaen in the presence of the visitors, but they did not visit the spot. The earth was afterwards thrown in, and the trench filled up as before, and, to the best of my belief, the kist-vaen still remains intact and undisturbed.<sup>112</sup>

Thus did Hutchinson describe the barrow digging exploits of the British Association during their meeting at Exeter in 1869.

110 James Douglas to H. G. Faussett, 31 May 1785 : Soc. Ant. Lond. Mss. 723, fol. 64; Woodbridge, 1970, 196 & 225; Ffoulkes, 1851a, 12; Mawson, 1876, 11; Cunnington, 1882, 345; Hall, 1886, 252; Hughes, 1901, 184.

111 Hutchinson, 1870, 159; Kirwan, 1872, 39; Barnwell, 1873, 195; Mansel-Pleydell, 1884, 30; Hamilton, 1891, 25; Bagnall-Oakeley, 1893, 65-66; Mortimer, 1895a, 21.

112 Hutchinson, 1880, 126.

## vii Finances.

The organisation of the financial support necessary for barrow digging is very imperfectly represented in the available sources, mainly because so much of it originated from the pockets of wealthy landowners and patrons. Even among the major barrow excavators there is no clear indication of how Douglas, Greenwell, Borlase or Warne and his co-workers in Dorset financed their work from which one can only draw the unsatisfactory conclusion that it was supported from their own resources although only Greenwell with his considerable collecting interests shows any clear sign of a sizeable personal income. Indeed, later in his life Warne wrote that 'the expense' of producing Ancient Dorset had been 'not inconsiderable' and in 1880 he was still trying to obtain payment of accounts connected with it and Celtic Tumuli issued some years previously.<sup>113</sup> Certainly it may have been a lack of adequate resources that caused Warne to encourage Rev. J.J. Smith to excavate the barrows at Bincombe since as well as providing the original impetus, Warne was the brother of the tenant and helped Smith in his work.<sup>114</sup>

Of the other important excavators we have some hints to guide us but it is far from certain that they point in the right direction. Alone of all the excavators only Bateman and Pitt-Rivers supervised and paid for their barrow explorations although the latter received a grant from the British Association for his work at Sigwell done with George Rolleston in the days before his inheritance of the Cranborne Chase estate.<sup>115</sup> In other cases there was clearly

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113 Letters to F.C. Brooke, 24 September 1877 & 6 February 1880 : in my possession.

114 Babbington, 1859, 141-42.

115 Rolleston & Lane-Fox, 1878, 76.

some dependence on patronage although to what degree is unclear.

D. Papillon wrote to Faussett in 1772.

I have no objection to the Barrows you mention being opened as you desire it, & am ready to pay the expences thereon if you will only take care that the men who do it do not secret anything.<sup>116</sup>

But a letter of the same year from Awnsham Churchill, giving permission for work at Sibertswold, makes no mention of meeting the cost.<sup>117</sup> Similarly, Mortimer makes occasional mention of work being paid for by someone else but he also details the costs of his work in rare instances which we can suppose he would only have done when he had borne the expense.<sup>118</sup> Cunnington was heavily reliant on patronage throughout his barrow digging career, his early work having been supported by William Coxe and H. P. Wyndham before Colt Hoare became the sole provider in 1806.<sup>119</sup>

For any aspiring barrow digger without adequate finances before the mid-nineteenth century a patron was essential and even after that time their importance was scarcely diminished. Some sponsorship was undertaken by the newly founded archaeological societies but it did aim to offer experience to the newcomer. The Archaeological Institute paid for the work at Silbury Hill but the party consisted of Merewether, J. M. Kemble, Rev. J. Bathurst-Deane and Frederic Ouvry,<sup>120</sup> and J. Y. Akerman, 'at the invitation of the Council of the Surrey Archaeological Society, ... assisted at the opening of a

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116 Letter of 20 July 1772 : Soc. Ant. Lond. Mss. 723, fol. 4.

117 Letter of 16 May 1772 : Soc. Ant. Lond. Mss. 723, fol. 2.

118 e.g. Mortimer, 1905, 8 f.n. & 161.

119 Woodbridge, 1970, 196 & 209.

120 Annotation in my copy of Merewether, 1851 by Frederic Ouvry.



Barrow at Teddington,<sup>121</sup> but neither of these examples can be interpreted as other than support for established scholars. Everybody else had to either pay for it themselves or obtain help from such figures as the Duke of Northumberland, Marquis Conyngham and J.R. Findlay.<sup>122</sup> Occasionally the work was made possible by a subscription list among interested persons, by which device some barrows were excavated at Alfriston supported by contributions no larger than three pounds but the actual excavation was done by students of Bishop Otter's College.<sup>123</sup>

The problems were compounded by a clear demonstration of diminishing returns for the sponsor. There were throughout the nineteenth century clear developments in excavation technique which required more and more work to be done on each mound, particularly the larger ones, as the realisation grew that barrows had been inadequately explored by earlier workers. The cost, for instance, of removing a thousand cartloads of stones, as was done during the excavation of a cairn at Collessie,<sup>124</sup> was no small obligation. Expenses for individual mounds varied considerably depending on the work done. William Molyneux estimated, in 1859, that the Northwood barrow could be excavated for ten shillings<sup>125</sup> whereas Mortimer's expenses for excavating and filling in two mounds in 1882 was ten pounds.<sup>126</sup> Moreover, his remarks that the cost of excavating one barrow in 1870 'cannot be put down at less than £30, as we paid £25 13s for the manual labour alone'<sup>127</sup>

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121 Akerman, 1855, 175.

122 Hall, 1886, 242; Vine, 1883, 312; Anderson, 1891, 20.

123 Smith, 1870, 59 & 76.

124 Anderson, 1878, 440.

125 Barnard Davis papers, letter of 9 August 1873 : Royal Anthropol. Inst. Mss. 145.

126 Mortimer, 1905, 8, f.n.

127 *idem*, 6, f.n.

contrast strongly with Colt Hoare's injunction to Cunnington that 'the sum total of Camp & barrow expences' should not 'exceed £50 this year [1806] as my expences in furnishing my House, etc. have nearly drained my purse'.<sup>128</sup> The costs then were of more than passing interest since they exercised a real control on what was achieved such that on occasions 'the labour and expense of moving such materials was found so great, that we were compelled to desist before we had arrived at the centre, so that unfortunately nothing was found'.<sup>129</sup>

#### viii The labourers.

The labourers who were responsible for the bulk of each excavation were of considerable importance and their quality and experience necessarily had serious implications for the success of the operations. The value of experience cannot be under-rated and for this reason many of the substantial excavators sought to acquire the regular services of at least one or two labourers. The most famous pair are Stephen and John Parker, father and son, who were, wrote Colt Hoare, 'constantly employed by us in all our operations'.<sup>130</sup> Their skills extended beyond the wielding of pick-axe and spade and John, in particular, was adept at discovering new sites, so adept indeed that he seems to have engaged in preliminary surveys of areas: 'I wish ... John to explore the Vale of Deverill as far as Kingston... When he has done all the more important work, he must examine Ridge and Grovelly Woods most

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128 Cunnington papers, Hoare 25, 10 May 1806.

129 Dr. Whitaker quoted in Luck, 1895, 28.

130 Hoare, 1812, 97 f.n.

thoroughly both in them & round them'.<sup>131</sup> But their main responsibility remained the digging - 'John must be your constant attendant with his pick axe, without which nothing positive can be ascertained'.<sup>132</sup> As their experience increased it was recognised that this expertise should be shared. When Edward Duke proposed to open some barrows Colt Hoare wrote to Cunnington, 'I think we must let him have one of our experienced men to show his apprentices the right path, as well to prevent the interments, etc. being deranged & destroyed',<sup>133</sup> and Richard Iremonger thought 'you will I trust not think me guilty of great intrusion in requesting the assistance [for my projected campaign at Old Winchester] of your Wiltshire labourers ..., for my Hampshire men have disgraced themselves by their exorbitant demands'.<sup>134</sup> Iremonger's letter emphasises that skilled workmen could not be created on the simple basis of good pay and it was part of Cunnington's skill that he could provide the medium for integrating the Parkers into the team built up around Colt Hoare. He provided the enthusiasm which he conveyed to them and he was the one with the understanding to keep John's 'sulking fits', which Colt Hoare so disliked,<sup>135</sup> within bounds - 'I kept John in a good temper with the history of Joanna Southcote and her prophecies; this and the meteor which luckily we saw brought us in good humour to the inn', he wrote later.<sup>136</sup> This rapport between director and labourer was at the heart of the development of capable 'pioneers' but there was apparently little effort spent by most diggers in its establishment. Rev. J. C. Atkinson certainly earned the friendship and respect of his workmen<sup>137</sup>

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131 Cunnington letters, Hoare 79, 1809.

132 Cunnington letters, Hoare 25, 10 May 1806.

133 Cunnington letters, Hoare 28, 22 September 1806.

134 Cunnington letters, letter from R. Iremonger, 30 June 1807.

135 Cunnington letters, Hoare, 17, 1806.

136 Cunnington papers, VIII, 30.

137 Atkinson, 1891, 135-38.

as did Rook Pennington<sup>138</sup> while references by John Mortimer to 'experienced workmen'<sup>139</sup> suggests that he too achieved success in this field. Of course, the training of labourers depended greatly on operations being conducted in a relatively restricted geographical area so that it was inevitable that Greenwell, who excavated in several counties, should have to employ inexperienced men whether he wished to or not, but there is no indication that he thought this a matter for regret. Faussett, according to T.G. Faussett, made 'not unsuccessful endeavours to instil some of his own ardour into his labourers'<sup>140</sup> but his own manuscript does not confirm this as a realistic appraisal. Otherwise, there was a rather naive approach to the value of experienced men - 'on discovering', wrote J.M. Joass, 'that one of our diggers had assisted at the excavation of Maeshowe, Orkney, under Mr. Farrer, and knew, therefore, what he was about, I left him with instructions to dig at G, while I accompanied Mr. Houston to ... a point ... about a hundred yards distant'<sup>141</sup> and 'most of the digging' of a barrow at Glassonby was 'done by George Cheesebrough, who had the previous experience of opening the Parks tumulus, just across the beck in Dale Raven'.<sup>142</sup>

The attitudes of inexperienced workmen, often removed from other estate duties for a few days by the landowner, were generally well disposed towards the work, buoyed no doubt by the relative ease compared to some of their other tasks : 'the workmen entered thoroughly into the spirit of the work, and, while eager for discoveries, were careful in carrying out the instructions for watchfulness'.<sup>143</sup>

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138 Pennington, 1877, 26.

139 e.g. Mortimer, 1905, 114.

140 T.G. Faussett to Joseph Mayer, 5 August 1854 : Smith, 1856, 204.

141 Joass, 1864a, 243.

142 Collingwood, 1901, 295.

143 Stuart, 1866c, 404.

This eagerness for discoveries is best translated as an expectation of treasure for Miles, earlier in the century, had seen his 'labourers ... so overcome with joy at the idea of perhaps finding stores of treasure concealed here, that it was with difficulty I could make them observe the caution requisite in patiently removing the earth'.<sup>144</sup>

The disappointment which inevitably followed such a discovery had led on more than one occasion to the wholesale destruction of antiquities, particularly urns, if the labourers were unsupervised.<sup>145</sup>

This disappointment was often reinforced by difficult working conditions, with which the casual labourer seemed ill-equipped to cope for their regular occupation set little store by care and patience so necessary on these occasions. Even the directors seemed to have been resigned to it - 'this grave', wrote Faussett, 'was so entirely filled up, even to the surface of the natural earth, with flints, that the labourers were much troubled to get down to the skeleton; so it is no wonder that everything was thus broken and destroyed by their tools',<sup>146</sup> and when Duke proposed his barrow digging to Colt Hoare the latter wrote to Cunnington, 'I question if he and his men will have sufficient stock of patience'.<sup>147</sup> There was clearly no escape from these problems except a determined attempt to establish a good working relationship with one's labourers and this most excavators, as we have noted, were either unable or disinclined to do.

The actual number of workmen, experienced or inexperienced, employed varied with the size of the barrow and the number of barrows it was intended to open; agricultural workers were not the only people who did the digging, soldiers, miners and gamekeepers

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144 Miles, 1826, 19-20.

145 Warne, 1866, mopr, 60.

146 Smith, 1856, 46.

147 Cunnington letters, Hoare 18, 23 March 1806.



are also recorded.<sup>148</sup> George Petrie had upwards of twenty men excavating two tumuli while Mortimer employed up to twelve on a single mound but a more normal number was from two to four.<sup>149</sup> Greenwell, on the other hand, seems to have used from six to seven men, at least during his work in Yorkshire.<sup>150</sup> It may perhaps be inferred that each digger rapidly arrived at an estimate of the numbers of labourers which he could supervise to his own satisfaction.

## ix Tools.

Relatively scant attention is paid to tools by barrow diggers in their published descriptions of their work and in the absence of excavation manuals one can only compose a very unsure picture concerning the use of any particular type. Pennington came nearest to describing the basic tools of barrow digging in the mid-nineteenth century when, detailing his work on a barrow at Birchin Lee Farm, he wrote,

We went to work with a will; shovel, and pick,  
and all the barrow-opening paraphernalia were put  
in action; every stone was carefully taken down,  
every shovelful of earth was religiously put through  
the sieve, and we found - nothing.<sup>151</sup>

The final statement affords the clue as to why Pennington felt it necessary to describe the use of his tools. Such brief mentions as we have are, therefore, either an explanation of finding nothing

148 Borlase, 1881, 195; de St. Croix, 1868, 53; Price, 1887, 433; Godfrey-Faussett, 1876, 301.

149 Petrie, 1857, 59; Mortimer, 1905, 181; Llewellyn, 1856, 64; Conder, 1895, 405; Ailsa, 1893, 413.

150 Greenwell & Rolleston, 1877, 202; Lukis papers, W.C. Lukis to F.C. Lukis, 2 October 1870 : Pre-Roman period, Great Britain, 2; Hicks, 1970, 310.

151 Pennington, 1877, 48.

despite impeccable technique or the imagaic use of tools to indicate the act of excavation. Thus, Edward Duke wrote to Cunnington that 'in the course of a month' he intended 'to take spade and mattock in hand with the intention of disembowelling two tumuli in the neighbourhood of Old Sarum...',<sup>152</sup> and F.C. Lukis spoke of 'a fatiguing day's work with spade and sieve'.<sup>153</sup>

Clearly, picks or mattocks and spades or shovels were the main tools of barrow digging and on many occasions there was little subtlety or finesse in their use. Rev. J.C. Atkinson described how, on his first barrow excavation, he was cautiously scraping and probing, feeling a deposit was close at hand, when one of his labourers,

tiring of [his] tardy approaches to the centre of expectation, reached forward over my bended back and lowered head, and with his shovel firmly grasped in his nervous hands, made a fell swoop into the thick of the little mound I was delicately shaping; and by his action disclosed the deposit, it is true, but at the expense of shearing off one-third part of a perfectly entire and uninjured cinerary vase.<sup>154</sup>

Such a scene had been enacted many times in the previous century or so. Care was not absent and impatience, as shown by Atkinson's labourer, appears to have been rarer than one might have supposed but Anderson's remarks that the deposits in Kenny's Cairn, 'rose to the pick in cakes',<sup>155</sup> and Cloustan's statement that the soil in one of the chambers at Unstan was 'more easily cleared by the hand than the pick',<sup>156</sup> suggests that the pick or spade was used even when

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152 Cunnington letters : from Edward Duke, 25 April 1809.

153 F.C. Lukis, 1853, 257.

154 Atkinson, 1891, 135.

155 Anderson, 1872, 293.

156 Cloustan, 1885, 343.

in close proximity to the interments. Perhaps Charleson and Anderson were exceptional in their use of the pick or chambered cairn excavations encouraged a more rigorous use of large tools but only rarely does one encounter a mention of smaller tools such as knives.<sup>157</sup> Indeed as late as 1890 Evans was writing of his care in clearing away around a burial 'by means of hoe and a pocket-knife',<sup>158</sup> which in combination would only represent a marginal improvement in technique compared to the judicious use of a pick. Equally, it has to be emphasised that the material produced by using a pick or its substitutes was often removed in a fairly disorganised manner : Charleson found 'the difficulty of removing the debris increasing with every spadeful, until finally buckets had to be requisitioned in conveying the contents to the surface',<sup>159</sup> but it was a step only taken with great reluctance and its introduction into his text was intended to emphasise the arduousness of his enterprise.

The universal use of pick and spade meant that they were only incidentally introduced into the barrow digging narrative and then in such a manner as to prevent any recognition of changing attitudes to their use. This is fortunately not so in the case of the sieve which, although mentioned just as rarely, was not a necessary adjunct to barrow exploration. It, therefore, involved some selectivity in its use. Douglas had among his party during barrow excavations on Wimbledon Common 'a very curious and well-informed little Quaker of the name of Jackson ... and the Quaker not content with the mere digging and careful turning over the ground insisted on the necessity of procuring a sieve to explore the contents of a grave with more accuracy'. 'This is', remarked Douglas, 'true enthusiasm',<sup>160</sup> but

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157 e.g. Ffoulkes, 1851, 14.

158 Evans, 1890, 290.

159 Charleson, 1901, 733.

160 Letter to H.G. Faussett, 9 July 1789 : Soc. Ant. Lond. Mss. 723, fol. 73.

he leaves the impression that it was all too fastidious. However, by the second half of the nineteenth century W.C. Lukis was firm in his advocacy of the sieve in noting that flint arrowheads were not readily recovered from chambered cairns in Britanny because 'they are small objects and easily escape detection, more particularly when explorers neglect to use a sieve'.<sup>161</sup> Yet the consistency of technique and concern for its improvement shown by the members of the Lukis family was largely unheeded. Mortimer was altogether more representative in his adoption of the sieve only when it was demonstrably advantageous, as in the case of a grave containing small jet disc beads.<sup>162</sup>

If the infrequent adoption of the sieve was indicative of a low level of concern with total recovery of finds or rather of a high belief in a capability to do without, the failure to adopt the probe is considerably more difficult to explain. It could not, of course, readily test unexplored mounds but in a situation which placed little priority on cleanness at the base of the trench dug, moreover, by hired labourers one is surprised to find that the failure to discover an interment led more often to abandonment of the trench than to the use of a probe.

The first use of this instrument is to be ascribed to Bryan Faussett:

Having last year opened every remaining visible tumulus [on Kingston Down], though never so small, I then imagined I could have nothing further to do here. For though I have often thought there might be many other graves in every burying place where I have dug, which might either have never had any tumulus thrown up over them; or, whose tumuli might have been entirely taken away by those who in aftertimes raised others in their neighbourhood; yet, as I then knew of no method of discovering them, without entirely trenching the whole of the ground between the several tumuli down to the firm

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161 W.C. Lukis, 1868, 44.

162 Mortimer, 1905, 138.

chalk, which would be a very expensive as well as tedious piece of work, I did not, till this summer [1773], attempt a search after them. But having lately invented an instrument for the purpose of discovering such latent graves without opening the ground; and which has fully answered my expectation wherever I have yet tried it. <sup>163</sup>

Faussett went on to say that he had named his new tool 'a probe'. <sup>164</sup> Cunnington, too, was alive to the possibility of such an instrument although the 'ingenious Tradesman' did not feel a custom-made object was required:

When you get within a foot or two feet of the bottom [of your excavation in a mound], shove a thick walking stick frequently into the earth as far as you can - this will often show the place of interment & save much trouble; for if there is a cist, the stick will slip in as if into ashes. <sup>165</sup>

It may not be without significance that apart from the use of the probe among the flat cemeteries of Kent by the successors to Faussett, <sup>166</sup> the tool was only employed with any consistency by that other barrow digging tradesman, John Mortimer. He probed the old land surface exposed in his barrow excavations and there is good reason to believe that the use of a probe is what Mortimer means when he speaks of 'testing' the ground in his descriptions of his barrow digging. <sup>167</sup> In 1891 he probed some geological features with a crow-bar after finding a prehistoric grave in one of his sections across them but his clandestine examination of pits on Danby North Moor was achieved with 'a pointed steel rod'. <sup>168</sup>

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<sup>163</sup> Smith, 1856, 87.

<sup>164</sup> idem, 149.

<sup>165</sup> Letter to Rev Mr. Richardson, February, 1803 : Woodbridge, 1970, 274.

<sup>166</sup> Brent, 1863, 309; 1867, 410; Godfrey-Faussett, 1876, 299-300.

<sup>167</sup> e.g. Mortimer, 1905, 131 & 284.

<sup>168</sup> Mortimer, 1905, 19; 1898, 161.



x Number of barrows excavated.

There was only a marginal reduction in the number of barrows excavated by the major diggers during the nineteenth century although by the second half of the century more time was being spent in the field. Faussett emptied nearly eight hundred graves, although many of these were not covered by a barrow, Colt Hoare and Cunnington almost five hundred, Kendall four to five hundred<sup>169</sup> (he alone of all major barrow diggers managed no publication whatsoever), Bateman, Ruddock and Carrington together almost four hundred, and Greenwell and Mortimer three hundred each. The pattern of activity in each of these careers is often poorly documented or else the career was too short for a meaningful pattern to emerge. However, as far as one can judge, Mortimer's career (fig. 1) is fairly typical with its burst of activity in the early years followed by long periods of a low but constant level of work interrupted by only the occasional period of the same intensity as the early years. Such a pattern is what one would expect as the more obvious barrows were exhausted in the immediate locality. It does, moreover, under-represent activity in the later years as it does not include the re-opening of barrows excavated in the first years of Mortimer's career.

However, the similarity in numbers of barrows excavated by the leading workers throughout the nineteenth century disguises the improvement in effort that began about the middle of the century which is reflected in both the number of barrows excavated in one day and in the amount of time spent before any barrow was considered unprofitable. Faussett cleared one hundred and six graves at Gilton in eleven days spread over 1760, 1762 and 1763 and a high level of such

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169 Barnard Davis papers, note made 15 September [1854] : Royal Anthropol. Inst. Mss. 140:4.

grave clearances seems to have been maintained for flat Anglo-Saxon cemeteries throughout the nineteenth century for Brent emptied one hundred and eighty seven in a three month spell in late 1862.<sup>170</sup>

Neither of these episodes can compare with Douglas's published claim that he opened fifty barrows on 22 January 1784 and twelve the day after in Greenwich Park.<sup>171</sup> However, three days after he had apparently ransacked fifty barrows he wrote to H.G. Faussett,

I beg to inform you that I have postponed writing to you 'til I have broke ground in Greenwich Park, which I did on thursday and friday last and opened about twenty barrows, some of which I found had been ransacked before me, ...<sup>172</sup>

Twenty barrows in two days seem an altogether likely figure and is more in line with the thirteen barrows opened in two days by J. Y. Akerman and Lord Albert Conyngham (later Lord Londesborough) in September 1841.<sup>173</sup> But this sort of approach was fast declining - Thomas Bateman attempted four barrows in 1845 and had to admit that it was too many for one day.<sup>174</sup> More and more it was becoming a question of not how many barrows in one day but how many days on one barrow. This new situation is strongly reflected by the increasing amount of time an excavator would spend before complaining in print about the labours involved. 'We this day spent', wrote Faussett, 'much time and pains (no less than five men for eight hours having been employed upon it) in endeavouring to overturn a very large mound' on Kingston Down<sup>175</sup> while Colt Hoare was a good deal more waspish,

170 Smith, 1856, 33 f.n.; Brent, 1863, 321.

171 Douglas, 1793, 89-90.

172 Letter of 25 January 1784 : Soc. Ant. Lond. Mss. 723, fol. 59.

173 Conyngham & Akerman, 1844, 48. Around sixty barrows were opened that autumn : Akerman, 1847, 123, f.n. 4.

174 Bateman, 1848, 62-63.

175 Smith, 1856, 83.

remarking 'but this insignificant little mound, whose history we expected to develop in a few minutes, cost us two hours time, and a severe trial of our curiosity and patience'.<sup>176</sup> In marked contrast Greenwell's attitude is almost benign when, writing of his own experiences, almost a century after Faussett, he noted,

No trace whatever of an interment could be discovered, although the whole mound... was turned over down to the chalk rock, the labour of six men and of two hard-working volunteers having been expended on it through a period of five days. It was the most perplexing barrow I have ever met with; ...<sup>177</sup>

## xi Problems.

Despite being often disappointed and perplexed the barrow digger was beset with very few problems. Excavation techniques had rapidly acquired sufficient efficiency as to preclude practical problems.

The weather could not, however, be controlled although in the second half of the nineteenth century many diggers sought to ignore it.

Faussett's remark that October was 'late in the season'<sup>178</sup> suggests that he considered the summer as the appropriate time for barrow digging, a feeling which Cunnington and Colt Hoare shared for the latter's illness in October 1806 caused him to abandon his 'intended expedition to Stonehenge for this season'.<sup>179</sup> Yet later barrow diggers seem to have regarded this as a piece of unnecessary sensitivity on the part of their predecessors and any month became a suitable time for excavation. Indeed Hartshorne quotes with

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176 Hoare, 1819, 92-93.

177 Greenwell & Rolleston, 1877, 202.

178 Smith, 1856, 84.

179 Cunnington letters, Hoare 31, October 1806.

approbation Dr. Dorow's claim that the winter-time had been the best time for his excavations in barrows near Wiesbaden since 'the soil below the frozen surface is more readily worked than in summer, and the earthen vessels are always more easily preserved'.<sup>180</sup> No British barrow digger adopted this rather extreme position but neither were they intimidated by bad weather even though Mortimer recounts what should have been a cautionary tale in which he attributes the premature death of Jas. Silburn to the severe cold he contracted while barrow digging.<sup>181</sup> Mortimer himself records several instances of barrow digging in snowy conditions and Greenwell did the same on occasions.<sup>182</sup>

Bad weather did, of course, curtail many excavations but rather curiously it seems to have led to the abandonment and not the postponement of the work. This is most clearly seen in Kirwan's description of his work at Upton Pyne :

Owing to unfavourable weather our day's work was soon brought to a close. We resumed operations on a subsequent morning by cutting a second transverse section from east to west across and beyond the centre of the mound...<sup>183</sup>

Less specific examples abound but instances from the beginning and end of our period show very little change in attitude. Faussett was driven off Kingston Down in August 1771 by a heavy thunderstorm but did not return until August of the following year and similarly

Mortimer re-opened a barrow in July 1868 which he had first attempted in June 1866 'being under the impression that during the hurried

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180 Hartshorne, 1841, 102, f.n. 3.

181 Mortimer, 1905, 299, f.n.

182 Mortimer, 1905, 62, 71, f.n., 82, f.n.; Greenwell to Albert Way, 6 December 1847 : Soc. Ant. Lond. Correspondence, 1844-48 quoted in Jessup, 1961, 70.

183 Kirwan, 1872, 152.

examination of this barrow, made in consequence of bad weather, something might have been missed'.<sup>184</sup> Surprisingly, only Mortimer records any attempt to make a shelter with varying degrees of success,

we were able to shelter ourselves from the piercing north wind by fixing up with stakes several yards of thick cloth, expressly obtained and frequently used as a shelter when at work on these breezy high downs.

The day was miserably wet, and, though well sheltered with a specially made umbrella sufficiently large to cover a small party at work, we were compelled to defer our examination.<sup>185</sup>

Borlase, however, while not providing any specific shelter was prepared to allow his workmen to dig on the sheltered side of the mound in inclement weather.<sup>186</sup>

Accidents were particularly rare or at least those serious enough to merit mention in the published reports were. Borlase records the burying of two workmen and the partial interment of 'one or two amateur excavators' during excavations of Veryan Beacon by Rev. J. Adams in the early 1850s.<sup>187</sup> All were dug out successfully but the incident emphasises that most barrow diggers had an extremely under-developed sense of danger even when they were relatively experienced. Bateman's efforts at Gib Hill have already been noted and a similarly fortunate escape occurred during the

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184 Smith, 1856, 81; Mortimer, 1905, 138.

185 Mortimer, 1905, 129, f.n. & 141.

186 Borlase, 1873, 425.

187 Borlase, 1872, 156-57.



excavation of Taplow barrow, a mound inconveniently surmounted by a yew tree:

The work was discontinued for a few days on account of a slight accident to Mr. Rutland from the falling in of some earth from underneath the yew-tree; but on the introduction of horizontal slabs and side-posts, the digging was carried down to a depth of twenty feet ... Opportunity was sufficiently afforded to take an accurate survey of the contents of the grave, and to remove those articles which were in situ, when the yew tree sank into the excavation, carrying the bolsters with it, ... 188

The use of shoring to prevent such occurrences did not occur until the end of the century,<sup>189</sup> although variations in excavation technique by major barrow diggers may have been prompted by safety considerations. Cunington's work on the Hatfield Barrow where the shaft was dug in the form of an inverted cone is a case in point.<sup>190</sup>

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188 Stevens, 1884, 63-64.

189 Ailsa, 1893, 413; Boyd Dawkins, 1902, 163-64.

190 Hoare, 1819, 6.

## **5 The analysis of structures.**

The recognition of barrows as structural units offering an individual diversity equal to that discernible among the ruins of medieval Britain and yet capable of an ordering into patterns similar to those established for the latter, more obviously architectural, monuments was not widespread among barrow diggers, nor could it have been with the aims and motivations outlined in previous chapters. In controlling the techniques employed, the interests of the barrow diggers tended to preclude the development of a methodology which facilitated the discernment of structural evidence. Barrow digging **did not break loose** from this circularity until late in the nineteenth century while in the preceding period the analysis of structures, though not absent, lacked coherence and meaning. Even those concerned with the chambered barrows and free-standing cromlechs with their clear structural element struggled, not altogether successfully, to break loose from the limits imposed by the wider aims and aspirations of the antiquarian world.

The sepulchral nature of barrows had been sufficiently demonstrated by the treasure seekers of earlier centuries for it to be generally accepted by the early eighteenth century. Knowlton, describing the Danes Graves' barrows in the 1740s, felt it safe to predict that 'if opened, one may find great quantities of human bones.'<sup>1</sup> The quantity was clearly a variable factor but few doubted that barrows were indeed receptacles for human burials although one or two thought it 'very remarkable that in opening barrows hardly any two are found to correspond in their contents, or in the apparent purpose of their formation'.<sup>2</sup> Many more barrow diggers were sympathetic to the idea of an infinite variety of contents but it was rare for them not to

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1 Knowlton, 1746, 101.

2 Smith, 1870, 59-60.

feel convinced of the 'purpose of their formation'. Combined with the unquestioning acceptance of the sepulchral element in barrow construction was the equally strong belief in the universal nature of tumular interment 'in the earliest state of society'.<sup>3</sup> This assumption remained strong even through the replacement of information from classical sources by that from ethnological data.<sup>4</sup> Thomas Bateman wrote to F.C. Lukis asking 'have you seen Squire & Davis' work on the Antiquities of the Mississippi Valley? There are many points of close similarity between the habits of the mound builders in that part of the globe and the primeval races in this land particularly in one feature of some of the earthen tumuli'.<sup>5</sup> Yet these 'points of close similarity' did not prompt more detailed analysis of the British material in order to evaluate the degree of similarity but rather served to emphasise for most barrow diggers the foolhardiness of attempting such an estimation. A barrow was quite simply the most efficacious means of covering the burial available to early peoples and, as such, offered little in the way of further information.

While accepting these two basic generalisations, some felt that barrows could have a secondary purpose, unconnected with burial, as 'index or direction post[s]'.<sup>6</sup> The idea appears to have originated with Stackhouse, certainly in 1806 he published the most elaborate treatment of the subject and did not feel that this role was at all secondary,

attention has, unfortunately, been solely directed to their sepulchral character, and confined to the excavation of individual tumuli. Considerable labour and expense have been, and still continue to be

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3 Miles, 1826, 12.

4 King, 1799, 267-325, passim; Horsfield, 1824, 38; Bateman, 1861, iii; Warne, 1866, 11; Greenwell & Rolleston, 1877, 1-2.

5 Lukis papers, Thomas Bateman, 16 January 1852.

6 Hoare, 1812, 40.

bestowed in searching after skeletons, urns, ashes, beads and other relics; and no small degree of learning and ingenuity has been displayed in describing the results of these investigations.

That barrows were originally constructed for the purpose of interment, and that most, if not all, that we now meet with in different parts of this kingdom have been so applied is a fact, which will not admit of any doubt or controversy; nor is this the object the writer has in view, but to show that they had a more extensive and important designation, than that to which the enquiries of the learned have been thus exclusively directed.<sup>7</sup>

This careful introduction, which shows a clear understanding of the role of basic assumptions controlling research procedures, did not gain widespread acceptance for Stackhouse's thesis. For him, 'the British barrows, at least those in the western counties, when taken collectively, exhibit the most complete system of vigilatory and communicating points' which clearly had a 'military character'.<sup>8</sup> Essentially, Stackhouse believed that the disposition and size of each barrow was related to the needs of observation and communication and he offered this summary of his position,

The whole of these particular principles are concentrated into this general one, that there is not a single spot, within the barrow district, left unexposed to at least one of these all-prevading points; and such is the perfection with which this great design is executed, that I believe I am safe in asserting, that even a single individual could not proceed twenty yards in any direction without being seen, supposing the watch on the barrows to be set.<sup>9</sup>

Clearly the demonstration of this master-plan required assumptions about chronology and social organisation that few of his contemporaries

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7 Stackhouse, 1806, 6-7.

8 Stackhouse, 1806, 11.

9 idem, 14.



were able to accept but the idea lived on until past the middle of the century in the muted form of occasional references to 'a beacon or specular mound'.<sup>10</sup>

Although of little consequence to developing attitudes concerning barrows, Stackhouse's scheme highlights the problems attendant upon the barrows relationship to other observable field monuments, particularly settlement sites. In the absence of excavation techniques with wider application than barrow digging, something not achieved until the work of Pitt-Rivers at the end of the nineteenth century, there could be no meaningful digging among these settlements, which lacked the clear foci as a guide for the excavator in the same manner as the barrows did, and, therefore, no clear establishment of the links between the two groups of monuments was possible. In addition to the failure to generate any viable absolute chronology this meant that for most of the period under discussion barrow diggers tacitly assumed that the close proximity of the two types of site indicated contemporaneity. Indeed, some even dated one by its association with the other<sup>11</sup> while an equally small number remained cautious in considering the implications of a close siting.<sup>12</sup>

The external form and general distribution of barrows.

An initial attempt to classify barrows on the basis of their external appearance was made before serious excavation was undertaken by John Aubrey whose scheme, although not published by himself, seems to have formed the basis of that published by Gibson in his edition of

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10 Thurnam, 1860, 318; see also Neville, 1847, 357.

11 Dearden, 1851, 291; de St. Croix, 1868, 57.

12 Anderson, 1868, 501 & 509.

Camden in 1695.<sup>13</sup> The classification was '1. small circular trenches, with very little elevation in the middle; 2. ordinary barrows; 3. barrows with ditches round them; 4. large oblong barrows, some with trenches round them, others without; 5. oblong barrows with stones set up all round them'.<sup>14</sup> This was in turn adopted by Stukeley but with new designations 'having no better foundation than his own fancy',<sup>15</sup> for example, type 1. became 'Druid barrows' and types 2 and 3 'king-barrows' while the latter type was noted as being 'an elegantly turn'd bell-form'.<sup>16</sup> Thurnam drew attention to two sheets among the Stukeley papers which showed a vastly more elaborate classification involving twenty-four varieties drawn from the barrows around Stonehenge and fifteen varieties (some duplicating those around Stonehenge) from barrows around Avebury. He justly remarked that 'from the ill effects of this terminology, quite enough of which was given to the world by Stukeley, the study of the primitive sepulchral antiquities of England has not yet entirely recovered',<sup>17</sup> for Stukeley had moved into a series of fantasy names involving 'Druids', 'Bards', 'Priestess' and 'Kings'. What is important in Stukeley's attempts is not, however, the over-elaboration of which he showed himself capable but the willingness to pursue fieldwork techniques and their combination with excavation data.

A similar attitude is observable in the work of Colt Hoare who proposed, early in Ancient Wiltshire, the following twelve varieties, for 'we must not consider every barrow as a mere tumulus or mound,

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13 Gibson, 1695, 98.

14 Thurnam, 1869b, 163.

15 Thurnam, 1869b, 163.

16 Stukeley, 1743, 40-41.

17 Thurnam, 1869b, 164 & pl. XI-XII.

loosely and fortuitously thrown up, but must rather view them as works of evident design, and executed with the greatest symmetry and precision': 1. long barrow; 2. bowl barrow; 3. bell barrow; 4. druid barrow; 5. druid barrow, second class; 6. pond barrow; 7. twin barrow; 8. cone barrow; 9. broad barrow; 10. druid barrow, no. 3; 11. druid barrow, no. 4; 12. long barrow, no. 2. Hoare commented on each type individually noting 'a singularity of outline in the construction' of long barrows, that bowl barrows were 'the most ordinary shaped barrow, and more frequently met with than any of the others', and that, in connection with the pond barrows, he could 'form no conjecture about these tumuli that carries with it the least plausibility'.<sup>18</sup> This classification owed much to the efforts of Aubrey and Stukeley, not least the retention of the term 'druid barrow' of which Hoare did not approve and kept only out of a sense of tradition. However, Hoare quickly came to believe the scheme too elaborate, with an over-emphasis on the minor varieties, so that by the time he was completing Ancient Wiltshire, some ten years later, he had reduced it to four basic types, 1. the long barrow; 2. the bowl-shaped barrow; 3. the bell-shaped barrow; 4. the druid barrow.<sup>19</sup> This more precise division of barrows he retained as his working groups although with the apparent re-inclusion of the pond barrow as a fifth major type.<sup>20</sup> Hoare never abandoned the analysis of external form as worthless but there is a clear increase in emphasis on types of interment forming first a balance to the external form and gradually, one suspects, becoming more important. There is no explicit statement to this effect but a marked contrast is observable in the shrinking classification of barrow forms and at the same time the increasingly detailed analysis of modes of burial.

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18 Hoare, 1812, 20-23.

19 Hoare, 1819, 109.

20 Hoare, 1829, 5-6.

Hoare's work signals the first difficulties in maintaining a unity between fieldwork and excavation, topography and antiquarianism. After Hoare, there was no serious attempt to re-establish external form as a valuable factor for analysis until the work of Thurnam, published in the late 1860s and early 1870s. His classification, though more elaborate, was strongly rooted in that of Hoare and is a measure of the earlier establishment of a consistent sound field-working approach as opposed to the variety and pragmatism of excavation techniques. Thurnam's groupings were<sup>21</sup>

**I. Long barrows**

1. simple or unchambered long barrows
2. chambered long barrows

**II. Round barrows**

- |                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
|                        | simple bowl-barrows                          |
| 1. bowl-shaped barrows | trenched bowl-barrows                        |
|                        | composite bowl or oval barrows               |
|                        | simple bell                                  |
| 2. bell-shaped barrows | twin   |
|                        | triple                                       |
|                        | simple - with flat area                      |
| 3. disc-shaped barrows | with one, two, or three small central tumuli |
|                        | with one low mound nearly covering the area  |

The accompanying descriptions were precise and competent definitions of the characteristics of each type but underlying this was a firm developmental sequence with chronological overtones. Although 'the

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<sup>21</sup> Thurnam, 1869b, 168.

manner in which those of bowl, bell, and disc-shaped are mixed, taken in connection with the results obtained by their excavation, shows that these several forms and varieties were in use at one and the same time, this is not inconsistent with the idea of a more modern origin for the bell-shaped barrow than for the bowl-shaped, and for the disc-shaped than either'.<sup>22</sup> Such a lack of inconsistency, in the face of all the available evidence, was only apparent to Thurnam because he found himself incapable of accepting that different forms with different degrees of "sophistication" could be wholly contemporary. It was easier to conceive of a sequence from bowl through bell to disc than to consider variety as a reflection of social status. This was the way that Stukeley's classification had pointed, albeit perhaps unconsciously, but the obsessions which surrounded his work enabled the message to be ignored. Equally, the introduction of a racial aspect into nineteenth century archaeology meant that there was much less emphasis on the social aspects than there had been in the eighteenth century with the aid of classical authors.

It is not surprising that these systems were all the product of men working in Wiltshire where the variety of forms was at once obvious and intriguing. Thurnam long ago noticed the connecting element.<sup>23</sup> The problems faced by workers in other areas are emphasised by the conclusions reached by Faussett and Douglas working in Kent. Both were thrown back to size as the basic criterion and although for Faussett this only involved the occasional interjection of a phrase such as 'middle-sized' or 'exceeded the middle size'<sup>24</sup> to describe certain barrows, Douglas attempted to be a little more systematic.

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22 Thurnam, 1871, 301.

23 Thurnam, 1869b, 162.

24 e.g. Smith, 1856, 77.



His division<sup>25</sup> into small, those with a diameter less than thirteen feet, medium, with a diameter less than twenty-three but greater than thirteen feet, and large, with a diameter greater than twenty-three but not often exceeding thirty-three feet, was arbitrary in the extreme and had little to commend it except convenience. It is significant that these two eighteenth century barrow diggers attempted some form of analysis, however rudimentary, whereas, when the major area of excavation moved away from Wiltshire with the cessation of Hoare and Cunnington's activities in the early nineteenth century, no further estimation of the significance of external form was made until Thurnam's work in the context of a wider study of Wiltshire barrows. The diversity of forms was not observable in these newer areas but nothing better illustrates the separation of topographical and antiquarian aspirations in the early decades of the nineteenth century than the total abandonment of this form of analysis.

Moreover, although there were token, if rare, acknowledgements of the existence of Hoare's scheme,<sup>26</sup> this abandonment is not simply the product of the absence of clearly observable varieties. Not only was there no generation of schemes more appropriate to other areas, there was the positive belief that Hoare's classification was without significance. Warne was most sympathetic but even he thought it burdened with an 'arbitrary nomenclature' while acknowledging that 'every variety ... is to be found in the tumular districts of Dorsetshire'. Yet for him this variety meant mounds 'varying in proportions from the mound the development of which is so minute as to be recognisable only by the experienced antiquary, to that of the size so vast as to impress us with awe and lead us mentally to acknowledge that the men of ancient days were endowed with a spirit

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25 Douglas, 1793, 1.

26 e.g. Ffoulkes, 1851, 9; Beldam, 1861, 309.

of perseverance now totally inappreciable'.<sup>27</sup> While this shows only that Warne's priorities were other than the careful analysis of external forms, others were a good deal more hostile. A writer in the Edinburgh Review noted that

Sir Richard Colt Hoare, after a laborious analysis, has classified these monuments as 'The long barrow, the bowl barrow, the canoid barrow, the Druid barrow, the encircled barrow, the enclosed barrow,' etc.; but all this fine classification becomes lost if the geologists have their way, and make out the barrows to be diluvial formations left by the lakes and other waters. Nor have the geologists been frightened by the discovery of human remains within these earthen mounds. They hold that this shows a disposition to bury under conspicuous objects, whether natural or artificial, as an arrangement more economical than the erection of fresh monuments.<sup>28</sup>

These absurd remarks, containing terms which even Hoare would have found novel, are symptomatic of the lengths to which commentators felt able to go in denying the value of such classifications. Others were hardly more moderate or sensible. Thomas Wright, after listing the types proposed by Hoare, remarked that 'no doubt barrows with the forms indicated by these names are found, but it is most probable that they frequently owe them to accidental circumstances, among which we must not omit the caprice of the makers'.<sup>29</sup> Similarly, Jewitt, after questioning 'the propriety of archaeologists at the present day continuing the very questionable nomenclature adopted by Sir R.C. Hoare' (a curious remark in view of the rarity with which this had occurred in the barrow digging literature in the previous generation or so), claimed that 'an examination of a very large number of barrows leads me to the opinion that the original form of all was circular, and that no deviation from that form, and

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27 Warne, 1866, mopr, 7-8.

28 Edinburgh Review, 118, 1863, 59.

29 Wright, 1852, 50, f.n.

no difference in section, can be taken as indicative of period or of race'.<sup>30</sup> This is reminiscent of Pennant's lament, almost a century earlier, that he could not 'establish any criterion by which a judgement may be made of the people to whom the different species of urns and tumuli belonged, whether they are British, Roman, Saxon or Danish'.<sup>31</sup> However, by the time Jewitt was writing there was widespread acceptance of the idea that the peoples mentioned in the historical sources were not those to whom the barrows might be attributed, and further it was clear that attributions were to come from the analysis of the contents of the barrows.

After Thurnam's efforts a good deal of the controversy was removed from the question, although Borlase, in the idiosyncratic manner that characterises much of his work, produced a scheme which owed much to the least defensible parts of Hoare's classification, within a few years of Thurnam's work appearing and without any apparent cognizance of it.<sup>32</sup> The publication of Thurnam's scheme, although removing the much-maligned nomenclature of Hoare, did not lead to wholesale acceptance and it remained typical, with one or two exceptions,<sup>33</sup> for barrow excavation reports to describe the mound only in terms of height and diameter or circumference. In view of this general reluctance to come to terms with the variety in barrow forms, it is hardly surprising that attention was not given to the grouping of barrows, a subject to which Hoare and Thurnam had only alluded, with the exception of Mortimer's abortive attempt to demonstrate that the plans of barrow groups originated from the constellations observable in the night sky.<sup>34</sup> It was, said Sir Henry Howarth, 'too improbable

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30 Jewitt, 1870, 6.

31 Pennant, 1778, 383.

32 Borlase, 1872, 115-20.

33 e.g. Pitt-Rivers, 1888, 1.

34 Mortimer, 1895b.

to be worthy of serious consideration; a view in which the majority of Fellows present concurred'.<sup>35</sup> We might, with justification, borrow Howarth's words in noting that for most barrow diggers the analysis of the barrows' external forms was not 'worthy of serious consideration'.

#### Stratigraphy and internal barrow structure.

Clearly the techniques outlined in the previous chapter were not particularly conducive to the recognition of internal barrow structure nor indeed was it an important aim of most barrow diggers to record such information. This in itself is probably sufficient to explain the haphazard nature of the evidence to be derived from the reports of eighteenth and nineteenth century barrow digging but it does not help in understanding why the principles of stratification, of prime importance among the field techniques of nineteenth-century geology, were so slowly and imperfectly adopted in archaeology. Perhaps the answer lies with its predominantly chronological use in geology whereas structural analysis would have been its main archaeological use. It could have had value in establishing relative chronologies but the intuitive systems employed by antiquaries together with the underdeveloped sense of absolute chronology rendered such relative time-scales an unnecessary sophistication. Yet the development of stratigraphy by William Smith and other geologists involved the recognition and description of type fossils which would seem to have presented a clear analogy for antiquarian work but for barrow diggers at least their "type-fossils" occurred in the discrete, "non-stratigraphic" context of the grave.

The problem was not really one of perception but the lack of any framework which gave stratigraphic information any value or

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35 Proc. Soc. Antiq. Lond., 2nd Ser., 15, 1893-95, 429.

significance. Stukeley had drawn, although not published, a section of one of the barrows he excavated but his descriptions of them,

The manner of composition of the barrow was good earth, quite thro', except a coat of chalk of about two foot thickness, covering it quite over under the turf. Hence it appears, that the method of making these barrows was to dig up the turf for a great space round, till the barrow was brought to its intended bulk. Then with the chalk, dug out of the environing ditch, they powder'd it all over.<sup>36</sup>

show a complete appreciation of the basic requirements for structural analysis through the interpretation of the mound's stratigraphy. But such a description remains rare throughout the period under consideration and almost unique until the middle of the nineteenth century. Perhaps the novelty of the investigations which he was pursuing prompted Stukeley to make these remarks for only occasionally does one get the impression that Hoare even appreciated the possibilities of such observations.<sup>37</sup> Indeed, Hoare's failure to record such information prompted W.C. Lukis to an impassioned outburst concerning his inadequacies,

It is remarkable, and I venture to add very fortunate that these mounds escaped the scrutiny of Sir Richard Colt Hoare, who, with the most praiseworthy aim, unwittingly did as much as any man could to prevent **archaeologists from knowing**, to the full extent, what his vast researches and extensive experience should have taught them respecting Wiltshire Barrows, and to mislead barrow diggers of a later day. What a mass of most deeply interesting information relating to the construction of Barrows, and how many articles of antiquity of great value have been overlooked and lost through the mode in which he prosecuted his researches. . . . If Sir Richard had adopted a different mode from the first, he would have acquired that very knowledge which would have saved him from the error of classifying Wiltshire barrows in the way he devised; he would have been able to teach us of the present day much that we have been acquiring with lengthened toil and observation; and would have helped us to compare

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36 Stukeley, 1740, 44.

37 That he did so is shown by, for example, Hoare, 1812, 125-26.



with greater exactness and interest, the barrows of Wilts with those of Dorset and other Counties. ... But any one who reads "Ancient Wiltshire" with the hope of learning how Wiltshire barrows were erected, and why their forms and dimensions are so diversified, will be disappointed. The investigation was apparently not pursued with this object in view. In many cases we have a difficulty in ascertaining the material of their construction; ...<sup>38</sup>

The concern which Lukis expresses here for structural analysis suggests that it was of greater importance among nineteenth century barrow diggers than I am proposing but his interest was altogether exceptional, deriving primarily from his considerable interest, together with the rest of his family, in chambered barrows which provided unequivocal evidence for internal structure. Further, even Lukis did not maintain any consistency of attitude towards constructional features for, although he described, in the article just quoted, the obtaining of a section of the barrow as 'a matter of great importance' and used it for a detailed analysis of the building of some of the barrows, a few years later he offered only the most perfunctory remarks concerning the material composing some of the barrows which he had excavated and made no attempt to determine the constructional sequence.<sup>39</sup>

Certainly, interest in details relating to the building of mounds did increase in the second half of the nineteenth century in part, no doubt, a function of the improved excavation techniques but it remained largely confined to matters reflecting on the relative chronology of the burials discovered. Inferred constructional sequences were rare<sup>40</sup> as were explicit statements or depictions of sections in

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38 W.C. Lukis, 1867a, 85-86.

39 W.C. Lukis, 1867a, 89, 97-98; W.C. Lukis, 1871.

40 Ffoulkes, 1851, 16; Greaves, 1861, 70; Mortimer, 1905, 110.

excavated barrows.<sup>41</sup> The piecemeal approach, closely related to interpretation associated with small finds, meant that structural analysis did not establish a separate identity in the minds of most barrow diggers. Moule, in an obituary notice, only felt he 'need ... but name Mr. Warne's great service to Dorset Archaeology in his book on our Barrows, with its careful and most instructive sections, showing the successive burials'.<sup>42</sup> It was only when the number of burials demanded some form of stratigraphic statement to explain their relationship that one is, by and large, aware that barrow diggers had an understanding that information was contained in the sections exposed by themselves.<sup>43</sup> Inevitably, this use of stratigraphy did not encourage its regular and methodical application in barrow excavations but rather ensured that its use was exceptional. But this did not mean that the structural implications could be avoided altogether since the presence of burials high in the mound, above the presumptive primary interment but with uninterrupted strata above them, required explanation. That most commonly offered was best summarised by Rev. J.C. Atkinson,

for, in divers different hills, when I had succeeded ... in obtaining a good clean section of the interior of a grave-hill, I have observed a significant regularity of stratification, always following the outline of the mound, as that outline must have been in the early days of its being. And this stratification was such in its character as to show conclusively that the material was not only derived from diverse localities, involving different colours and various qualities, but also deposited, when obtained and brought to the site of its destined application, with the steady regularity which characterises systematised and methodical, as well as graduated, accretion.<sup>44</sup>

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41 Wright, 1855, 172; Rocke, 1874, 125; Woodruff, 1874, 21-22; Mortimer, 1905, *passim*.

42 Moule, 1888, xix.

43 Borlase, 1872, 245; Greenwell & Rolleston, 1877, 196; Coffey, 1905, 14-16; Mortimer, 1905, 148 & 169.

44 Atkinson, 1891, 148.

Together with a construction based on material from diverse localities went the concept of accretions to the mound over a period of time : 'there can be no doubt', thought Atkinson, 'that in many cases these secondary interments led on not only to very considerable additions to the existing grave-hills, but to additions of such magnitude as entirely to remodel the grave-mound dealt with'.<sup>45</sup> The development of this idea, of barrow form depending in part on the number of burials made in it at different times, perhaps explains the reluctance to use external form as a basis for classification. Re-modelling barrows was an hypothesis implicit in the much older idea of barrows forming family vaults<sup>46</sup> but it could never have been a wholly satisfactory explanation while it was felt that size of tumulus equated with the rank of person buried under it. Hoare had early claimed that 'the motto of fronti nulla fides may be justly and strictly applied to barrows; and the antiquary who makes them his study, must neither be disappointed in finding only a simple interment in the largest barrow, and the finest urns and most precious trinkets in the smallest',<sup>47</sup> but the relationship between size and rank remained attractively viable until late in the nineteenth century.<sup>48</sup> It weakened, however, in the face of the intermittent accumulation hypothesis and the difficulty of reconciling that idea with the discoveries in barrows as Hoare's comments were increasingly substantiated. The situation remained confused despite the formulation of these ad hoc generalisations to such an extent that Atkinson did not apparently see any inconsistency between his remarks quoted above and the claim that 'no two of those of the larger size were built of the same material, or planned on precisely the same principle'.<sup>49</sup>

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45 Atkinson, 1891, 149.

46 Douglas, 1793, 170; Miles, 1826, v; Akerman, 1847, 3.

47 Hoare, 1812, 210.

48 e.g. Greenwell & Rolleston, 1877, 260.

49 Atkinson, 1891, 147.

Much of this was challenged by Pitt-Rivers but his work appeared too late to seriously influence the barrow diggers under discussion here. For the first time, there was a serious attempt to unite structural analysis and stratigraphy with the demands of artifact interpretation and chronology on the basis of equality of importance. Unlike his predecessors and contemporaries Pitt-Rivers actively sought for and excavated the ditches surrounding barrows, showing the importance of interpreting stratigraphy as a matter of routine. The importance of such a technique was shown at Wor Barrow where 'the history of the Barrow has only been brought to light by the deposits gradually accumulated in the Ditch in the course of ages and the relics deposited there during the process of silting up'.<sup>50</sup> Moreover, he attempted to understand the silting process by leaving open the re-excavated ditches at Wor Barrow in order to observe the impact of weathering agents and, from this, he was able to show the rapid accumulation of the primary silt.<sup>51</sup> Concern with ditches as an integral part of the construction of barrows led Pitt-Rivers to doubt the wholesale importation of material for the construction of barrows, as the Yorkshire barrow diggers claimed. 'This may have been the case in some instances', he wrote, 'but more frequently ... this appearance has resulted from the ditches having been overlooked'.<sup>52</sup> While Pitt-Rivers had a more coherent approach to the problems posed by the barrows as structural entities than any of his contemporaries, we should not be led, in consequence, into the belief that his interpretation of structure was less rooted in preconceived attitudes. By way of example one may note his conclusions concerning disc barrows. The form, he suggested, may have arisen through the grief of the mourners causing them to plan a more elaborate and larger monument than they had the motivation

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50 Pitt-Rivers, 1898, 62.

51 *idem*, 24-26.

52 *idem*, 144.

to complete as 'grief ... abated, and laziness supervened', an idea which may perhaps be related to the ingenious scheme of W.C. Lukis whereby barrows were seen as the accretion of small mounds eventually into one large one.<sup>53</sup> In support of his suppositions Pitt-Rivers noted that 'the habit of all primitive people, including the modern Irish as a familiar instance, of lashing themselves up into a frenzy on the occasion of a death, and general excitability upon any uncommon occurrence, followed by a speedy relapse, favours this hypothesis'. This could not, however, explain all the observable aspects of disc barrow form but, thought Pitt-Rivers, 'it may ... be a form that has become persistent and conventionalized through the cause already mentioned'.<sup>54</sup> Enough has been quoted to show that Pitt-Rivers was fully in agreement with the ideas of social evolution current among anthropologists and others to his day and we may perhaps see, in his explanation of why the disc barrow form does not conform exactly to expectation, a rather subtle adaptation of the theory of "survivals" popularised and developed by Tylor.

It is clear then that the failure to appreciate the value of stratigraphy derived from a lack of concern with the barrow as an example of structure and that Pitt-Rivers' work came too late seriously to alter these attitudes.<sup>55</sup> Moreover, this lack of concern meant that only the exceptional was recorded and the fact that it was exceptional prevented the generation of techniques more positively aimed at its future detection. Thus the discovery of "house-sites" under barrows<sup>56</sup> did not cause Mortimer to rethink his approach in order to recognise better such elements in subsequent excavations. There was a general unwillingness to admit the possibility that barrows were more

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53 W.C. Lukis, 1867a, 98-99.

54 quotations from Pitt-Rivers, 1898, 145.

55 See Evans 1903 for an isolated example of the impact of Pitt-Rivers' approach.

56 Mortimer, 1882.



complex than simple heaps of earth or stone covering interments and so, when this conclusion in any individual case became inevitable it was generally noted, with the implication that this was exceptional and without wider importance. Associated with these attitudes was the general statement concerning barrow structure without any documentation or support other than the author's assertion.

First making a circle of large stones, within which the interments were placed, and then covered with an accumulation of stones, until a mound was formed surrounded by a kind of Wall of one or two courses, consisting of the aforesaid circle; the whole was then covered with earth, which though thinly laid on at the summit, was suffered to extend considerably further than the walled circle, thus concealing all the stonework.

This, Bateman confidently claimed, was 'a plan commonly adopted by the Britons in the construction of their tumuli',<sup>57</sup> or again, Hancock referred to 'the customary circle of stones which runs round the barrow within the outer covering of moor earth'.<sup>58</sup>

Nothing better highlights the problems associated with the analysis of structures than the response to barrows which produced no burials whatsoever. Hoare, in commenting on the unusually large number of empty 'cists' discovered in the Everley barrows, asked, 'can we suppose that the Britons entertained the same ideas as the Greeks and Romans, who erected to the memory of those whose bodies could not be found, a tumulus honorarius or cenotaphium, from the superstitious notion that the soul could not rest unless deposited in a tomb?'.<sup>59</sup> He did not provide an answer but it was clearly not beyond the bounds of possibility for Hoare, without his acceptance of the idea that all empty barrows were cenotaphs. Later in the century,

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57 Bateman, 1861, 62-64.

58 Hancock, 1896, 22.

59 Hoare, 1812, 186.

however, when images of the barrow-building population had come more into focus, Greenwell felt unable to countenance the idea of cenotaphs. 'Such a practice', he wrote, 'surely belongs to an age wherein the state of culture must have been much more artificial both in sentiment and habits than any by which we can imagine the people who erected these barrows to have been influenced'.<sup>60</sup> Certainly, by the middle of the nineteenth century this had become the generally accepted position but there still remained the problem of the empty barrows demanding explanation. Three interpretations were widely canvassed. The first, advanced by Kemble but with little support,<sup>61</sup> was that barrows were prepared beforehand and that empty barrows were simply those that had never been used.<sup>62</sup> The other two, both primarily advocated by Greenwell, were either that the barrow had been inadequately excavated or that the body had completely decayed.<sup>63</sup> It does not require much intuition to recognise that inadequate excavation was largely reserved for explanation of the phenomenon among barrows dug by earlier workers. Noticeably, none of these interpretations poses any threat to the concept of a barrow being a simple mound covering an interment and that of Kemble, which came nearest to so doing, was described by Greenwell as 'being both unnatural and out of harmony with the general mass of evidence which the burial mounds afford'.<sup>64</sup> Greenwell eventually came to accept the idea of cenotaphs 'on rare occasions' but this reluctant decision was only taken when he could find no other way of explaining his observations.<sup>65</sup> Even so it was not a view that was readily agreed to by others.<sup>66</sup>

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60 Greenwell & Rolleston, 1877, 341.

61 e.g. Woodruff, 1874, 26.

62 Kemble, 1855, 331.

63 Greenwell & Rolleston, 1877, 28.

64 Greenwell & Rolleston, 1877, 28.

65 Greenwell, 1890, 25.

66 e.g. Mortimer, 1905, xxxix.

## Long barrows, cromlechs and chambered barrows.

Long barrows may reasonably be considered in conjunction with the other two types of remains since they, much more than round barrows, represented the link with the chambered barrows and comparisons between chambered and unchambered long barrows were readily made. As a type, the long barrow had been recognised by Stukeley and thereafter was generally accepted as a distinctive group among barrows, even by those who were not impressed with round barrow typologies. A few, like Jewitt, felt that 'where elliptical barrows occur (generally known as "long barrows"), they are ... not matters of original design, but of accident, through additional interments; ... an examination of a very large number of barrows leads me to the opinion that the original form of all was circular, and that no deviation from that form, and difference in section, can be taken as indicative of period or of race'.<sup>67</sup> This mention of period and race emphasises the important aspects of long barrows for nineteenth century barrow diggers, especially for Thurnam who, as we shall see in the next chapter, was most concerned with these factors. Prior to this, interest in long barrows had been limited since their contents were found to be 'so very uniform and uninteresting',<sup>68</sup> as Hoare had remarked. It is not surprising, therefore, that Thurnam should have been the one who devoted most effort to a firm definition of the unchambered long barrow. In particular, he sought to distinguish between the true long barrow with ditches alongside the mound only and oval barrows which, although resembling long barrows in the form of the mound, had ditches encircling the whole barrow. The latter type was generally smaller than the true long barrow and probably its form depended, thought Thurnam, 'upon its having been designed

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67 Jewitt, 1870, 6.

68 Hoare, 1812, 65.

for two or three distinct interments, placed at tolerably regular intervals'.<sup>69</sup> In large measure, Thurnam was concerned with this distinction to protect the integrity of his data, for his views had not found total acceptance<sup>70</sup> and depended heavily on primary material from long barrows to carry conviction. It was therefore important, from Thurnam's point of view, to establish definitions which minimised the opportunities for his opponents to introduce potentially contaminated evidence in support of their arguments.

Thurnam probably acquired more understanding of both earthen and chambered long barrows than any of his contemporaries or predecessors but his single-minded pursuit of the burials precluded the possibility of his developing some form of structural hypothesis concerning earthen long barrows on the basis of the chambered barrows. Greenwell recognised both groups of long barrows as belonging to a single type and had further recognised that the presence or absence of a chamber was a function of the prevailing geological conditions in the area in which the barrow was constructed but he had failed to draw any structural inferences regarding the earthen long barrows.<sup>71</sup> Moreover, the discovery of bones cremated in situ under long barrows only prompted Greenwell to the most generalized interpretations which did not seek to work out the structural mechanisms involved.<sup>72</sup> This failure to postulate decayed wooden structures under earthen long barrows remained until the end of the nineteenth century as Pitt-Rivers' removal, unrecognised, of one half of the entrance to the mortuary structure under Wor Barrow shows. He had the ability to record and interpret what he found but his haphazard recognition of a post-pipe suggests his technique was in no way aimed at maximising the recovery of such information.<sup>73</sup>

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69 Thurnam, 1864a, 427-28.

70 see, for example, Mortimer & Davis, 1866, for comments concerning oval barrows and their contents.

71 Greenwell & Rolleston, 1877, 479.

72 *idem*, 490 & 495.

73 Pitt-Rivers, 1898, 80.

Unlike long or round barrows or cairns, cromlechs and chambered barrows, by their obvious structural intent, demanded explanations which took full account of them as pieces of architectural effort. They were among the earliest recognised prehistoric field monuments and the use of large stones endowed them with a grandeur which barrows, no matter how symmetrical their form, could never equal. Indeed, their megalithic nature implied the use of force and effort on an altogether different scale from that required by the construction of barrows. Thus, whereas there was early agreement on the function of barrows, much of the discussion, especially concerning cromlechs, was aimed at a similar satisfactory definition of their use. When this discussion finally resolved itself in favour of a sepulchral function, they became subject to those forms of analysis used in connection with barrows but the residual problems created by the original prolonged debate absorbed a good deal of energy so that typological schemes involving structure were rare before the late nineteenth century.<sup>74</sup>

Generally speaking, during the eighteenth and early nineteenth century chambered barrows, although known, received so little attention in comparison with that accorded to cromlechs such that Colt Hoare, in his report on the Stoney Littleton barrow, could claim with some exaggeration to have discovered 'a new species of tumulus ... the STONE BARROW, varying from the Long Barrow, not in its external, but in its internal mode of construction' (an exaggeration compounded by the fact that the work was conducted under the supervision of John Skinner).<sup>75</sup> Cromlechs, however, were hotly debated throughout the eighteenth century and several interpretations, all involved to some extent with Druidic notions,<sup>76</sup> were advanced. The appeal of

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74 The development of interpretations of cromlechs and chambered barrows is deserving of study in its own right. Only the most cursory survey is offered here, with emphasis on a few relevant aspects.

75 Hoare, 1821, 44; Coombs & Coombs, 1971, 82-85.

76 For these see Piggott, 1968b, 131-81.



possible Druidic altars, either for sacrificing or burning their victims, was considerable. Although the most fervent supporter of this view was Rowlands it had appeared before he published his study of the Anglesey material.<sup>77</sup> Pegge, writing later in the century, gave a more ambiguous statement:

I have hitherto called the cromlech British tombs, in compliance with the present received opinion; ... But I hold it nevertheless, very uncertain whether those piles are in fact funeral monuments. ... the probability seems to be, that these piles were rather places of devotion than of interment, as the word cromlech evidently imports; and so were placed only casually, and not always or universally, over graves.<sup>78</sup>

The idea of cromlechs as 'places of devotion', or 'Druidic temples' as other less inhibited antiquaries styled them and chambered barrows,<sup>79</sup> clearly derived from the Druidic altar hypothesis but Pegge's remarks have additional interest in their appeal to the word cromlech and mention of 'present received opinion'. Belief in the antiquity of the word cromlech, with all the consequent philological interpretations, was still sufficiently strong a century after Pegge wrote for Albert Way to go to some lengths to refute the idea.<sup>80</sup>

From the wider discussion accompanying the quotation, Pegge appears to mean William Borlase when he speaks of 'present opinion' but he rather misrepresents Borlase's position. Although arguing strongly for their primary use as sepulchres, he did not preclude their use as devotional places or altars even if he felt it to be 'very unlikely, if not impossible, that ever the Cromleh should have been an Altar for **Sacrifice**, for the top of it is not easily to be got upon, much less a fire to be kindled upon it, sufficient to consume the Victim, without scorching the Priest that officiated'.<sup>81</sup> While not dispensing with

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77 Rowlands, 1723, passim; Nevill, 1713, 255.

78 Pegge, 1777, 114.

79 Molesworth, 1787.

80 Way, 1871, 98.

81 Borlase, 1769, 226-30.

the Druidic element, Borlase's attitudes are characterised by a more practical attitude to cromlechs as functioning structures and this led him to support the interpretation of them as sepulchral. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the matter remained unresolved and in 1808 Colt Hoare wrote to Cunnington that he intended to meet his 'worthy friend Mr. Fenton - and before we are many months older, we hope to ascertain the true meaning of the cromlech, for we mean to overturn several, & dig completely within them'.<sup>82</sup>

A more rigorous approach based on excavation rather than speculation was introduced towards the middle of the nineteenth century, mainly through the work of the Lukis family. 'During the steady progress of investigation', wrote F.C. Lukis, 'we were often compelled to acknowledge that our day-dreams of barbarous sacrifice, and writhing victims and yelling multitudes, were now for ever to be dispelled'.<sup>83</sup> The basic Lukis position was first proposed by F.C. Lukis who, having dismissed the Druid's altar hypothesis as 'mere conjecture' resulting from 'the incorrect translation of the word cromlech', noted that 'after the investigation of about twenty of those chambers of the dead, and examining their contents, the result has been convincing and satisfactory as to their original use, and they can no longer be considered otherwise than as ancient catacombs, erected by a remote people'.<sup>84</sup> This is, of course, only moderately more assertive than Borlase but to it was added the belief that not only were cromlechs sepulchral but that they were no more than the denuded remains of chambered barrows. The idea, although not new since Borlase attributes it to John Bell early in the nineteenth century,<sup>85</sup> became strongly associated with W.C. Lukis. He did not offer a full statement of his views until the 1860s but the position of the Lukis

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82 Cunnington letters, Hoare 56, 29 May 1808.

83 F.C. Lukis, 1853, 233.

84 F.C. Lukis, 1845a, 144 & 146.

85 Borlase, 1897, 426.

family was well-known, at least among correspondents like Bateman, by the mid-1840s. Indeed Bateman noted a barrow structure which, with the earth removed, 'the old school of antiquarianism' would have interpreted as 'a complete druidical circle, with a cromlech or altar for human sacrifices standing in the centre'.<sup>86</sup> W.C. Lukis shared his father's interests more completely than his brothers and it may have been a sense of filial duty as well as his intention to aid the completion of his father's proposed book that caused him to delay until the 1860s before giving a comprehensive account of his own position. As early as 1840 he was urging that his father, F.C. Lukis 'should write a volume or two 4to giving plates of everything & a description of them simply, without entering into the probable use of the cromlechs & circles, ... For after all most of the works if not all on these subjects are theoretical & I may say absurd'.<sup>87</sup> The project continued to grow, however, with W.C. Lukis apparently adding material to the two manuscript volumes entitled On Cromlechs after his father's death in 1871. Between them the Lukis family produced a series of important papers on cromlechs and chambered barrows,<sup>88</sup> but the summary of their thinking, written by one of the sons, Frederick Collings Lukis, which appeared in 1853 shows that the essential points were all decided before that date.<sup>89</sup>

The work of the Lukis family satisfied, by and large, the majority of their contemporaries<sup>90</sup> for whom the idea of cromlechs and chambered barrows as one and the same type of sepulchral monument meant that they could be more effectively assimilated into established attitudes concerning barrows. Yet they were not without their critics

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86 Bateman, 1848, 90.

87 W.C. Lukis to F.C. Lukis, 17 June 1840 : Lukis papers, Pre-Roman period, general, fol. 31.

88 F.C. Lukis, 1845a; 1845b; 1846; 1849; J.W. Lukis, 1848; W.C. Lukis, 1864; 1866.

89 F.C. Lukis, 1853.

90 see Barnwell, 1969, 118-29, for a statement to this effect and Donaldson, 1861, 319-20.

particularly Du Noyer who argued that cromlechs, or some at least, were free-standing, possibly more cenotaphs than sepulchres, and claimed to have discovered the primary form in those he characterised as 'earth-fast cromlechs' while Stanley felt that the sepulchral nature of the monuments was unproven and just as extreme a picture as the Druid's altar view had been previously.<sup>91</sup> W.C. Lukis, in particular, spent much time refuting these allegations, especially with the suggestion that they represented a failure to distinguish between the original structures and their present ruined condition.<sup>92</sup> But in order to defend their dictums, the Lukis family adopted attitudes that prevented further contributions to the problem. 'It has been customary', wrote F.C. Lukis, 'to give different appellations to these structures, according to their shape and form, or agreeably to the hypothesis endeavoured to be maintained. From the foregoing observations [on Channel Island examples] it will be easily perceived that whether the cromlechs partake of the circular or square form, or are directed either east or northward, their design remains the same'.<sup>93</sup> Or again from the pen of J.W. Lukis, 'the form of this cromlech [Gavr' Innis] corresponds with many already described by Mr. Lukis and others ... as existing in various parts of the world, and it will be easily perceived that the same purpose and custom prevailed at the period of their construction. Whatever differences may appear in them or in their contents, they are no more than what an increased knowledge of the arts would naturally dictate, as the people approached to a more perfect state of civilisation'.<sup>94</sup> It was essential that differences and distinctions be minimised by the Lukises in order to maintain the basic unity implicit in their hypothesis; to acknowledge variability was to

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91 Du Noyer, 1866, 477-78; 1869, 40; Stanley, 1871, 94-95. See also Long, 1858, 344, f.n. 1: 'two forms of cromlech, the sepulchral and sacrificial'. A compromise statement attempting to embody a consensus view.

92 W.C. Lukis, 1867b, 216; 1878, 134; 1881b, 286.

93 F.C. Lukis, 1845b, 223.

94 J.W. Lukis, 1848, 269-70.



risk reversion to a multiplicity of competing interpretations. Moreover, their attitudes accorded well with the feelings of the times since, in a fine piece of circularity, they both lent and drew support from the concept of the cromlech as a world-wide phenomenon. This was an inevitable development once the sepulchrality of the monuments was established since the universal nature of tumular burial had been long accepted. Yet the nature of megalithic monuments was such that it enabled the recognition of apparent points of similarity among widely separated groups<sup>95</sup> of an altogether greater degree of significance, which, in turn, prompted, in those racially-oriented times, the idea of a cromlech-building people.<sup>96</sup> The idea is present in the quotation, given above, from J.W. Lukis while his brother, F.C. Lukis, spoke of the cromlech-building people being 'branches of one original stock' which Wake Smart later identified as the Indo-Europeans.<sup>97</sup>

In the face of this mental pedigree it is not surprising that the Lukis family, despite their unrivalled store of information, their perception and thoughtfulness, could not find the way forward in the analysis of observable differences in structure and an altogether more dispassionate view of the material available. The efforts of calmer, methodical minds, like those of Thurnam and Anderson, whose attempts to point the way with small-scale syntheses,<sup>98</sup> were lost amid the generalisations riding on the back of the universal cromlech-building people. Indeed by the end of the century only the simplest distinctions based on whether the roofing was achieved with corbelling or a simple slab were being advanced as valuable new criteria but even then accompanied by warnings that the variety in ground-plans was infinite and there could

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95 e.g. Taylor, 1867, 368-69 for comparisons of Dekhan and Northumbrian cairns. See also Borlase, 1881, 196.

96 for comments on this and other points discussed above see Danial, 1966.

97 F.C. Lukis, 1853, 235; Wake Smart in Warne, 1872, iii-iv.

98 Anderson, 1868; 1869; Thurnam, 1869b, 199-243.



be no over-reliance on structural matters.<sup>99</sup> Nor it is other than symptomatic of the problems besetting workers in this field that the first British book on megalithic remains should be the work of an architectural historian, James Fergusson.<sup>100</sup> His idiosyncratic views found little favour with antiquaries who would have wholeheartedly agreed with William Morris when he wrote of Stonehenge that it was a monument which 'nobody knows anything about - except Fergusson who knows less than nothing'.<sup>101</sup> The importance of his efforts lies not in the affront he generated among antiquaries but that he alone was sufficiently free of the problems associated with the destruction of long-established, but meaningless, interpretations and their replacement by a more satisfactory framework to attempt the general survey.

The highly selective consideration of the attitudes of barrow diggers to the structural aspects of their work which this chapter contains is a record of failure rather than success. There was never the ability or willingness to capitalise on the previous generation's achievements because the tendency towards the general statement subverted the development of rigorous analysis and the excavation techniques to support that analysis. In the case of the earthen mounds or stone cairns there was little belief in the view that they were other than constructions of the simplest form despite growing evidence to the contrary. Whereas with the obviously structural cromlechs and chambered barrows the destruction of hypotheses, produced without serious excavation data, became a task of such complexity as to prevent the creation of anything other than a most general basis. Moreover, the general aims and attitudes, outlined in previous chapters, have shown that structural analysis was not particularly important to barrow diggers who felt that other aspects of barrows provided more coherent and meaningful answers.

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99 e.g. Borlase, 1897, 425; Allen, 1900, 217 & 222.

100 Fergusson, 1872. For the background to Fergusson's architectural ideas see Craig, 1968.

101 W. Morris to Mrs Burne-Jones, August 1879 : Henderson, 1950, 130.

## 6 The analysis of small finds.

Any attempt at a full survey of barrow diggers' views concerning the objects they discovered would be long, tedious and repetitive. I have chosen, therefore, to restrict this chapter to a small number of topics in the hope of avoiding these tendencies while at the same time showing the forms of analysis which excavators thought appropriately applied to their discoveries. It has been emphasised several times that the recovery of objects was a prime motivation for all barrow diggers and we are here discussing that small number who felt able or desirous to offer some further generalisations connected with the material they found. The subjects to be considered are :

- i the human remains and forms of burial
- ii pottery
- iii the problems of chronology
- iv the social implications of the finds

They provide a balance between specific and general topics and between those elements which we still consider important and those in which only passing interest is shown. Inevitably, in order to show the constructions of the nineteenth century there is a bias against earlier workers but such a position finds justification in the rudimentary efforts of the eighteenth century antiquaries struggling to establish the most meagre of basic premises. Despite the widespread use of classificatory techniques among the natural sciences, finding remarkable expression in the work of Linnaeus, the efforts of Hoare and his predecessors show that the elevation of description into generalisation in the field of small finds had a low priority in the topographical tradition. Only with the weakening of the links with topography and the growing union with ethnology does analysis begin to burgeon. Moreover, the topics here discussed are deliberately selected to exemplify, in a specific manner, the barrow diggers' response to the wider aims outlined in earlier chapters.

## Human remains and forms of burial.

Attitudes to human skeletal remains discovered during barrow digging changed dramatically during the nineteenth century. 'In searching ... into these rude memorials of our forefathers', wrote Milner in 1790, 'the true Antiquary will ever respect their remains; and whilst he enters into their views by endeavouring to revive their memory, he will also as far as possible consult their wishes, in leaving to their bones their antient place of sepulture'.<sup>1</sup> These remarks were quoted by Colt Hoare because they 'coincide so truly with my own sentiments on the subject ... In the numerous barrows we have opened due reverence has been paid to the remains of the mighty dead : their bones and ashes have been carefully collected, and deposited again in the same tomb, together with a coin, marking the time when they were investigated'.<sup>2</sup> Such claims for a reverential attitude to human bones do not correlate well with Hoare's statement that 'when throwing out the bones of this skeleton, we had a strong proof how well they are preserved when deposited deep in the chalk, as they would bear being thrown for a considerable distance without breaking',<sup>3</sup> but they do show that the collection of such pieces was no part of the antiquary's work in the early nineteenth century. Moreover, the attitude remained unchanged well into the century : 'Lord Londesboro never takes the crania from the barrows', Barnard Davis noted.<sup>4</sup>

Yet in 1850 John Thurnam made the following statement:

I beg to announce that I am collecting information in reference to the crania from tumuli of different ages, with the view of deducing, if possible, some conclusions as to the form of the skull, and other characteristics of

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1 Milner, 1790, 897.

2 Hoare, 1812, 20, f.n.

3 idem, 163.

4 Barnard Davis papers, 1850-54 : Roy. Anthropol. Inst. Mss. 140. 3.

the skeleton in the aboriginal and succeeding races who settled in the British Isles. A few crania, valuable for this purpose, have already been collected by the labours of the Yorkshire Antiquarian Club, and during another season more may be expected from the same source. One gentleman, who possesses a valuable collection of antiquities from tumuli, has promised the use of his series of crania, chiefly Celtic. There are also a few skulls scattered through public collections, to which access may be obtained. In conclusion I may be permitted to express my desire to receive information which may assist in the proposed inquiry. I shall feel indebted to any gentleman who may possess crania from barrows, the age of which can be authenticated by the associated remains, who will allow me the use of them, for the purpose of being measured and described.<sup>5</sup>

Further, in 1861, Bateman described Hoare's Ancient Wiltshire as being 'in a great measure useless to the scientific student, from the absence of any Craniological Notices or Measurements' while by the end of the century Mrs. Armitage thought that 'the labours of Dr. Thurnam, Canon Greenwell, and Professor Rolleston, which have established the existence of two very different races, distributed over the whole of this island before the coming of the Romans, form the most important step which has yet been taken in England in the direction of ... a science [of archaeology]'.<sup>6</sup> The latter remarks strike a note of incredulity in the mind of the modern reader but although they may be unrepresentative, even of their own time, it is as well to remember Pitt-Rivers' statement that he 'superintended the clearing of all the skeletons on the ground, having been sent for, if elsewhere, immediately any skeleton or other object of special interest was found'.<sup>7</sup>

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5 Thurnam, 1850, 35.

6 Bateman, 1861, preface, v; Armitage, 1895, 42.

7 Pitt-Rivers, 1888, xiv.



But how are we to explain the dramatic change in attitudes to skeletal material that occurred around the middle of the century? In part it reflects the growing racial outlook of ethnological studies at that time which has been mentioned in a previous chapter but this provides a background against which to view the work on human remains rather than an explanation for the changed feelings. Attempts to determine racial varieties in man were not new by the mid-nineteenth century. Blumenbach, whom Barnard Davis saw as the pioneer of such work through the analysis of skulls, had published his first important work in 1775 and his dedication of the third edition of On the natural variety of mankind (1795) to Sir Joseph Banks shows his work was well-known to and supported by English workers.<sup>8</sup> Indeed Colt Hoare, in his description of the Stoney Littleton barrow, requested 'the attention of my brother antiquaries, and especially of those versed in the science of craniology, to the two skulls discovered in this tumulus, which appear to be totally different in their formation to any others which our researches have led us to examine, being fronte valde depressa,'<sup>9</sup> and in so doing showed that we cannot attribute a reluctance to collect skulls to an ignorance of the work of the craniologists. The answer lies more with the activities of the resurrectionists in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The failure to develop a satisfactory system for the provision of bodies for the teaching of anatomy at that time had led to a situation whereby most corpses supplied to anatomy schools were those of persons recently deceased, buried and then illegally disinterred. Although this practice caused widespread public concern and disquiet, successive governments were reluctant to introduce legislation since anatomical experiments also aroused public indignation. The situation continued to deteriorate until a Select Committee was established in 1828 and its recommendations led eventually to the

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8 For this dedication see Bendyshe, 1865, 149-54.

9 Hoare, 1821, 47.

Anatomy Act of 1832,<sup>10</sup> as a result of which the activities of the resurrectionists ceased and public prejudices towards scientific research involving human bodies was consequently reduced.<sup>11</sup> Considering the date of the act and the hostility which the resurrectionists engendered, it seems reasonable to interpret the reluctance of barrow diggers before the late 1830s to collect human remains as a desire to avoid association in people's minds with the resurrectionists rather than a simple disinclination to interfere with the physical remains of the dead.<sup>12</sup>

Thereafter, despite the call by Thurnam for the preservation of human material, attitudes changed only slowly. Barnard Davis contributed a similar paper to the Gentleman's Magazine in 1853 but 'with extremely small success'.<sup>13</sup> However, his A few ethnological queries, to serve as a guide in collecting information respecting the inhabitants of the British Isles, published in 1860, elicited 'many serviceable replies'.<sup>14</sup> One would expect, in glancing over the craniological literature of the mid-nineteenth century, to find the clearest exposition of the possibilities of such studies among the pages of Crania Britannica the result of collaboration between Davis and Thurnam. That it is not so discovered is explicable in the circumstances of their co-authorship of that mighty work, for it was something that would never have been contemplated in less formal times. Bateman, an early believer in the value of craniology had first suggested the project to Barnard Davis in 1849, offering to make available his own collection exclusively to Davis who, after hesitancy and reluctance sufficient to show his own modesty, set to work. The allusions to its beginnings in the published

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10 2 and 3 Guil. IV. cap. 75.

11 A survey of events leading to the passing of the act is given in Bailey, 1896, 89-119.

12 cf. Celoria, 1966.

13 Davis, 1853; Davis & Thurnam, 1865, preface, f.n.

14 Davis & Thurnam, 1865, preface, f.n.

work are insufficient to establish the details but a long letter from Davis to Bateman is more revealing. Davis had, in the course of his preparations, contacted Thurnam in order to discover if there was any clash of interests and had received a reply to the effect that Thurnam's plans were of a preliminary nature and that pressure of work precluded any early publication : 'under these circumstances I could not at all encourage you postponing any work you may intend to bring out on this subject', concluded Thurnam. The reasons for Thurnam's apparent indifference to Davis's original proposals are unclear, perhaps they are the result of 'the distance of his personal manners' which Bateman noted but more likely Thurnam did not believe, at that stage, Davis's work would amount to anything substantial. Whatever the explanation Thurnam's initial reactions placed him at a severe disadvantage when the appearance of a prospectus alerted him to the dangers of his own work being pre-empted. 'What you propose', Thurnam then wrote to Davis, 'is so similar to what I myself intended that I feel there would be no chance of success for two works almost identical in character, and as circumstances enable you to be first in the field I must abandon my intention, unless you should consent to what I have now to propose to you. This is that we should combine & bring out a work in our joint names'. Davis felt that this second letter showed clearly that although 'he reiterates in the most friendly manner his aid, as far as his crania are concerned, he will feel disappointed in having the subject taken out of his hands as it were'. However, 'at the same time I consider', wrote Davis, 'I have taken every precaution to avoid such interference and had full reason to conclude that I had so avoided it'. In such circumstances, Thurnam had little room for manoeuvre when Davis proposed 'to take him as an associate, with his name on the prospectus & title page, on condition of his rendering every assistance in his power, both as to materials & the obtaining of subscribers - his having nothing to do with the business, or pecuniary part of the undertaking, beyond receiving one copy of the work for his own use - his adhering to my original plan of full size representations, and the avoidance of all

theoretical opinions'.<sup>15</sup> The sting in these proposals was very much in the tail with Davis' refusal to admit 'theoretical opinions', thereby excluding the possibility of Thurnam making a major contribution. Even at this early stage it must have been clear to both authors that they would make strange bedfellows and, as the work progressed, the differences between them widened to such a degree that the final production is lacking in any real cohesion. Davis was an orthodox believer in polygenesis with a firmly conservative estimate of what craniology might achieve whereas not until 1856 was Thurnam, in Davis's estimation, 'a decided polygenist',<sup>16</sup> and certainly he was always more radical in his belief in the potential of craniological studies. Consequently, Crania Britannica remains remarkable for the quality of the illustrations and the incidental archaeological information which it contains, rather than as the finest exposition of craniology applied to prehistoric material.

Thurnam was thus obliged to publish his own attitudes in separate papers commenting

I was the more anxious to express my views on the ancient British skull-forms from having had no adequate opportunity of doing so in the pages of Crania Britannica. It may have been as well, not to have combined in the same work views hardly, or not at all, capable of being reconciled.<sup>17</sup>

The views which were excluded from Crania Britannica he summed up as follows :

... as to the forms of skull from the tumuli of the pre-Roman period in this country, a sort of axiom has, I think, now been established to this effect:- Long barrows, long skulls; Round barrows, round or short skulls, - Dolichotaphic barrows, dolichocephalic crania; Brachytaphic barrows, brachycephalic crania.<sup>18</sup>

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15 Bateman correspondence, J. Barnard Davis, 20 May 1852.

16 Bateman correspondence, J. Barnard Davis, 7 July 1856.

17 Thurnam, 1864b, 512, f.n.

18 idem, 158.



Dolichocephalic skulls were defined as those skulls having a breadth/length ratio, on a scale of one hundred, of seventy and brachycephalic skulls as those with a ratio of eighty. The maintenance of such a theory required detailed understanding of the context from which the skull came and, for a relative chronology, the associations of the skull. In seeking to establish these factors, Thurnam was drawn towards his more obviously archaeological work, since Davis had earlier noted that 'Dr. T [hurnam] maintains that no confident opinion can be formed as to the people which a skull belongs unless there are some antiquities to determine this'.<sup>19</sup> In documenting a belief that two distinct races were to be associated with the construction of the two major forms of prehistoric sepulchral monuments, Thurnam was giving substance to earlier suggestions of Wilson and Bateman.<sup>20</sup> As well as reversing the accepted Scandinavian sequence, it ran into considerable criticism on methodological grounds. After all, as one reviewer of *Crania Britannica* acidly remarked, 'Dr. Thurnam's beautiful hypothesis ... has not convinced even his own colleague'.<sup>21</sup> Davis was not alone in feeling that Thurnam's views placed insufficient weight on accidental variations in the form of the skull which occurred in every race and that the basic methodology was consequently unsound.<sup>22</sup> Moreover, Davis believed in the 'protogenic character of the Celts' and maintained that both forms of skull were equally Celtic.<sup>23</sup> Thurnam sought to answer these criticisms and reiterated his beliefs, 'established from archaeological and osteological evidence', emphasizing that the dolichocephalic skulls were 'earlier and ... probably Iberic' while the later, brachycephalic ones were 'probably Gaulish or, in other words, Belgic'.<sup>24</sup> Thurnam's views were given considerable support

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19 Barnard Davis papers, 1854-58; Roy. Anthropol. Inst. Mss. 140. 4.

20 Wilson, 1851, 160-89; Bateman, 1851, 211.

21 Beddoe, 1868, 53.

22 See, for example, Davis, 1857, 42-43 and Blake, 1869.

23 Davis and Thurnam, 1865, 19-20 & pl. 33; see also Thurnam, 1864b, 124, f.n.

24 Thurnam, 1869a.



by the work of Rolleston on the skeletal material from Greenwell's excavations especially with regard to the primacy of the dolichocephalic skull form so that even Beddoe, who was unsympathetic to Thurnam's conclusions, was obliged to admit in 1888 that Thurnam's views were 'now generally accepted' as to the association of long barrows and long skulls.<sup>25</sup> Certainly, the development of these racially orientated analyses inhibited the adoption of phrenological interpretations by barrow diggers although they did not entirely exclude them. Bateman had, early in his career, described one skull as exhibiting 'phrenological developments indicative of some of the worst passions incident to human nature' and Greenwell, more positively, said of one he found that it 'belonged to a man ... of good intelligence'.<sup>26</sup> But piecemeal judgements concerning individual characters could not compete with the possibilities of making important statements about races and craniologists roundly condemned the value of phrenological interpretations.<sup>27</sup>

We have seen in chapter three how the political efforts of those wedded to the priority of racial analysis in anthropology were effectively neutralised by the supporters of evolutionary anthropology. In denying much significance to race per se, the cultural evolutionists eliminated it as a matter for serious study in general anthropology but in barrow digging the situation was more problematic since it was so much more intimately concerned with burial and human skeletal material. If interest could not be diverted entirely from the human remains it could and was channelled into considerations of the treatment of those remains and the implications arising therefrom. It had long been recognised that 'two systems of burial were ... adopted

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25 Greenwell & Rolleston, 1877, 126-30, 559-718; Beddoe, 1888, 105.

26 Bateman, 1848, 29; Greenwell & Embleton, 1867, 146.

27 Davis & Thurnam, 1865, 6.

the interment of the body entire, and cremation' but, as Hoare went on to remark, 'after the most minute investigation, I have never been able to separate, with any degree of certainty, by two distinct periods, these different modes of burial : I am, however, inclined to think that the very earliest mode of interment was the gathering of the legs up towards the head and that the latest mode was extending the body at full length'.<sup>28</sup> Hoare's inclinations were generally accepted but, more important, there was no clear definition of the relationship between interment and cremation which could only result from a more dispassionate and precise assessment of the data. Significantly, the first attempt to secure greater precision was made by Lubbock, one of the foremost evolutionary anthropologists, for although 'the human remains . . . , and especially the skulls, will prove our best guides . . . at present we do not possess a sufficient number of trustworthy descriptions or measurements' and 'the pottery does not at present help us much'.<sup>29</sup> His immediate solution was, through an analysis of the work of Hoare and Bateman, to seek to relate modes of burial with the relative chronology of the three-age system through the associated finds.<sup>30</sup> This sharpening appreciation of the importance and value of the concept of association was shared with the racially orientated students of human material, most of whom found the three-age system as acceptable as did the evolutionary anthropologists for whom it was tailor-made. A study similar to Lubbock's was undertaken by Thurnam as part of his later, more specifically archaeological work and with comparable results which showed that contracted burial was usual in the neolithic but not unknown in bronze age while cremation showed a suitably opposite picture.<sup>31</sup> It is interesting to note that by the late 1870s, when Thurnam's racial observations had been substantiated by

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28 Hoare, 1821, 47.

29 Lubbock, 1865, 100.

30 idem, 92-103.

31 Thurnam, 1871, 310, 331.

Greenwell and Rolleston and the evolutionary approach was uncontestedly dominant, Lubbock paid more attention to Thurnam's work juxtaposing it with his own burial analysis.<sup>32</sup>

Increasing emphasis on association in both racial and burial mode studies encouraged concern with the legitimacy of the assumption that prehistoric man believed in a future existence, the requirements of which he was attempting to meet by the provision of grave goods. Bateman was maintaining a long-held view that the deposition of objects was as universal a custom as the building of barrows and, since historical sources documented both belief in an after-life and the placing of goods in the grave, it was appropriate to apply the same motivations to prehistoric man. Indeed, he uses it as powerful argument in favour of monogenesis.<sup>33</sup> One of the first to question this fundamental assumption was A.H. Rhind who felt that 'a careful survey ... would probably involve a necessity for material modification of the current classifications, and limit the applicability of the psychological deductions which have commonly attributed to primeval ages certain feelings on the subject of futurity, without sufficient reference to the special divergences indicated by observed data, which, to say the least, will hardly verify the exactness of such a universal scheme of primeval religion'.<sup>34</sup> Lubbock took up the point as his 'careful survey' showed how cases involved burial without accompanying objects and attacked Wilson's statement<sup>35</sup> that there was 'constant deposition' of goods beside the dead. It was just this absence of ~~constancy~~ that led Lubbock to the view that objects with human remains were no more than 'the touching evidences of individual affection'.<sup>36</sup>

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32 Lubbock, 1878, 141-44.

33 Bateman, 1861, iii-iv.

34 Rhind, 1857, 375.

35 Wilson, 1863, I, 498.

36 Lubbock, 1865, 92-98.

Greenwell was equivocal on the matter but felt on balance that the evidence supported the idea of a belief in a future existence and by the late 1870s even Lubbock, while maintaining his original position, was introducing exceptions.<sup>37</sup> However, Mortimer, whose analyses of such philosophical questions were never noted for their subtlety, crudely reasserted the fundamentalist belief.<sup>38</sup> This aspect of barrow digging attitudes is an interesting demonstration of the problems associated with small finds analysis. A cardinal axiom coming under attack in the mid-nineteenth century because of more rigorous approaches weathered the storm because it was not susceptible to determination by those approaches and certainty in the new general law was dissipated by an increasing number of counter-examples. It was then of no matter that the original difficulties remained unresolved but of great moment that the new position could not make itself impregnable.

### Pottery.

After human remains pottery was the most frequently discovered material during barrow digging and, since its study was not burdened by the same initial inhibitions, it was the subject of relatively early attempts at classification. The first serious attempts were those of Hoare who was the first to acquire a sizeable collection of prehistoric pottery; Faussett and Douglas, working essentially on post-Roman graves, did not think of pottery as important in view of the host of other objects recovered. Classification depended initially on a large number of pots for only in this instance could the individuality of each pot be transcended and the similarities appreciated. Throughout the eighteenth century and into the nineteenth century, stray finds were

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37 Greenwell & Rolleston, 1877, 59-61; Lubbock, 1878, 156.

38 Mortimer, 1905, liii.

often described as Roman because no-one was in a position to define the characteristics of pre-Roman pottery and such attitudes continued until the mid-nineteenth century although with less justification.<sup>39</sup> Hoare's threefold classification was based on interpretation of the pot's function for as he had 'strong reason to suppose that they were appropriated to distinct purposes, it is necessary they should be discriminated'. The first group he distinguished was the 'sepulchral, or funerealurn' which acted as a container for cremated bones while the second he termed 'drinking cups' because 'a very ancient custom prevailed, and even still is practised amongst savage nations, of depositing articles of food with the dead and ... the Britons very probably destined these vases for the same purpose'. The final series, 'incense cups', were more contentious. Since their size precluded their use as containers of 'the ashes, or even the viaticum of the deceased', Hoare argued that the presence on many of them of perforations suggested 'they were filled with balsams and previous ointments, and suspended over the funeral pile' justifying his interpretation with reference to classical authors.<sup>40</sup> Although without chronological overtones, Hoare's approach established the basic criteria for the classification of pottery.

Thus, because function remained the appropriate means for the analysis of pottery, criticism was largely directed at the terminology and not the groups themselves although the distinction between the two was often confused and blurred. Akerman, for instance, drew attention to Tacitus's description of the burial practice of the Germans as using 'no odours, but a particular kind of wood, in reducing the body to ashes'. This statement was, claimed Akerman, the most relevant classical description of burial practice when interpreting British material but, he complained, 'some English antiquaries still talk of

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39 e.g. Gibson, 1808; Hutchinson, 1862, 55.

40 Hoare, 1812, 25-26.



"incense cups" and perfumes used at the funerals of the primitive inhabitants of Britain'.<sup>41</sup> The problems associated with incense cups remained throughout the nineteenth century and curiously, although the argument remained one about function, it became a matter of providing an acceptable presumed use for a group which acquired their own validity. This relationship between function and a largely undefined morphological criteria bedevilled most nineteenth century analysis of small finds. A fine example of this interaction is seen in Greenwell's attitude to Stanley and Way's suggestion that these diminutive vessels were used to transfer fire from one place to another.<sup>42</sup> It was an explanation, thought Greenwell, which possessed, 'upon the whole, the best claims to acceptance; and until some more likely one is suggested, or some facts come to light which render it untenable, I feel inclined to adopt it, as, at all events, a provisional explanation of the purpose of these enigmatical vessels'.<sup>43</sup> In this situation, there is no room for admissions of total ignorance since to do so would weaken the credibility of the classification which could not be solely a notional assessment by the archaeologist or an analytical device which furthered the development of the subject without immediately contributing to our understanding of the past. It had to be rooted in the facts and actuality of prehistoric life; to provide merely succinct definitions which encouraged precise usage of terminology was of little value.

Bateman added a fourth group, food vessels, to Hoare's classification and thereby included those pots which, although rare in Wiltshire, were common finds in the barrows of the more northerly counties.<sup>44</sup> He described drinking cups as 'happily denominated'<sup>45</sup> so it is not

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41 Akerman, 1847, 10-11.

42 Stanley & Way, 1868, 73-74.

43 Greenwell & Rolleston, 1877, 83.

44 Bateman, 1855; 1861, 283-85.

45 Bateman, 1861, 285.

surprising that he saw the new group as fulfilling a complementary role. Otherwise, Bateman's 'observations on Celtic pottery' were only marginally more descriptive than Hoare's but less attention was paid to function although it still underpins the system.<sup>46</sup> Greenwell's remarks<sup>47</sup> are similarly structural to Bateman's while aiming at a more comprehensive survey. Both commentators introduce the same elemental flaw into their work by using examples not as support for their general statements but merely as illustrations of their remarks. Greenwell, in particular, isolated the principal forms, but, in so doing, notes, as he did in the case of incense cups, that 'there are numerous varieties, not materially differing from the typical forms, which it would be tedious as well as useless to particularise'. Such a statement, coupled with a definition of food vessels as 'all those vessels which are associated with unburnt bodies, except drinking cups; and those which accompany burnt bodies, except cinerary urns, and incense cups, whatever the form may be',<sup>48</sup> emphasises that the defined groups were meant to be all-embracing rather than internally coherent. Indeed, the failure to cope with aberrations within each group strongly implies that neither Bateman nor Greenwell had a firm view of what they hoped to achieve in these efforts at classification other than amplifying existing interpretations. Remarks in a similar vein, introduced by Jewitt into works where they formed only incidental prefatory material,<sup>49</sup> show that this form of generalised analysis did not result specifically from a detailed analysis of their own material, expanded into a more embracing statement, but was the almost unquestioning imposition of their own finds into a pre-existing grouping; even Bateman's food vessel group is nothing more than a logical extension to Hoare's original scheme.

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46 Bateman, 1861, 279-87.

47 Greenwell & Rolleston, 1877, 66-103.

48 *idem*, 66.

49 Jewitt, 1865, 4-12.

Interposed, chronologically, between Bateman and Greenwell was Thurnam but his work on pottery,<sup>50</sup> in company with his other small finds analysis, was of an altogether more fundamental nature and has the stamp of one very much involved in the classification of artifacts. Thurnam divided the pottery into two basic classes, culinary and sepulchral pottery, on the basis of their appearance and the presence or absence of decoration; culinary vessels were, thus, 'of various form and size, but all characterized by exceptional rudeness and the almost entire absence of surface ornament'.<sup>51</sup> Although accepting the basic four-fold classification of other workers for his sepulchral pottery analysis, Thurnam's attitudes were bound up with two new approaches, first, that some of the pottery found in burial contexts was not specifically made for sepulchral purposes, a view which Greenwell totally rejected<sup>52</sup> and, second, that it was worthwhile and indeed necessary to attempt to determine sub-groupings within the four major types of sepulchral pottery and the newly-defined culinary pottery. Despite the arbitrary nature of these sub-groups, which Thurnam himself recognised with such phrases as 'four varieties ... which however glide the one into the other, may be distinguished',<sup>53</sup> the systematic ordering and description of each variety marks a significant shift in emphasis from functional to morphological considerations. It presents a sharp contrast to the unitary approach of Bateman and Greenwell, seeking to establish principal forms for each major group. Thurnam's schemes found few adherents and were largely ignored by Greenwell in his pottery survey but they did contain the essence of a morphological classification, an approach spectacularly developed by Abercromby.

Abercromby's work lies largely outwith the limits of this survey and this is certainly true of his influence<sup>54</sup> but it is important to emphasise

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50 Thurnam, 1871, 331-400.

51 idem, 338.

52 Greenwell & Rolleston, 1877, 103-09.

53 Thurnam, 1871, 377.

54 An early example of this is Gray & Prideaux, 1905, 9.

that his studies<sup>55</sup> represent the use of a typological approach similar in concept and scope to those undertaken by Evans on stone and bronze implements. The initial delay of its application to pottery analysis can be explained in terms of the efforts described above. Like stone and bronze finds pottery classification was rooted in interpretations of function but unlike the other two materials, it could not be readily aligned with the evolutionary anthropological approach of the late nineteenth century since there were no obvious paths of functional efficiency to be discerned. Pottery remained for most barrow diggers a potential source for chronological or historical statements without any clear conception of how the methodology to achieve that potential might be established.<sup>56</sup> Abercromby's solution to the dilemma was to abandon the idea of functional efficiency and to see pottery instead as developmental sequences, the result of a tradition which meant that 'as each generation had inferior models to imitate, a disadvantage which increased progressively as time went on, the whole tendency of the form was from good to bad, and from bad to worse'.<sup>57</sup> It represented the demise of a functional basis for the classification of material whose varieties would largely be determined by non-utilitarian criteria and the emergence of morphological analysis with strong chronological implications.

### Chronology.

The problems of establishing chronological sequences, both relative and absolute, is appropriately discussed as part of the analysis of small finds, since it was the material recovered that appeared to offer

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55 Abercromby, 1904; 1905b; 1907; 1908; 1912.

56 e.g. Kirwan, 1872, 154; Mansel-Pleydell, 1896, 33.  
cf. Smart, 1891.

57 Abercromby, 1905b, 326; 1908, 57.

the opportunities for their resolution. Indeed, much of the analysis which has been described in the sections above had the implied purpose of solving chronological difficulties. However, the weaknesses of these approaches were never sufficiently recognised when classification constructed on a chronological premise was used to support that premise without the development of techniques needed to verify independently those conclusions. Absolute chronologies remained largely a matter of guesswork throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries but, interestingly, did not lengthen significantly with the collapse of the fundamentalist biblical time-scale in the mid-nineteenth century. Hoare noted that 'with respect to the precise aera of the first colonization of Britain, we have no certain data' and quotes Richard of Cirencester who 'places it at a thousand years before Christ' without committing himself to that estimate.<sup>58</sup> Cunnington, however, placed his finds in the period between 1000 and 500 B.C. observing that 'the information to be gathered from Roman & Greek historians will afford little information for illustrating ... the works of an ancient people like the Celtic Britons ... therefore all theories drawn from such sources in regard to our Celtic Britons are ever at war with facts'.<sup>59</sup> Since he had no other sources besides the Bible, it is difficult to know on what basis Cunnington determined his absolute dates. Hoare and Cunnington were the first major barrow diggers to be faced with such problems for the finds of both Faussett and Douglas could satisfactorily be encompassed within the existing historical framework. But it was not a matter which could be effectively resolved and Greenwell's efforts in the same field are every bit as tentative as those of the earlier antiquaries. Starting from the fixed point of Caesar's invasion of Britain in 55 B.C., he claims that the introduction of iron 'may be placed, with some degree of confidence, as dating from about two or three centuries before the birth of Christ'.

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58 Hoare, 1812, 12.

59 Woodbridge, 1970, 211; Cunnington letters, T. Leman, 1809.



As bronze necessarily precedes iron and a large number of bronze implements are known, the beginnings of bronze may be placed around 1000 B.C. and consequently round barrows 'belong to a period which centres more or less in B.C. 500'. Regarding a preceding neolithic to which long barrows could be attributed Greenwell was personally convinced of its reality without being able to adduce any conclusive arguments in its demonstration.<sup>60</sup> Despite all his efforts, Greenwell cannot disguise the fact that the whole thing is nothing more than supposition. Not until Abercromby does the estimation of historical dates for finds from barrows become anything more than simple but embellished guesswork. By listing all the associations of ribbed faience beads, proceeding from that to a link with bronze hoards through the dubious Alloa association of collared urn and gold bracelets, he felt he had shown these beads to be imports of the period 900-600 B.C.<sup>61</sup> Despite its many imperfections, Abercromby's scheme was one of the earliest to establish a coherent methodology aimed at producing sound historical dates.

Although prehistoric studies could and did develop during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries without any clear indication of the time-scale in calendar years for the period which was under consideration, they necessarily required some criteria by which to establish a relative chronology. Hoare found an answer in his belief in 'gradual progress ... from barbarism to civilization', a view which caused him to pronounce the urns from the Deverel Barrow 'to be of the earliest British manufacture, which their coarse texture will sufficiently evince'.<sup>62</sup> Quite simply, the cruder an object was, in the estimation of the antiquary, the older it was likely to be. As a basic attitude it retained considerable appeal until well into the nineteenth century but,

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60 Greenwell & Rolleston, 1877, 130-32.

61 Abercromby, 1905a.

62 Hoare, 1812, 1; Miles, 1826, v.

as early as 1846, F.C. Lukis was suggesting that the absence of any accompanying grave goods was a social rather than a chronological aspect of burial.<sup>63</sup> Certainly, Kirwan's remarks in 1872 demonstrate the appeal and the difficulties of this rather simplistic position,

It may indeed be generally assumed that the ruder hand-made unbaked burial urn belongs to the earliest period relatively, whilst the examples of well-finished and elaborately ornamented pottery may be referred to a period when artistic skill was at least partially developed, and when the workman had acquired a knowledge of the potter's wheel; yet no chronological arrangement can be absolutely based upon the obvious distinctions thus presented to us, for the rudest of pottery has been found associated in the same barrow with graceful and neatly ornamented weapons of bronze.<sup>64</sup>

Similar feelings lay at the heart of the most important scheme for determining relative chronology, the three-age system, and it provoked criticism on equally similar lines.

The introduction of the concept of three successive technological ages in the history of man was the single most important contribution to the systematization of prehistoric material made during the nineteenth century. Essentially, it distinguishes a stone age, followed by a bronze age and completed by an iron age where these ages are defined as the period in which the related material was used in the manufacture of essential tools. Although developed by Thomsen, newly appointed curator of the infant National Museum of Denmark as an aid to museum classification, in the second decade of the nineteenth century its wider validity was rapidly demonstrated stratigraphically by Worsaae working in the Danish peat deposits and publication followed in 1836. The idea was not new but whether we can legitimately regard similar but

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63 F.C. Lukis, 1846, 28.

64 Kirwan, 1872, 155.

philosophically determined systems in classical authors as expressions of the same general ideas must be doubtful.<sup>65</sup> Whatever apparent images are discernible in the work of earlier authors, there can be no doubt that it was the systematizing of Thomsen and Worsaae that gave the concept practical application for prehistoric archaeology, as a result of which work the idea was diffused and taken up by fellow antiquaries across northern Europe.<sup>66</sup>

In essence, the three age system was a specific use of the more general ideas of human progress and this in itself would have given it appeal even without the independent verification from Worsaae's work. It first appeared in English in books prepared by Lord Ellesmere and W.J. Thoms, the folklorist, on Danish antiquities;<sup>67</sup> Thoms specifically described Worsaae's book which he had translated as one 'likely to facilitate the enquiries, and to reduce into somewhat of a method the researches, of our English archaeologists, in the imperfectly developed of primeval antiquities'.<sup>68</sup> The approach was rapidly adopted by British workers such as Wilson, Bateman and Rhind.<sup>69</sup> Bateman, however, did not make significant use of it in Ten Years' Diggings perhaps because it seemed temporarily irrelevant in the face of the racial analyses of the time and Rhind, while admitting that its delineation had 'given the tone to nearly all subsequent researches and deductions',<sup>70</sup> sought for some inexplicable reason to find its origins among the work of eighteenth-century antiquaries. Of course it was a concept particularly suited to the attitudes of the evolutionary anthropologists. Lubbock noted that there must be some overlap between periods, since stone tools might well have been in use in the

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65 See, for example, the remarks of Hesiod's views in Finley, 1965, 286.

66 The matter is more fully discussed in Daniel, 1943; 1962, 39-41; 1971, 140-42.

67 Ellesmere, 1848; Worsaae, 1849,

68 Worsaae, 1849, x.

69 Wilson, 1851; Bateman, 1851; Rhind, 1856.

70 Rhind, 1856, 210.

bronze and iron periods, and that the scheme could only be applied to Europe but, he concluded, 'even in this limited sense, the above classification has not met with general acceptance; there are still some archaeologists who believe that the arms and implements of stone, bronze, and iron were used contemporaneously'.<sup>71</sup> Lubbock may here have had in mind Thomas Wright, whom Pitt-Rivers, later in the century, singled out as a representative of 'the older antiquaries'.<sup>72</sup> Certainly Lubbock went to some trouble to refute Wright's claim that the weapons of the so-called Bronze period were in actuality Roman.<sup>73</sup> However, Wright was not alone in his scepticism and an interesting attack on the concept was made by O'Laverty who admitted that the theory was plausible but 'it is inconsistent with the account given in Genesis, where we find it stated that Tubal Cain "was a hammerer and artificer in every work of brass and iron", at a period long antecedent to our pre-historic times'. After suggesting that 'we place too much reliance on our theories of the gradual development of the arts', O'Laverty went on to defend these rather traditional views with an appeal to stratigraphic evidence derived from the river Bann, in fact by exactly the same procedures as those Worsaae had used to demonstrate Thomsen's concept, although he did not recognise that there was a difference in reliability between material derived from river beds and that from peat deposits. He concluded by quoting a Derbyshire barrow opening which had revealed a stone axe-hammer associated with a bronze dagger.<sup>74</sup> This final point was the one that caused most anxiety among barrow diggers in the use of the three age system, which Rooke Pennington showed was difficult to apply to a small number of burial groups with any meaning.<sup>75</sup>

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71 Lubbock, 1865, 3.

72 Pitt-Rivers, 1894, 217.

73 Wright, 1866; Lubbock & Lubbock, 1867.

74 O'Laverty, 1857.

75 Pennington, 1875a.

Indeed, the three age system was inevitably more useful in the broad synthesis than in the interpretation of individual finds which was the reason for Lubbock's original caveat. Despite these problems, Lubbock felt able to drop his statement about the lack of general acceptance by the late 1870s and Greenwell structured his chronological remarks along the lines of the three periods with no suggestion that it was controversial.<sup>76</sup>

The social implications of the finds.

This final section should be seen rather as a postscript to the preceding three sections than as one of equal importance since it seeks only to give emphasis to the principal reason for the limited nature of the analysis undertaken during the second half of the nineteenth century by barrow diggers when the time seemed particularly suited to large scale classificatory approaches. There was always a social interpretation underlying general attitudes to barrows but it assumed greater importance in the second half of the nineteenth century. Although social evolutionary theory played a significant part in this development, its origins are to be found in the more general ideas that progress could be measured by a consideration of the manufacturing and artistic capabilities of any group of people. 'Gentlemen, - THE EXHIBITION OF 1851', said Prince Albert, 'is to give us a true test and a living picture of the point of development at which the whole of mankind has arrived'<sup>77</sup> and it was to do so through a display of their raw materials, machinery, manufactures and fine arts. It is indicative of the tenor of the age that technology was the yardstick by which nations were to be judged for, after all, an underlying assumption of the Great Exhibition

76 Lubbock, 1878, 3; Greenwell & Rolleston, 1877, 130-32.

77 Official descriptive and illustrated catalogue of the Great Exhibition of the works of industry of all nations, London : 1851, 4.



was that it would show how superior Britain was when it came to measuring degrees of civilization. One would, therefore, be surprised if such ideas had not penetrated prehistoric archaeology, a subject wholly concerned with material remains. Equally, a consequence of the economic superiority acquired by Britain at this time was the need for colonies and the colonial experience is similarly reflected in the attitudes of the barrow diggers. The justification for the adoption of such attitudes, acquired from society's views, within the narrow confines of archaeology came from the work of the evolutionary anthropologists.

The situation during the nineteenth century grew ever more complex as the century proceeded. Hoare contented himself with rejections of the predominant eighteenth-century view that barrows were memorials over those fallen in battle, offering the innocuous interpretation that the Deverel barrow 'was raised for a family or general deposit'.<sup>78</sup> To these simple deductions Bateman added a further sidelight by claiming that 'it is probable that the critical examination of all deposits of burnt bones would lead to much curious information respecting the statistics of suttee, and infanticide, both which abominations we are unwillingly compelled, by accumulated evidence to believe were practised in Pagan Britain'.<sup>79</sup> Indeed, suttee and other such burial 'abominations', while clearly reflecting the British relationship with India, held considerable attraction for barrow diggers interpreting their skeletal finds until early in the present century.<sup>80</sup> Whereas Greenwell, bolstered no doubt by social evolutionary theory, attempted the most wide-ranging analysis of all diggers by including information not just from the barrow structure and human skeletal material but also from the accompanying

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78 Hoare, 1821, 48; Miles, 1826, v.

79 Bateman, 1861, 83.

80 A late example is Coffey, 1905, 16.

grave goods in 'a brief account ... of what we appear to have learned concerning the people and their progress in civilisation, their art and manufactures, their social habits and their polity as evidenced by the contents of the barrows'.<sup>81</sup>

While the range of such social interpretations was expanding or indeed remaining constant at the level which Greenwell was attempting, there was little incentive to attempt more mundane classification studies which did not offer the same quality of deduction. The paucity of sound analytical approaches which this chapter has documented emphasises the essential collecting nature of barrow digging and, for even the most involved diggers, vague generalisations were always more attractive than detailed documentation. It is wholly significant that, with the exception of Thurnam, the most systematized study of barrow material was the work of men not primarily considered as barrow diggers like Lubbock, Evans and Abercromby.

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81 Greenwell & Rolleston, 1877, 111.

Their society

## **7 The background: ecclesiology, geology and romanticism.**

In any review of antiquarian work during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries a clear divide is to be observed in the years around 1840. Within the field of barrow exploration, the differences between the two periods are diffuse, shadowy, almost transitional, but in the antiquarian world from which such explorations were drawing succour the change was dramatic, almost revolutionary. The transformation was not a reflection of newly engendered ways of interpreting the past, rather it was the response of antiquarianism to its recently acquired popular esteem and interest, the clearest manifestation of which was the establishment of a host of local societies and museums. Since the effects were organisational rather than philosophical the impact of these institutions on the well-established traditions and attitudes of barrow diggers was small initially but increased rapidly as the might of the expanding number of forums came to be felt in all areas of antiquarian activity. Some of the reasons, therefore, for this remarkable change in popular feeling deserve consideration.

# I

Joseph Hunter, in his address to the Archaeological Institute's meeting at Salisbury in 1849, drew attention to a recent and, from his own point of view, welcome phenomenon:

We no longer look with indifference on the works of our ancestors, or think it a matter of indifference to know why we find a castle on one site and a cathedral on another; why a church is found in some little-frequented spot, and when it was erected, or whether it is not indigenous to the place, like the yew tree that grows near it. The spirit is certainly abroad; and the question seems now to be not whether the curiosity shall exist, but whether objects still remain unexamined and undescribed on which that curiosity shall exert itself.<sup>1</sup>

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1 Hunter, 1851, 26.



One may smile, with hindsight, at the naïveté of the concluding remarks but Hunter's main theme will find support in the utterances of the vast majority of his contemporaries and his interpretation remains convincing. He was speaking at the end of a decade which had seen the foundation of the first county societies and, although there were many yet to be established, it must have been clear, even by 1849, to Hunter and like-minded men that they were witnessing the beginnings of something new and important in topographical and antiquarian studies. 'The educated class of resident gentry and clergy' were preparing to render the 'very valuable assistance' which George Matcham, speaking at the same meeting, thought them capable of, 'professional pretensions or political controversy' notwithstanding.<sup>2</sup>

Hunter was lecturing on the topographical gatherings held at Stourhead between 1825 and 1833. Colt Hoare's aim, in these meetings, was to bring together friends working on topographical material so that they might discuss matters of common interest. They were leisurely affairs lasting a week and with little formal business.<sup>3</sup> Although the evidence is less clear there are indications that such meetings were common among groups of antiquaries; the whole tenor of Barrow Digging by a Barrow Knight suggests a similar meeting under the auspices of Thomas Bateman. Such gatherings clearly foreshadow the general activities of the county societies but they differ in that they are composed exclusively of active antiquaries who are, in the main, personally acquainted with one another. It is the institutionalising of these activities within the framework of county societies that begins in the 1840s.

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2 Matcham, 1851, 14.

3 For a detailed account of these meetings see Woodbridge, 1970, 251-61.

Before considering the impulses behind this institutionalising, it is as well to look further at the process in action. In this context, it is particularly appropriate to concentrate on events in Wiltshire where there is a valuable intermediary step less easily documented in other areas. In 1839, the year after Colt Hoare's death, the Wiltshire Topographical Society was founded.<sup>4</sup> Although retaining some of the exclusiveness of the Stourhead gatherings, it was a more broadly based group though still consisting predominantly of active topographers. One of the founders of this society was John Britton, a man whose influence stretched far beyond Wiltshire. However, in this more local scene, he fulfils an important linking role. He was a correspondent and friend of Colt Hoare and Cunnington, although at times the friendship was severely strained,<sup>5</sup> and it was the sale of his topographical library that triggered the formation of the Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society in 1853.<sup>6</sup> Thus, in the space of some twenty years topographical and antiquarian studies in Wiltshire were transformed from being the interest of a few, meeting at irregular intervals, into a society in which active workers still formed a considerable majority, and finally came to be centred on a society where such workers were a definite minority. Although personally involved throughout this development, Britton's role may justly be considered peripheral but on a wider stage he was very intimately concerned with the growing prestige of antiquarian pursuits.

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4 Pugh et al., 1953, 5.

5 Woodbridge, 1970, 196-97, 207-09.

6 Pugh et al., 1953, 6.

## II

John Britton enjoyed a cosmopolitan and stormy career<sup>7</sup> but his importance, in this context, lies with his efforts as a writer and publisher of topographical literature. His work in this field dovetails the antiquarianism of the county societies and the activist and proselytizing activities of the Cambridge Camden Society. Although an honorary member of this society, Britton was not much in sympathy with their aims. Despite this, he was still regarded by that most critical of societies as one of the foremost contributors to the popularisation of the history of mediaeval ecclesiastical, Gothic architecture.<sup>8</sup> The Gothic Revival had been a long time in the coming; Clark sees its origins in the work of Thomas Gray<sup>9</sup> while not denying Horace Walpole his role as its chief promoter.<sup>10</sup> Britton's contribution was to make available to the wider public that which previously had been known only to the devoted Gothic scholar.

'Before a national taste can be made effective it must be instructed, and before it is instructed it must be created', was Eastlake's admirable summary<sup>11</sup> of the problem with which Britton was concerned. He created and instructed this taste through three major works: The beauties of England and Wales,<sup>12</sup> Architectural antiquities of Great Britain, and The cathedral antiquities of England. In these

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7 see Britton, 1850 for details; a brief summary is given in Crook, 1968.

8 The Ecclesiologist, 17, 1857, 70.

9 Clark, 1964, 25-26. However, Kliger, 1946, would see its first stirrings in seventeenth century political discussion. For a summary of recent work on its early development see Crook, 1970 and for Thomas Gray see Bell, 1944.

10 Lewis, 1956.

11 Eastlake, 1872, 88.

12 This series, begun in 1800 with Edward Brayley, was completed in 1818 although Britton and Brayley ceased to contribute to it after 1811 when there was a change of publisher.

publications, and a host of minor ones, he showed himself to be 'the first exponent of the topographical method on a large scale'.<sup>13</sup> His work seriously challenged the previously accepted medium for conveying topographical information, the county histories in large and costly folios. Their influence is to be seen in the arrangement of The beauties of England and Wales but few other signs of the tradition remain. This break with the traditional format did not have its origin in scholarship but was conditioned entirely by Britton's desire and need to make money from his work.<sup>14</sup> This elementary requirement heightened his 'fine instinct for changes of fashion' and nurtured his 'shamelessness in exploiting it'. Without attempting to subordinate the text, Britton saw and satisfied the necessity for good illustrations and the artists he employed present a formidable list, including the Le Keux brothers, Frederick Mackenzie, and A.W. Pugin. Through these men he gave the educated public an opportunity of understanding what real Gothic ruins and buildings looked like, and in so doing he 'killed Ruins and Rococo'.<sup>15</sup>

However, Britton's gift to the public of insight into the rather esoteric field of Gothic Studies should not be allowed to diminish the very significant contributions he made to those already privy to the secrets of that world. It was not a time in which travel was easy<sup>16</sup> and Britton's illustrations provided an excellent substitute for experience of the genuine object. His efforts encompassed those phases of the Gothic Revival now known as the Picturesque and the Ecclesiological, that is 'the shift from Gothick to Gothic'.<sup>17</sup> In

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13 Frankl, 1960, 496.

14 Ferriday, 1957, 367.

15 Quotations are from Clark, 1964, 65-66.

16 The difficulties are fully detailed in Moir, 1964.

17 Crook, 1968, 98.

assessing this change, Crook has compared the differing fortunes of the Greek and Gothic Revivals in the period 1790 to 1840 noting that the Greek Revival was virtually finished by the time of the first appearance of The Ecclesiologist in 1841, and relating the difference to the availability of archaeological publications. Not until after the publication of the bulk of Britton's and his contemporaries' work was there available to Gothic scholars the comparable 'quarry of stylistic precedents' that Greek scholars had, through the publications of among others Stuart and Revett, by 1800.<sup>18</sup> The assembling of these stylistic precedents by the late 1830s provided the essential raw material for further growth. However, it was growth that was to take place in particularly turbulent times where ecclesiastical matters were concerned, and the Gothic Movement became intimately involved through the activities of the fiercely aggressive Cambridge Camden Society. John Keble's famous 'National Apostasy' sermon and Tracts for our Times, published between 1833 and 1841, had heralded a new spirit in the affairs of the Established Church, which, while delighting some, was fiercely opposed by others.

The Cambridge Camden Society was founded in 1839 by two Trinity undergraduates, J.M. Neale and Benjamin Webb,<sup>19</sup> with the encouragement and aid of their tutor, Archdeacon Thorp. It was, for a few brief years, a force of considerable potency in ecclesiastical and architectural affairs. The study of Church architecture and the promotion of restoration, guided by sound ecclesiological principles were the Society's principal aims. Membership was open to all but control was retained, through an oligarchic constitution, by

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18 *idem*; for a fuller discussion of the sources for the Greek Revival see Crook, 1972, 1-62.

19 Rose, 1967, 120-21, quotes the claim of Rev. E.J. Boyce that he too was an important moving spirit in the foundation, but the evidence appears to be only Boyce's uncorroborated statement.



a small group comprised of friends of the founders. In consequence, the published attitudes of the Society remained remarkably constant until 1845 when the crisis provoked by the restoration of the church of St. Sepulchre, Cambridge, convulsed the Society. Clark would see this affair as the effective end of the Camdenians power, White as the stride from adolescence to maturity, and Rose as a symptom of the collapsing oligarchy with the end of the University careers of its members.<sup>20</sup>

To whichever view one inclines, there can be little doubt that the severance of ties with Cambridge and the subsequent alteration of the name to the Ecclesiological Society which the crisis brought about, mark the end of the Society as a controversial institution, seldom out of the limelight in matters ecclesiastical. In that brief period from 1839 to 1845 the influence of the Camdenians was such as to affect the whole development of the Gothic Revival. Frankl sees Charles Barry's Houses of Parliament, begun in 1836 and in which Pugin was heavily involved,<sup>21</sup> as marking the abandonment of 'trifling and dilettantism' and the first steps towards seriousness in the Gothic movement. The development of this serious phase from Barry and Pugin, through the Cambridge Camden Society and Ruskin, to the work of George Gilbert Scott he would consider to be a quintessentially English phenomenon: the ever-deeper march into a cul-de-sac.<sup>22</sup> However inexorably the Cambridge Camden Society was leading the Gothic movement into this cul-de-sac neither it nor the Society were, in the period 1839 to 1845, so far into the blind alley that there could be no turnings leading to more profitable roads of development. One may reasonably see the county archaeological societies as the product of one of these diversions for the

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20 Clark, 1964, 150-52; White, 1962, 153 ff; Rose, 1967, 144.

21 Clark, 1964, 113-17, details this involvement.

22 Frankl, 1960, 553-63.

relevance of the Camdenians to those institutions lies not in their philosophy but in the activities which their philosophy initiated.

It has already been noted that the Society's aims were the study of Church architecture and the promotion of restorations in good ecclesiological taste. These aims, particularly the latter, were largely the product of the theological storm created by the Tractarians: 'the Cambridge Ecclesiological Society ... led the way in changes in worship expressive of the changes in theology advocated at Oxford'.<sup>23</sup> However, the Oxford scholars are not to be closely associated with the interest in ritualism which the Cambridge Society's activities produced. Neither Keble nor Newman were attracted by such matters.<sup>24</sup> Moreover, their reaction to it was rather conservative; Newman complained that the Camdenians, in company with others, were 'making a fair outside, while within are dead men's bones'.<sup>25</sup> It was these 'dead men's bones' that were the concern of the Tractarians. The repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, together with the reform of Parliament, had created an anomalous situation for the Church of England. Its affairs were in large measure controlled by Parliament but for the first time there was a possibility that supporters of the Anglican Church would represent a minority in Parliament. The Tractarian response to this curious position was a wholesale re-examination of doctrine in order, it was hoped, to provide a comprehensive basis for an unfettered and proper continuance of the Church. The most dramatic result was the affirmation of the principle of Apostolic Succession. It is hardly surprising then that controversial appeals to the past in doctrinal matters caused a similar approach to be adopted in architectural and liturgical studies.

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23 Quoted by White, 1962, 19; Storr, 1913, 268, notes that although 'the interest of the Tractarian leaders was in doctrine rather than ritual, the ritualistic movement was latent in Tractarianism'.

24 Storr, 1913, 268; Willey, 1969, 86.

25 In a letter to Keble quoted by White, 1962, 21.

The realisation of its aims posed immense problems for the Cambridge Camden Society at the time of its inception. Yet it had that special kind of élan which Willey finds in the early Oxford Movement as that 'only given to a party which knows and feels that it holds the clue to a contemporary problem, and can minister to the special needs of its time; it is not the 'note' of a merely romantic or antiquarian craze.'<sup>26</sup> It is not wholly surprising in the Cambridge Society that some of its supporters became more involved in romanticism and antiquarianism than in the leaders' desires to minister to the special needs of the times. The Anglican society, which the Camdenians confronted, was almost entirely devoid of reverence for church buildings and furnishings. The early volumes of The Ecclesiologist contain many reports of church fittings, such as fonts, rudely and disgracefully treated, and altars and chancels reduced to the roles of hat-stands and schools. The unfamiliarity produced by a picture of a typical Anglican church of the 1830s indicates not only the success of the Cambridge Society but also the religious indifference and rigid class awareness of the times.<sup>27</sup>

To counteract these abuses, for that is how they appeared to the Camdenians, the campaign was waged on two fronts: first, the powerful use of polemics in The Ecclesiologist and occasional publications of the Society, and second, the systematic collection of information through the Church Schemes. The latter were long, comprehensive check-lists which members were urged to complete for each Church they visited, a copy being sent to the Society.<sup>28</sup> They represented a clear attempt together with The Ecclesiologist, to involve and educate

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26 Willey, 1969, 83.

27 White, 1962, pl. I, shows the interior of St. Olave's, Hart St., London. See also the excellent, if propagandist, description provoked by a visit to the church at Tenterden, Kent, in Cobbett, 1830, 186-187.

28 White, 1962, 54-57, 231-36.

the whole membership of the Society, particularly those living some distance from Cambridge. The collection of information was a necessary preliminary to the creation of a science of Ecclesiology and ensured that the central task of interpreting the symbolism of medieval churches could be well grounded in fact.<sup>29</sup> Clearly, however, the interpretation of the symbolism was a task reserved for the leading Camdenians, and for the majority of the membership the collection of information was to be their only contribution. There can be no doubt that the impact of the Society's views was nationwide. Even in rural Dorset local wood-carvers enjoyed a brief period of prosperity as local clergy imbibed the Camdenian philosophy and began to adorn their churches with new choir stalls and chancel screens.<sup>30</sup> Of course, all this was not achieved without protest,<sup>31</sup> and eventually the Cambridge Society succumbed. The same fate, however, did not await the less polemic, more academic societies formed under the influence of, or in the case of Oxford just before, the Cambridge Society.

It is important to distinguish between the Oxford Movement and its concern with doctrine and the ecclesiological studies influenced by Tractarian ideas.<sup>32</sup> It was these studies that dealt with the material remains, their interpretation and value. Foremost in this field, at least in the important realm of public relations, was the Cambridge Society but it was by no means alone. The Oxford Society for promoting the study of Gothic Architecture was founded just before it in 1839 with essentially similar aims. In 1840 a friendly relationship was established with the Camdenians, although friction occurred

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29 Clarke, 1969, 87-97.

30 Kerr, 1968, 162-163.

31 White, 1962, *passim*; Rose, 1967.

32 For some who have not maintained the distinction see Allen, 1884, 234 and Haverfield, 1924, 81.

from time to time.<sup>33</sup> The Oxford Society was, however, low key and meriting the contemporary description of it being 'confined ... very much to ... the extension of our miscellaneous knowledge.'<sup>34</sup> By not seeking to elevate their activities much beyond that of an antiquarian pastime the Oxford Society retained a flexibility denied to the Camdenians. Although many Tractarians were members, their failure to involve it in the serious controversies of the day belies the claim that strong Tractarian influence is discernible in its activities.<sup>35</sup> Aside from a difference in emphasis on the promotion of religious ideals both societies provided benefits for their members including lectures, organised field trips and published proceedings,<sup>36</sup> all of which were to become the staple fare of the county archaeological societies. Indeed, the earliest societies strongly suggest the influence of the Oxford and Cambridge societies, not least in their titles, and such influence must reflect the attention attracted by the crusading spirit of the Camdenians.

The first county archaeological societies were not founded until 1844-46 when they were established in Lincoln, Norfolk and Sussex. The societies formed between 1839 and 1844 were diocesan rather

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33 White, 1962, 43; Ollard, 1940, 159-60; Webb, 1941; Pantin, 1939, 179.

34 *Eclectic Review*, 25, 1849, 33.

35 Ollard, 1940. Neither Newman nor Keble were members and Pusey did not join until 1842.

36 The Cambridge Camden Society also operated the Church Schemes, an idea translated into more archaeological terms by, among others, the Cambrian Archaeological Association: *Archaeol. Cambrensis*, 1, 1846, 135-37, 353-56, 416-18. Although the derivation is partly credited to the French Comité Historique (p. 135) the tone of the instructions is so similar to the exhortations of the Camdenians that one cannot but consider their influence to be as great as the Comité Historique. Certainly, by 1846, it was more politic to name the latter.



than county and solely concerned with ecclesiastical architecture.<sup>37</sup> The transition from a concentration on ecclesiastical monuments to a broader historical base appears to be the significant factor in establishing the viability of the county societies, but the influence of the religious activities which had contributed in part to their birth was not far below the surface; the Buckinghamshire Society, founded in 1847, restricted membership initially to those in communion with the Church of England.<sup>38</sup> The Oxford Society was able to broaden its outlook in the manner suggested by the county societies, although not until the late 1850s,<sup>39</sup> whereas it was the Cambridge Society's inability to make such a transition that led to its eventual collapse into obscurity. The wider aims of the county archaeological societies enabled them to temper the esoteric concerns of the ecclesiastical societies with the more reasoned philosophy of the newly founded national archaeological societies, the British Archaeological Association and the Archaeological Institute.

### III

While the ecclesiastical societies were effecting major changes in the outward manifestations of organised religion, developments in geology were contributing to the collapse of scriptural fundamentalism brought on by historical and textual Biblical criticism.<sup>40</sup>

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37 e.g. societies at Exeter, Durham and York. The Lincoln Society could be interpreted as the last diocesan society but, unlike the others, it did develop into a county society: for its early history see Hill, 1966. White, 1962, 44, fn. 1, fails to make the distinction between county and diocesan societies.

38 Head, 1955, 119.

39 Pantin, 1939, 183-86.

40 Willey, 1961, 31, would see such criticism as vastly more important than contributions from the natural sciences. While probably true for the *cognoscenti*, it is difficult to visualise such criticism ranking in popularity with geology and biology, but see also Burrow, 1967, 180.

Such matters were clearly less important than the ecclesiological societies in their influence on the structure and operation of county societies but they gave forceful emphasis to the importance of the past for the present. They must now be considered as major contributors to the acceptance of the study of the material past as a worthwhile pursuit; it was on this feeling that the county societies were to flourish.

The importance of geology for the growth of archaeological studies has long been recognised,<sup>41</sup> but there has been a tendency to over-emphasise the importance of Sir Charles Lyell's Principles of Geology, published between 1830 and 1833. The contribution of geological studies was two-fold: first, it helped establish the legitimacy of the challenge mounted by scientific pursuits to knowledge that had previously been the preserve of the theologians, in this instance world chronology, and second, it provided invaluable assistance in demonstrating the high antiquity of Man.<sup>42</sup> These two matters are linked to the publication of Lyell's book but not so inextricably linked that its appearance may be taken as marking the collapse of fundamentalist biblical chronologies and the acceptance of the development of Man over many tens of millenia. Under the general title of 'Natural History', geology came within the ambit of many county societies and the continuing debate over the antiquity of man, which kept archaeology at the centre of the scientific stage in the first twenty years of many of the societies' existence, must have contributed strongly to their development in those crucial early years. It is curious that the erosion of belief in the historicity of the Bible was not rapidly followed by the recognition of the high

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41 e.g. Allen, 1884, 234-35.

42 Of course, science had previously challenged the supremacy of theology in cosmological affairs, but in matters relating to the history of the earth, as distinct from the universe, the Bible had largely remained the ultimate repository of wisdom.

antiquity of Man as a theoretical concept worthy of considerable attention. That this did not occur is perhaps attributable to two factors. First, the prevailing belief in the Bible as historical fact did not collapse in a dramatic manner as the result of a single publication, but was gradually eroded, and second, the collection of the evidence for the age of Man was not primarily in the hands of geologists but with prehistoric archaeologists. The latter were a new breed without any seriously defined principles or methodology and hence there existed no really adequate means of assessing the evidential value of their claims. In such a situation, Huxley echoed the views of many scientists when he spoke 'in vindication of caution and scientific logic ... rather than to be right in the company of haste and guesswork'. He went on to note the adulation bestowed on a discoverer by posterity and the abuse reserved for his contemporaries who justly disbelieved him.<sup>43</sup> The pertinence of this last remark for Dean Buckland has been aptly noted.<sup>44</sup>

Buckland is all too often matched with Lyell in considerations of the debate over the validity of biblical history. Other figures appear briefly but the scene becomes best viewed as a glorious gladiatorial contest between the two giants with the fairy-tale ending when the progressive Lyell vanquishes his former teacher, the conservative Buckland, with one massive three year sweep of his pen. Such a melodramatic view interprets the Uniformitarian-Catastrophist debate as primarily concerned with the idea that historical truth resided exclusively in the Bible and it falls because the debate was plainly not so concerned.<sup>45</sup> Of course, Uniformitarianism could not be reconciled with the biblical sequence of events, but it is more pertinent to question whether the Catastrophist geologists believed in

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43 Huxley, 1869, xxx-xxxi.

44 Clark, 1961, 77-78.

45 Cannon, 1960, 39.

the historical truth of the Bible and were consciously defending such a position by their attack on Uniformitarian theories. It is clear that the importance of the debate was not the destruction of belief in the Mosaic chronology but the increased awareness, on the part of the educated public, of the erosion of belief in such a chronology which had been taking place among geologists for some little time.

The pivotal issue of the Uniformitarian-Catastrophist argument was the mechanisms of change in the earth's structure and the time factor, although important, was always subsidiary. Lyell's own position was succinctly stated in a letter to Murchison as 'the admission of such principles, which ... are neither more nor less than that no causes whatever have from the earliest times to which we can look back, to the present, ever acted, but those now acting; and that they never acted with different degrees of energy from that which they now exert'.<sup>46</sup> This insistence on there having been no difference in degree in the past to that observable in the present was vital to the debate. Yet, throughout the Principles Lyell constantly treats the concepts of difference in kind and difference in degree as interdependent.<sup>47</sup> This was a revival, as Lyell freely admitted, of Hutton's steady-state model of earth history requiring no trace of a beginning and no hope of an end. By acknowledging Hutton, Lyell felt logically able to begin his work with a consideration of the history of geological studies. He regarded such a summary as largely of a polemical nature and, in the consequent over-simplification and distortion, linked the attitudes of the scientifically unacceptable 'Scriptural' geologists with the more sophisticated views of such people as Buckland and Sedgwick.<sup>48</sup> Within the broader aims of his book Lyell clearly felt

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46 Lyell, 1881, vol. 1, 234.

47 Rudwick, 1970, 7.

48 *ibid*, 9-10. Cannon, 1964a, 31, shows that Lyell's main point was that the attempted reconciliation of theological ideas with geological data had retarded the development of geological thought. This was aimed primarily at Buckland.

entitled to use such an interpretation but there is no reason to believe that he wholly subscribed to this rather simplistic characterisation of his opponents. Undoubtedly, Catastrophists like Sedgwick and Buckland believed that the Bible was of some value to geologists but neither they nor other Catastrophists saw it in terms of the simple equation that the Bible equalled truth. Sedgwick, in particular, had a liberal interpretation of the Scriptures' relevance for geology and was one of the most severe critics of Andrew Ure's New System of Geology (1829) with its fundamentalist biblical interpretations.<sup>49</sup> Buckland's attitudes were more subtle and ambiguous as betokens his position as the leading Catastrophist.

As the leading geologist of the 1820s, a position established by the wide acclaim accorded to his work Reliquiae Diluvianae (1823), his very pre-eminence before the appearance of Lyell's Principles combine with his Catastrophist views to make him a particularly suitable victim in any personalised interpretation of the debate. Moreover, as Buckland's eccentricities provoked a number of caricatures which made him very much a public figure,<sup>50</sup> it becomes easy to see his Bridgewater Treatise<sup>51</sup> of 1836 as signalling capitulation and to interpret his subsequent career as a gradual drift into ineffectuality.

Of all the leading Catastrophist geologists, Buckland seems to have struggled longest to reconcile geological evidence with biblical statements and some would see his Bridgewater Treatise as marking the end of that struggle.<sup>52</sup> More recently, however, Buckland has been accorded more sympathetic treatment and attention has been drawn to

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49 Sedgwick, 1830.

50. Example in North, 1947, 100, fig. 1 & 111, fig. 3.

51 Background to these treatises is briefly explained in Gundry, 1946.

52 e.g. Gillispie, 1959, 212, but this attitude derives from Gillispie's desire to see developments in geology as a series of personal conflicts.



the lack of disparity between his position when he delivered his inaugural lecture at Oxford in 1819 and his views as proposed in 1836.<sup>53</sup> Buckland's writings, in common with their close ally the Bible, provide ample opportunity for demonstrating any interpretation with judiciously chosen quotations, but there is reason to believe that he had accepted the impossibility of reconciling geological evidence with scripture through a fundamentalist interpretation of the Bible and had, in consequence, rejected the concept of the Bible as sole repository of historical truth before the publication of Lyell's Principles.<sup>54</sup> Indeed, Lyell appears to have recognised this and acknowledged that all major geologists accepted the inadequacy of the 'Hebrew cosmogony', even if they did not accept his Uniformitarian interpretations.<sup>55</sup> There remained, however, a vocal group of geologists who proclaimed the primacy of the Bible in geological matters until the time of Darwin and beyond, but they cannot be considered as representative of any form of orthodox geological thinking.<sup>56</sup> It is interesting to note that these 'Scriptural' geologists seem to have reserved some of their harshest criticisms for Catastrophists rather than Uniformitarians.<sup>57</sup>

Despite the educative efforts of such conscientious figures as Buckland and Sedgwick, and the popularity of Lyell's Principles as evidenced in its sales, the debate was principally one between friends taking place mainly within the confines of the Geological Society.<sup>58</sup> It was not acrimonious in tone nor at all one-sided since the Catastrophists numbered many of the most eminent among their

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53 e.g. Cannon, 1961a, 18-22, and especially 20, fn. 22.

54 Rudwick, 1970, 10.

55 Lyell, 1881, vol. 1, 238, 268.

56 Millhauser, 1954, 84; Gillispie, 1959, 152.

57 Millhauser, 1954, 71-74.

58 Cannon, 1960, 39-40.

ranks and their resistance was stiff despite the encouragement given to the Uniformitarian cause by Herschel.<sup>59</sup> Though support was gradually reduced, the Catastrophist position never became wholly untenable and one can perhaps see Buckland's support of Agassiz's theories of glaciation as an attempt to regain lost ground.<sup>60</sup> Just as the Catastrophist cause was not extinguished so Buckland was not removed from the public scene, being elected President of the Geological Society for the second time in 1838 and created Dean of Westminster by Peel in 1846, although both events occurred in less than auspicious circumstances.<sup>61</sup> Equally significant, in this context, is his selection by one of the earliest county societies, Somerset, to deliver their inaugural address.<sup>62</sup> The impact of the debate was not, then, an important factor in the careers of the leading protagonists or their standing in society, except perhaps in relative terms. As late as December 1844 Peel felt confident that 'ninety-nine persons out of a hundred will vote ... against the Geological Society and for the Dean and Moses.' In part, this was because society in general was not getting its information through the work of leading geologists but from the popularisers of science; 'the proofs of the conclusions of Geology are not set before them in plain language and with brevity', Peel concluded.<sup>63</sup> The popularisers did not involve themselves with geology until Uniformitarian ideas had virtually established their domination and the debate had become, for geologists, almost a philosophical concern of little practical importance, but when they did so the affair became part of a much wider controversy.

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59 Cannon, 1961b.

60 Cannon, 1960, 48.

61 *ibid*, 40; *DNB*, VII, 207; Chadwick, 1966, 229.

62 *Proc. Somerset Archaeol. Nat. Hist. Soc.*, 1, 1849-50, 9-20.

63 Bm Add. MS 40556, ff. 296-97, Peel collection quoted in Gruber, 1964, 122, fn. 3.

In 1844 Robert Chambers had anonymously taken up one of the Catastrophists' most telling points against Lyell: how is the progression of organic forms to be explained in view of the Uniformitarian requirement of an unvarying natural law? The answer he provided in his Vestiges of the natural history of creation was plausible but unscientific, was roundly condemned by all reputable scientists of the day and was so popular that the book ran to twelve editions by 1860.<sup>64</sup> The anonymity so carefully preserved by Chambers served only to heighten the impact of the work, the authorship of which provoked wide speculation, the leading candidates being Thackeray, Lyell and even Prince Albert.<sup>65</sup> The keyword in Chambers' argument was development and his advocacy of materialistic Lamarckian theories, involving steady organic progression, struck at the very basis of the concept of divine control and design. In his concern with the organic world, Chambers was re-opening a very vexed question and, by doing so, was unwittingly paving the way for its resolution by Darwin, as the latter recognised.<sup>66</sup> Any survey of the origin of species had to include man, but on this matter Chambers confined himself mainly to considerations of linguistic and racial problems.<sup>67</sup> Despite his reluctance to acknowledge fully the implications of his position regarding the antiquity of man,<sup>68</sup> his ideas must have contributed to reducing the impact of the final decisions of that debate.

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64 Cannon, 1960, 51.

65 Gillispie, 1959, 163.

66 See von Hofsten, 1936, for a summary of thinking on this question prior to Darwin, and de Beer, 1969, 33-34, for Darwin's debt to Chambers.

67 Chambers, 1844, 277-323.

68 He carefully avoids the issue with remarks such as 'the past history of mankind may be, to what is to come, but as a day: *ibid*, 310.

Any resolution of the problems associated with the antiquity of man which resulted in the firm establishment of a long chronology for man would inevitably have sealed the collapse of fundamentalist biblical interpretation. The leading protagonists, however, showed little overt awareness in their writings of this aspect of the question, partly because popular opinion was fast recognising the necessity for new attitudes to the interpretation of the Bible. Peel had not been alone in appreciating the need for material explaining the new geological thinking in simple language and the influence of the popularisers' efforts was quite dramatic. In contrast to Peel's assessment of popular feeling in 1844, F.W. Newman believed that by 1850 'it had become notorious to the public that geologists rejected the idea of a universal deluge as physically impossible'.<sup>69</sup> The problem of introducing a new interpretation of man's position into this markedly less biblical view of the past still remained, however, and the difficulties involved in bringing this about are already well detailed,<sup>70</sup> but the failure of events to produce rapidly such a situation has received little discussion. It was nearly ten years after Newman wrote that the first scholars judged, on a dispassionate assessment of the evidence, the high antiquity of man to be proved and not until 1863, with the publication of Lyell's Geological evidence of the Antiquity of Man could the matter be regarded as truly resolved.

It is wholly symptomatic of this affair that it should need to be confirmed by a man of considerable status, like Lyell, before the high antiquity of man could begin to receive general acceptance, for status was a crucial factor. In a letter to Prestwich describing a visit to Boucher de Perthes, Falconer noted that 'Abbeville is an out-of-the-way place, very little visited, and the French savants who meet him in Paris laugh at Monsieur de Perthes and his researches'. He went

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69 Newman, 1850, 122.

70 Daniel, 1950, 57-62; Clark, 1961; Gruber, 1965; Furon, 1965, 484-87 gives an interesting French viewpoint.

on to say that 'after devoting the greater part of a day to his vast collection, I am perfectly satisfied that there is a great deal of fair presumptive evidence in favour of his many speculations regarding the remote antiquity of these industrial objects mainly axes, and their association with animals now extinct'.<sup>71</sup> Falconer's remarks concerning the French savants were equally applicable to their English counterparts, as he himself observed in the same letter, 'I am satisfied that English geologists are much behind the indications of the materials now in existence relative to this walk of post-glacial geology'. The sites which produced the relevant evidence were remote and their excavators largely unskilled in gaining acceptance of their radical ideas among a scientific community largely predisposed to preserving the status quo until forced to do otherwise.<sup>72</sup> The final arbiters were inevitably the geologists but it was the archaeologists to whom a longer chronology offered most benefits, the short chronology postulated for man placing impossible problems in the way of meaningful analysis of prehistoric material.

Only when representatives of both geology and archaeology, in the form of Prestwich and Evans, became interested enough to assess the evidence on the ground did real progress become possible. Both subjects draw greatly on field activities but there was apparently little disposition among savants in 1859 to undertake such an assessment. Evans described how he arrived in Abbeville 'where I found Prestwich waiting for me at the Station, and very glad to see me, as of all the party he had asked to meet him there I was the only one who came'.<sup>73</sup> Yet the two of them were equal to the problem, Prestwich with his unrivalled knowledge of post-glacial deposits and their stratigraphy, and Evans with a fast-developing expertise in the field

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71 November 1, 1858: Prestwich, 1894, 119.

72 The failure of these excavators to successfully promote their ideas is detailed in Lyon, 1970.

73 Evans, 1943, 101.



of stone implements. Further, they both clearly understood the kind of hard evidence that was required, as their photographing of a flint axe in situ amply demonstrates: 'we had a photographer with us to take a view of it so as to corroborate our testimony', wrote Evans.<sup>74</sup> Even then, after seeing and accepting the evidence, Prestwich and Evans displayed considerable caution in interpreting their observations. They did not claim the high antiquity of man but rather only that the implements, which were the work of man, were associated with the bones of extinct animals in deposits laid down when the landscape of Western Europe showed a different configuration from that presently observable.<sup>75</sup> If Prestwich and Evans declined to draw the obvious conclusions, others did not. Rev. Charles Kingsley, in a letter to Prestwich, wrote

You, I am sure, will appreciate the immense importance of your own statement. If corroborated, it must lead to a reconsideration and rearrangement of beliefs, as well as of geologic theories. It seems to me the greatest step forward which has been made since the Scientific tradition of the six-days' creation was abandoned as untenable.

That religious persons will be angry, and try to crush the truth, you must expect. But I must compliment you on the modesty and tact with which you have at least staved off the evil day, by confining yourself to facts, and building no theories on them. By such a method, sound science will gain a firm root in thinking minds before the ignorant and suspicious public is even aware of its existence.<sup>76</sup>

Prestwich and Evans' caution was a combination of two factors. First, both men saw the primary role of scientists as the amassing of data in order to document fully their theories. It was this position at which Kingsley was hinting with his praise of Prestwich for confining himself to facts. This was not a belief, such as some barrow

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74 Evans, 1943, 102.

75 Prestwich, 1860.

76 August 26, 1859: Prestwich, 1894, 136.

diggers had, that new scientific attitudes will develop in the wake of the wholesale collection of facts.<sup>77</sup> Prestwich's involvement with the Brixham cave excavations and his letters to Falconer in particular demonstrate his willingness to postulate the high antiquity of man but his unwillingness to advocate it without the support of considerable evidence. The second factor was a marked unease in countenancing views which appeared to deny man's position as God's special creation. An archaeologically and geologically demonstrated high antiquity for man, combined with contemporary discoveries in human palaeontology and Darwin's transformation hypothesis, clearly reflected, around 1860, the growing tendency to see man as an animal, subject to the same transformation process as other animals.<sup>78</sup> Yet such a position was not easily adopted with its implied erasure of man's supernaturally derived metaphysical qualities and its demands for a reassessment of man's nature and history.

#### IV

In seeking to explain the origins of county archaeological societies through contemporary events in the ecclesiological movement and the breadth of those societies' concerns in terms of developments in geology, it must not be supposed that such things were isolated impulses occurring in vacuo. Ecclesiology was one element in a much wider interest in medieval life that developed in the early nineteenth century. Such concerns are not just to be interpreted as fond reminiscences of past days when a greater stability was evident in social affairs, as a form of the Golden Age philosophy in which people of every period indulge. Of course, there is an element of this in attempted reconstructions of 'Merrie England' with perhaps the prime

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<sup>77</sup> For a discussion of Victorian attitudes to data collection see Cannon, 1964a.

<sup>78</sup> Coleman, 1971, 92-103.

example in that sumptuous flop, the Eglinton Tournament,<sup>79</sup> but this is, as Steegman pointed out, merely the nineteenth century equivalent of the Augustan search for the romance of Cathay, observable in chinoiserie.<sup>80</sup> It does not explain the predilection for things medieval, nor indeed why they were accorded such serious consideration. To understand that one must view the early Victorians as the heirs to the romantic age facing a period of increasing secularism and materialism.<sup>81</sup>

This fascination with the medieval period was to form the cornerstone of the new, wider appeal of archaeology. One has only to review the subject matter of the papers delivered to the annual congresses of the British Archaeological Association in the 1840s to see that this was so. Of the four sections in which each congress divided, three, the historical, medieval and architectural, concerned themselves very much with medieval matters, while the fourth involved itself with the 'primeval' period. The high level of interest in field monuments shown at these congresses is to be attributed to the Romantic Movement's desire for the rugged and sublime in scenery and the evocative ruins abounding everywhere in the countryside. It was a desire communicated by the numerous tours in search of the picturesque which form a formidable section of late eighteenth and early nineteenth century literature.<sup>82</sup> The accompanying study of portable antiquities cannot, however, be similarly explained without recourse to the novels of Scott and his followers. Indeed, it can reasonably be argued that by the 1840s those newly converted supporters of archaeology, who offered the county societies viability, derived their image of the past largely, if not wholly, from the reading of such novels. Scott's

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79 Fully described in Anstruther, 1963.

80 Steegman, 1970, 93.

81 For a discussion of these aspects see Altick, 1973, 102-06.

82 The contribution of the Romantic Movement is discussed in Piggott, 1937.

novels achieved remarkable sales and maintained a hold over the Victorian public which is today understood only with difficulty.<sup>83</sup>

Scott's contribution to historical writing, through his treatment of social and economic matters, was considerable,<sup>84</sup> but we may see his influence just as powerfully in more trivial matters. Part of Scott's skill as a novelist was his use of historical details. He involved his characters, especially in his novels set outside Scotland, in anachronistic situations for the sake of the plot, but carefully avoided such anachronisms in his descriptions of objects in his scene-setting. These detailed descriptions of places and their contents were clearly of immense interest to the reading public for such material, together with complicated and fast-moving plots, became the hallmarks of those followers of Scott who worked in the highly lucrative genre of historical novels.<sup>85</sup> Moreover, the followers of Scott enjoyed much popularity in their own right, with the Parlour and Railway Libraries publishing, between 1847 and 1860, forty-seven novels of G.P.R. James, nineteen of Bulwer Lytton and fourteen of Harrison Ainsworth.<sup>86</sup> However, whereas Scott reserved most of his antiquarian material for the footnotes later writers often included large pieces of antiquarian information, which they had personally researched, in the body of the text.<sup>87</sup> Whatever the value of this detailed research for the development of the historical novel, there can be no doubt that it contributed significantly to the growing interest in and awareness of the material appurtenances of past generations.

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83 78270 sets of the Waverley Novels sold between 1828 and 1849: Altick, 1957, 383. A discussion on some aspects of Victorian attitudes to Scott is contained in Raleigh, 1964.

84 Trevelyan, 1949, 200-05; Trevor-Roper, 1969, *passim*.

85 Simmons, 1969, 49-53.

86 Dalziel, 1957, 81, fn. 1.

87 Simmons, 1969, 53-55.

At the heart of Scott's literary endeavours lay his serious study of antiquarian and historical matters and, in this field too, he was a powerful influence. His concern that the basic historical sources should be published led him to support the literary clubs that began to appear in the early nineteenth century. He was a member of the exclusive Roxburghe Club and an important contributor to the foundation of the Bannatyne Club.<sup>88</sup> Although in the exclusiveness of the early clubs there was an element of bibliomania, they represented a serious attempt to publish critically edited texts of manuscript material much of which had clear relevance for the more material aspects of the past. It is perhaps this aspect that has led some to see the foundation of county archaeological societies as part of the same movement as that represented by these literary clubs.<sup>89</sup> Certainly, there are stronger analogies between the two types of society than the mere desire to present to a wider public the basic material for historical interpretation. The development from the exclusiveness of the Roxburghe Club to the virtually unlimited membership of the Spalding Club and Camden Society shows a pattern of growth closely comparable to that already noted in Wiltshire in a more obviously archaeological context.<sup>90</sup> Similarly, the foundation of the Camden Society, in reaction to the supposed failures of the Historical Manuscripts Commission,<sup>91</sup> forms a fine analogy to the establishment of the British Archaeological Association in response to like deficiencies in the Society of Antiquaries of London. Yet, these are the analogies which could be expected in the process of institutionalising

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88 Ash, 1972, 29-30; see also Withrington, 1971, 43-44.

89 Simpson, 1940, xiv; Ash, 1972, 27.

90 For Scottish clubs, who formed the majority, see Terry, 1909; for the Spalding Club, Simpson, 1940, and Withrington, 1971, and the Camden Society, Johnson, 1940.

91 Levy, 1964. However, in proposing this view Levy underestimates the personal aspirations of some of the founders. It is at least arguable that the Historical Manuscripts Commission's conduct provided a convenient excuse for a Society which would have been founded anyway.



historical and archaeological research. The centres for literary clubs in Scotland and archaeological societies in southern England were geographically distinct while the literary clubs raison d'être remained the publication of material. They never sought to involve their membership in a wider range of educational activities in the way that the county archaeological societies did. Instead, they assumed, quite unwittingly, a market research role in that they demonstrated the viability of local societies devoted to historical research, especially in the case of the Spalding Club of Aberdeen and the capability of such societies to draw significant support from leading members of the local landowners and gentry who often subscribed more out of a feeling of obligation than genuine interest in historical matters. The latter factor was of considerable import in the development of county archaeological societies.

Many years ago Haverfield drew attention to 'the social tendency towards groups' as one of the noticeable elements to be observed in the attitudes of the educated classes in the nineteenth century.<sup>92</sup> This chapter has concerned itself with the activities, largely conducted within the framework of such groups, which made possible the foundation and development of further groups, the county archaeological societies. The latter were late arrivals on the provincial intellectual scene. The local agricultural societies had begun to appear, not surprisingly, in the late eighteenth century,<sup>93</sup> and there were over two hundred provincial horticultural societies by 1842

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92 Haverfield, 1924, 81.

93 Ernle, 1936, 209.

where there had been almost none some thirty years earlier.<sup>94</sup> Thus, county archaeological societies were in no way organisationally new except in the field of antiquarian pursuits. They represented a fairly standard response to increased interest in historical and archaeological affairs deriving from changed attitudes to the past. The Romantic Movement in literature and the visual arts had promoted an interest in the non-industrial aspects of the countryside with its numerous field monuments and Scott and his followers in writing historical novels had made more specific the archaeological aspect inherent in the Romantic Movement's view of the past. None of these contributing factors was itself sufficient to provoke the foundation of provincial archaeological societies. It required the involvement of antiquarianism in that most important aspect of life, religion, through the activities of the Cambridge Camdenians and geologists to emphasise the role of the antiquarian activities in matters of importance to everyone. Furthermore, it stretched across the whole spectrum of archaeological interest from the earliest remains of man to the end of the medieval period. The complexity of the attitudes of the ecclesiologists and the geologists, together with local factors, explains the foundation of local archaeological societies over more than a generation.

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94 Quarterly Review, 70, 1842, 208.

## 8 County and national archaeological societies.

Having attempted some explanation of the changing attitudes in a wider cultural field that facilitated the growth and development of the new national and county archaeological societies, it is now necessary to consider their activities together with the factors which intimately affected their viability during the nineteenth century.

Their work gave much needed depth to antiquarian studies for they took the interested and made them the informed and, no matter how imperfectly the transformation was achieved in individual cases, the overall result was the creation of a large body of sympathetic and knowledgeable laymen. Knowledgeable that is in the sense of understanding that even casual finds of antiquities had a significance which demanded their interest and concern. In 1889 R.W. Cochran-Patrick issued the following plea,

That more workers in the localities should come forward. As the object of the Association is simply to record facts, and provide materials for future generalisations, no profound or special archaeological knowledge is required.

Accurate descriptions and truthful drawings of remains or relics are all that is necessary, and contributions of that kind will be of the greatest use both to the Society and to Archaeological Science.<sup>1</sup>

His remarks were directed to the Ayrshire and Galloway Association but they provide a succinct summary of a belief on which county societies were to feed during the whole of the nineteenth century. The rise of this group of laymen was essential to the further growth of archaeology, a subject which has its base in collecting and recording. The county societies and their journals caused a large increase in the publication of casual finds and small excavations. Their success in this field was related to matters of conceptual scale; in an age which confidently anticipated the writing of definitive histories it was still much easier to sense the relevance of the casual find for a county history than for a national one. It is this aspect of scale that

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1 Archaeol. Hist. Coll. Ayr & Galloway, 6, 1889, xvii.

unites the activities of the societies with the most important factors governing their viability. Essentially, they provided a context in which the antiquarian activities of their members, including barrow digging, acquired meaning and importance.

Our sources in any general assessment of the development of national and county societies must generally be the early printed records of the societies and later histories usually produced as part of the celebration of the centennial or some other significant anniversary. These recent histories tend to be 'labours of love rather than of critical scholarship',<sup>2</sup> whereas the early printed records are often confusing and sometimes, one suspects, deliberately misleading. It is all too common to find secretaries reported as saying that in the field of membership the number of new members has equalled, or even exceeded, the numbers of deaths and resignations when a simple comparison of the figures will show a decline by up to thirty - a number which represented some ten per cent of the membership of many of the smaller societies.<sup>3</sup> No doubt such misrepresentation as occurred sprang from a firm belief that it was in the best interests of the society: in the case of membership, a fear that the announcement of a serious decline in numbers would encourage further resignations is easily understood. Equally common is the omission of matters from officials' reports which might be prejudicial to the well-being of the society in question. This technique was similarly applied to membership figures, mention of which would be absent for one or more years to be followed by a statement, without serious comment, of a membership considerably less than

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2 A phrase used by Gillispie, 1959, 232 to categorise the majority of histories of scientific societies.

3 See, by way of example, the incompatibility of remarks concerning membership made at the 1861 and 1862 annual general meetings of Wiltshire Archaeol. & Nat. Hist. Society: Wilts. Archaeol. Mag., 7, 1861, 234 and 8, 1864, 2.



the previous announced figure.<sup>4</sup> All of this is readily checked in the field of membership but it is clearly more difficult to do so in less numerical aspects of a society's existence. Furthermore, it should be emphasised that it is the very consistency with which such misrepresentations or omissions occur that leads one to regard them as other than mere forgetfulness or inadequacy on the part of individual officials. The presence of such approaches among the repertoire of secretaries and others holding positions in county societies, though by no means universal, does, by their consistency, limit the usefulness of the early printed records of societies. Indeed one must always bear in mind that such records have been compiled by those who, at the time, had a vested interest in projecting an image of a healthy society. The difficulty of striking a fair balance between creating a belief in the capability of overcoming a problem and injecting a feeling of despair among the ordinary membership is one which rapidly leads to an almost ritualistic combination of worry and optimism even among the speeches of the most honest officials, as anyone who attends today's annual general meetings will know. Equally, more recent histories show a very natural reluctance to dwell upon those aspects which show a society's efforts in an unflattering way but rather concentrate on those individuals who contributed most to the society's achievements. Only the briefest of mentions is afforded to affairs highlighting the organisational difficulties of the early societies. It is perhaps ungenerous to expect that anniversary histories should concern themselves with such matters, despite the interesting implications created by their occurrence, and one must regret that so many societies have left their own histories unwritten: of the national societies only one, the Society of Antiquaries of London, has as yet achieved this.<sup>5</sup> Any analysis, such

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4 Note, for example, how no figure is quoted for membership of the Surrey Archaeological Society in 1885 and the staggering loss between 1884 and 1885 of 71 members - some 17 per cent of the total membership - is attributed to an excessive number of deaths insofar as it is explained at all: *Surrey Archaeol. Coll.*, 9, 1888, xii and xxvi.

5 Evans, 1956.

as this, emphasising the difficulties of using the available evidence inevitably leaves an impression of a situation that is blacker than is warranted but it is necessary to sound a cautionary note concerning the problems before attempting to interpret the considerable amount of evidence available.

The social and economic contributions to the growth of archaeological societies.<sup>6</sup>

It is wholly indicative that the new local societies were organised on a county basis, for the county was essentially the unit within which the nobility and gentry exercised a collective authority and on which was based the institutions whereby they derived their influence.<sup>7</sup>

Socially, as well as administratively, the county formed an arena within which every member of those classes retained an importance and individuality not possible on a wider stage. By assuming a county role archaeological societies were able to take advantage of the support which these groups habitually gave to county organisations. This was nowhere better exemplified than in the libraries of the county houses filled by subscriptions to county histories, often multiple copies, and the works of local authors, the tangible remains of a once-vigorous local patronage and patriotism.<sup>8</sup> It may seem surprising the clergy, the third member of the triumvirate with which the fortunes of the archaeological societies were associated, should not have pressed their own social unit, the diocese, into a more prominent position. Religious affairs had had a considerable influence in generating a wider interest in the past and the apparent precursors of the county society had been the diocesan architectural societies but the move away from purely architectural matters to

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6 The best list of such societies and others with similar aims, though incomplete, is given in Tate, 1946, 320-25.

7 Thompson, 1963, 133-34; Hobsbawn and Rudé, 1969, 35.

8 Munby, 1974, 107.

broader topographical interests inevitably led back into the pre-existing topographical tradition firmly based in a county approach. The clergy were, after all, part of the nobility and gentry and their not insubstantial secular interests must have pointed clearly to the county as the natural area for such a society's interests.

Indeed the original proponents of county archaeological societies were by no means unaware of the importance of the county as their willing use of local pride shows. George Bish Webb, in his circular proposing the establishment of a Surrey Archaeological Society issued in August 1852, wrote,

Sussex, with but one half the population, and with fewer objects of interest to the antiquary, has an Archaeological Society numbering from six to seven hundred members who annually publish a very interesting volume of transactions, and hold a Congress in the county numerously attended.

It is to be hoped that the gentlemen of Surrey will not be slow to follow this good example of their neighbours, and show that they feel some pride in their interesting and beautiful county.<sup>9</sup>

There is no subtlety in this fervent appeal with its demands on the sense of obligation and duty, which Webb knows his readers will feel, supported by the veiled reproach implicit in the detailing of the Sussex achievement. The sense of identity which the county unit provided and the responsibilities which derived from it were not, however, vague and nebulous feelings capable of manipulation to any ends. In late 1857 Sussex Archaeological Society was approached by various persons from Kent who, while wishing to found an archaeological society in Kent, believed it desirable that it should be united with the Sussex Society. Although clearly the prestige of the Sussex Society would have been enhanced by the acceptance of this proposal, its committee replied that it 'considered

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9 Quoted in Lowther, 1954, 3.

that, with every good wish towards the Kentish Society, and with the most friendly feeling and desire of offering assistance, it would be most to the advantage of both Societies to be independent of each other.<sup>10</sup> While this episode may appear to be a fine example of redoubtable county feeling on the part of Sussex it is less obviously so on the part of Kent. Yet the Kentish proposal was only one part of an incident which paradoxically is the best example of the importance of the right of counties to run their own affairs and the ease with which affronts were felt, often in the face of logic and reason. It is only because events took place in the three southeastern counties which appeared to be attempting to subvert the inalienable county prerogative that we have such clear demonstrations of its permeation of all aspects of life, even such relatively inconsequential things as archaeological societies; in other areas it was accepted, without comment, as the natural way to proceed.

In 1857 Bish Webb, by then firmly established as the Honorary Secretary of the Surrey Archaeological Society, sought to extend the influence of his infant society with a proposal for a single society for Surrey and Kent. Necessarily, this involved canvassing support among influential men of Kent and Kentish men. Among those he approached was the Rev. Lambert B. Larking, Vicar of Ryarsh, to whom he justified his scheme by noting the fruitless attempts during several years to found an independent Kentish Society and by doubting the practicality of an autonomous society. If Webb's approaches to all his Kentish correspondents were similarly couched there can be little difficulty in understanding the hostile reaction they provoked. Larking certainly regarded them as an affront and began to campaign actively for an independent Kentish Society, replying to Webb, significantly, that his first duty was to his own county. He rallied support among those influential residents known to him personally, arranging for Lord and Lady Falmouth to hold a preliminary meeting at

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10 Quoted in Salzman, 1946, 7.



Mereworth Castle to establish a Kent Society, and wrote to Bish Webb informing him of the imminent establishment of the new society while asking him to withdraw his own scheme or at least hold it in abeyance. This Webb declined to do, apparently feeling that the Mereworth meeting was to be nothing more than a further abortive attempt to found a Kent Society, but his refusal to withdraw only spurred Larking to greater efforts. As part of his campaign Larking inserted a notice in the Maidstone Journal to inform 'the County that an Independent Society was on the tapis! However, the notice was amended, by whom is unclear, before it appeared so that in the final version Webb's party was referred to as 'interlopers'. At this point Webb could have been forgiven for believing that Larking's prime motivation was personal malice, not a sober defence of county pride, but he was too heavily involved to be able to withdraw gracefully. Events moved rapidly in favour of an independent Kentish Society and although Webb held two meetings in support of his proposal they served only to emphasise that the projected joint society was unfeasible. The amount of personal animosity which was generated between Larking and Webb as the business proceeded gave the affair the air of a personal conflict in which the more general defence of county integrity faded into the background. Yet the whole incident offers the clearest example of the importance of county institutions to those classes intimately involved with them.<sup>11</sup>

These examples from Surrey and Kent perhaps suggest too strongly that coercion was needed to raise local patriotism to the required enthusiasm, whereas the general descriptions of inaugural meetings contained in the respective county journals are full of a ready willingness to aid, albeit only passively in the majority of cases, the firm establishment of a new county institution. Furthermore, the pressure to establish a county society is seldom as overtly defensive as in the case of Kent but it remains important in all

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<sup>11</sup> This is a brief summary of the detailed account in Jessup, 1956, 1-7.



instances. The founders of the Huddersfield Archaeological and Topographical Association in 1863<sup>12</sup> had the aim of establishing a society concerned only with the district around Huddersfield and without county pretensions. But by 1868 it had announced the publication of the first part of The Yorkshire Archaeological and Topographical Journal: 'the title thus worded has been adopted', said the annual report for that year, 'because the area from which articles may, consistently with the rules, be contributed embraces all Yorkshire.'<sup>13</sup> This preliminary move towards county status was formalised in 1870 when the title of the Yorkshire Archaeological and Topographical Association was adopted.<sup>14</sup> It is unclear exactly what precipitated this move but there is some reason to suppose that it was the desire to publish a journal for which the district society had insufficient financial and organisational support in order to make it a practical proposition. The Huddersfield Society's first attempt at publication had been a series of twelve photographs of local antiquities but Chadwick notes irregularities in their issue since he himself was only able to obtain three or four although he had subscribed for the series.<sup>15</sup> The difficulties involved in satisfactorily producing a series of twelve photographs must have increased dramatically with the publication of a journal.

Clearly then, the county pattern was one that commended itself to both would-be organisers and members of local archaeological societies but firm pictures of their social composition are hard to construct. It is generally agreed that the county archaeological societies were 'managed by the gentry, the clergy, and the upper

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12 The generally accepted foundation date although the Association does not seem to have been formally constituted until 1864: Chadwick, 1915, 1.

13 Quoted in Brooke, 1902, 235.

14 For the Huddersfield Society see Brooke, 1902, and for the early history of both societies, Chadwick, 1915.

15 Chadwick, 1915, 21.

professional class in unison, with the benevolent approval of the peerage',<sup>16</sup> yet any attempt to go beyond this is fraught with difficulty. Such figures as one can compile from the membership lists are woefully inadequate in that at least sixty per cent of any society's membership cannot be categorised and some of the groups which are identifiable are probably incompletely represented (examples in Table 1). However, if we cannot, on the basis of these figures, successfully isolate the relative strengths of the various groups within the membership nor adequately compare them with similar analyses for other, non-archaeological societies, we can observe some points of interest which, together with other incidental scraps of information, do lead to an appreciation of the social role of county archaeological societies and a clearer understanding of those factors connected with their viability.

The clearest and firmest picture to emerge from these figures is necessarily that of clerical participation; in one of the more balanced histories of a local society it is noted that 'the clergy dominated and inspired the greater part of the work that the Society undertook.'<sup>17</sup> Between twenty and twenty-five per cent of the membership of societies in the southern half of England were clergy and the consistency which the Somerset figures (Table 1) show throughout the second half of the nineteenth century is paralleled in all available figures for societies in the counties of lowland England. The scholars in religious garb, of which we may reasonably see the members of county societies as representative, had a long tradition behind them<sup>18</sup> when they entered their final climactic half-century as a distinct group in the middle of the nineteenth century. Catholic in their tastes and learning, if not in their religion, they contrived

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16 Leicester Archaeol. Soc., 1955, 6.

17 *idem*, 5.

18 Southern, 1970, 240.

Table 1 : Composition of the membership of two local archaeological societies - Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society and the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire.

Somerset		1851	1862	1872	1881	1891	1902
Total		420	385	381	480	554	612
Membership		112(21)	84(22)	86(22)	115(24)	127(23)	140(23)
Clergy		20(5)	24(6)	22(6)	24(5)	25(5)	23(4)
Aristocracy		13(3)	9(3)	11(3)	22(5)	34(6)	26(4)
Military		12(3)	14(4)	11(3)	13(3)	15(3)	18(3)
Doctors		10(3)	11(3)	7(2)	6(1)	5(1)	7(1)
M. P.		15(4)	18(5)	13(4)	24(5)	27(5)	44(7)
Women							
Lancashire & Cheshire		1851	1861	1872	1881	1891	1901
Total		304	390	252	200	290	236
Membership		31(13)	40(10)	14(6)	21(11)	27(9)	19(8)
Clergy		14(5)	16(4)	23(9)	15(8)	16(6)	10(4)
Aristocracy		3(1)	5(1)	6(2)	4(2)	16(6)	12(5)
Military		16(5)	12(3)	5(2)	2(1)	2(1)	7(3)
Doctors		12(4)	15(4)	15(6)	9(5)	6(2)	2(1)
M. P.		-	-	1(0.5)	2(1)	8(3)	11(4)
Women							

Note : Figures in parenthesis represent percentages.

Sources : Membership lists published by each society.

to find the time, with more than a little help from their curate, to make major contributions to scholarship not least, as we have seen, in the world of barrow digging. They were grateful beneficiaries of a patronage system which enabled Anglican clergy to have a more secular attitude to their responsibilities than perhaps one would expect. Llewellyn Davies was overstating the case when he said, 'few will doubt that the Church of England greatly needs the help of divine grace to preserve it from an undue reverence for station and property'<sup>19</sup> but he was imparting the essence of the situation. Yet the position was by no means unchanging throughout the nineteenth century. The system which had offered country parsons security even in the face of dire neglect of their duties had done so on the basis of immobility on the part of individual parsons. It was incompatible with the increased mobility of the rest of the population; in the final decades of the century there was increasingly the feeling that a country parish meant a lonely and stagnant existence. The newer parsons were more often townsmen and less often Oxford or Cambridge educated, for after 1871 dons did not need to be ordained to hold their fellowships nor resign them if they married.<sup>20</sup> Curiously though these changes with their apparent decline in the numbers of scholarly parsons are not reflected in the clerical membership of local archaeological societies and, moreover, the activity of the clergy which sustained most societies, as well as filling their journals, continued unabated until at least the early years of the present century. From this one can only conclude that either county societies were only capable of attracting the most die-hard antiquarians among the clergy as members or, more likely, that the diminution of learning among country clergy has been heavily overstated. Clearly, there is considerable need for further figures from other non-archaeological societies and estimations for the number of rural clergy who belonged

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19 Quoted in Chadwick, 1970, 156.

20 Chadwick, 1970, 165-66, 169-70.

to any secular organisation with scholastic aims before any definite interpretations can be advanced with confidence.

In addition to the suggestions concerning scholarship among country parsons, the figures are important in indicating the relative importance of these clergy in the membership of societies having an agricultural or industrial base. It is immediately apparent that clerical membership in the Lancashire and Cheshire Society, representative of the more industrial north, was only half that of Somerset, standing for the agricultural, rural south. This would seem to support the generally accepted idea that county archaeology societies are the product of rural, southern English society with its firm roots in the Anglican Church and that the greater strength of Nonconformity in the Midlands and the North inhibited the growth of such societies in these areas.<sup>21</sup> But is this really so? In attempting an answer, it is fortunate that the 1851 census embodied a rare effort to determine religious allegiance in Britain. The value of the information was hotly disputed at the time of its collection but more recent assessments suggest that it was a conscientious compilation with substantial reliability within its own limits.<sup>22</sup> Church attendances on census Sunday were particularly low because of such things as illness and bad weather and there are, moreover, statistical objections to the manner in which the figures were collected. Yet they do provide rough indications of denominational strength which have some value in a consideration of general statements concerning the social consequences of those strengths. The census results do appear to support the idea of a greater element of Nonconformity in the industrialised north than in the agricultural south (figures for England, on a county basis, are given in Table 2) but there are sufficient exceptions to suggest that there is 'no simple equation between agricultural society

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21 Leicester Archaeol. Soc., 1955, 4; Piggott, 1968a

22 Inglis, 1960.



Table 2 : Religious allegiance in 1851 and the foundation dates of county archaeology societies.

County	Anglicans		Dissenters		county society foundation date
	Sittings	%	Sittings	%	
Hereford	49312	72	19363	28	-
Rutland	12131	70	5168	30	-
Oxford	74369	68	34932	32	(1839)
Sussex	108076	67	51935	33	1846
Surrey	143783	66	75311	34	1854
Westmorland*	24411	66	12828	34	1866
Dorset	77886	65	42196	35	1875
Kent	194443	65	104853	35	1857
Hampshire	135720	64	76441	36	1885
Shropshire	92435	64	51228	36	1877
Suffolk <sup>+</sup>	141417	63	82812	37	1848
Middlesex	344487	62	207744	38	1855
Berkshire	56679	61	36058	39	1879
Essex	132041	61	84072	39	1852
Somerset	174723	61	112630	39	1848
Warwick	123624	61	78207	39	-
Worcester <sup>+</sup>	85155	61	53513	39	-
Norfolk <sup>+</sup>	168722	60	114698	40	1845
Hertford	55193	59	38037	41	1845
Devon	191710	58	141224	42	-
Stafford	161217	58	118299	42	-
Buckinghamshire	64231	57	48978	43	1847
Cumberland	56803	57	42980	43	1866
Gloucester <sup>+</sup>	156651	57	119955	43	1876

Northampton	84816	56	65656	44	-
Wiltshire	87843	55	70851	45	1843
Lancashire	383466	54	324751	46	1849
Cheshire	121882	53	107829	47	1848
Leicester	82964	53	73714	47	1855
Huntingdon	23568	52	21446	48	-
Cambridge	52917	51	51279	49	1840
Lincoln	142844	51	136403	49	(1844)
Bedford	42557	48	45257	52	1847
Derby	87829	48	94752	52	1878
Nottingham	70928	47	76096	53	-
Yorkshire	420785	44	546508	56	1863
Durham	66319	40	100966	60	1813
Northumberland	52405	40	79241	60	1813
Cornwall	95155	36	166529	64	(1818)

\* Includes four unreported Baptist chapels estimated at 1000

+ Figures for Anglican sittings probably affected by exceptional size and number of ancient parish churches

Those foundation dates in parenthesis indicate societies not wholly archaeological but taking sufficient interest in the subject to preclude the establishment of a separate society; Oxford and Lincoln both developed eventually into societies within the normal range of county archaeological societies.

Source : Religious affiliation after Everitt, 1970, 181.

and Anglicanism, or industrial parishes and Dissent.<sup>23</sup> What does emerge from the comparison between the foundation dates of county archaeological societies and relative denominational strengths given in Table 2 is that there is little evidence to suggest that the relative strength of Anglicanism *vis-à-vis* Dissent is a significant factor in the date of the establishment of a county society; a more convincing case, though not totally so, could be advanced to suggest that the absolute size of the Anglican community is the important criterion. It is, however, important to realise that most county societies were operating quite successfully with total memberships equal to less than one-third of one percent of the active Anglicans in their area. We should, therefore, be careful of over-emphasising the importance of Nonconformity in this matter for some heavily Anglican and rural counties, like Dorset and Hampshire, saw archaeological societies founded late in the nineteenth century while some 'Nonconformist' counties like Cheshire and Cambridge were early contributors to the ranks of such societies. It is wholly likely that membership of societies in Northern England reflected the higher social standing of non-Anglicans in their areas and that these societies were consequently less restrictive in their enrolment.<sup>24</sup>

However, the breakdown of membership figures (Table 1) tells us much less about the other social groups that made up the county archaeology societies and for these groups we are still thrown back onto generalisations derived from much broader aspects of county life. The aristocracy were numerically weak but, as in all rural affairs, they were offered, in deference to their rank, opportunities for a considerable exercise of power in the operations of the archaeological

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23. Everitt, 1970, 180-82.

24 Note the considerable society careers of Joseph Mayer, a Jewish merchant in Liverpool, and John Collingwood Bruce, a Nonconformist Minister in Newcastle.

societies. Rule five of the original set drawn up for the Sussex Archaeological Society indicates 'that Members of either House of Parliament shall, on becoming Members of the Society, be placed on the list of Vice-Presidents ...' and rule six that Vice-Presidents were to sit on the Committee of Management.<sup>25</sup> Similar rules were adopted by many societies although it was, thought Roach Smith, a policy of 'leaning on broken reeds.'<sup>26</sup> In simple terms he was right because those committee members occupying their position by virtue of rank took little interest in the routine management of their societies, most of which quietly abandoned the relevant rules within the first twenty years or so of their existence. Not that the aristocracy were above using their influence in support of individual projects, they were quite happy to do so as Sir John Boileau did in enlisting the support of the Norfolk and Norwich Archaeological Society for Joseph Hunter's The history and topography of Ketteringham. Boileau had a genuine interest in his own village and wished to encourage a model of local history but he was not displeased when Hunter inserted his ancestry.<sup>27</sup> But in generally adopting a rather negative approach the aristocracy were acting very much within the accepted patterns of county society. The gentry and clergy retained a good deal of power in matters which affected the county while surrendering much of their individuality to the aristocracy when it came to national considerations. This dichotomy of responsibility is reflected in the social lives of both groups; the gentry mixed freely with the aristocracy in county life without sharing the latter's more cosmopolitan experience derived from an annual sojourn in London. Such relationships between gentry and aristocracy did not, until the latter part of the nineteenth century, embody a role for those engaged in trade or business despite the growing importance of such figures in

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25 Salzman, 1946, 8.

26 Letter to W.H. Blaauw, ? 1846 quoted in Salzman, 1946, 11.

27 Chadwick, 1960, 59-60.

both national and rural affairs.<sup>28</sup> Indeed, this elemental suspicion of trade lay behind the dispute which split the Archaeological Institute from the British Archaeological Association when Way and his supporters believed that Wright was attempting to obtain business advantages from his connection with the Association.<sup>29</sup> The recognition of middle class participation in county archaeological societies is indeed a most difficult problem but such involvement was clearly thought right and proper by the longer established county figures : Lord Falmouth in a letter to Larking written in the early days of the Kent Society proposed a more energetic canvass of the middle class in order that the fledgling society might have a firmer base.<sup>30</sup> Here then is the prime social function of institutions like county archaeology societies for they provided a structure which developed the newer middle class groups' allegiance to the pre-existing county pattern without offering immediate access to administrative power but giving instead opportunities for social contact with the aristocracy and gentry in less formal surroundings than could be achieved in business meetings. Such organisations were clearly necessary if stability of county institutions was to be maintained in the face of increasing 'democratization' and their importance is in part reflected by the full reporting of their activities in the local press and such periodicals as the *Gentleman's Magazine* which were aimed at the rural market.

At the same time other, more impersonal factors were contributing to the viability of archaeological societies and were as reflective of the growth of industrialisation and new agrarian techniques as the altering class structure of rural society. They involved the means of communication, particularly the roads and railways. While the

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28 Thompson, 1963, 22-23, 110, 185-86.

29 The only recent consideration of this complicated affair is the wholly one-sided account in Evans, 1949, 1-5.

30 Jessup, 1956, 5.



construction of these networks unearthed many antiquities,<sup>31</sup> itself an aspect that some would mistakenly interpret as being fundamental to the growth of antiquarian activities,<sup>32</sup> their real importance lay in the greatly improved facilities they offered for personal communications between antiquaries. The impact of the Turnpike Acts in greatly easing journeys by road is clear even in writers as hostile to the new roads as Cobbett, 'it is true that I could have gone to Uphusband [from Kensington] by travelling only about 66 miles, and in the space of about eight hours. But, my object was, not to see inns and turnpike-roads...'<sup>33</sup> It is somewhat difficult to appreciate that an average of eight miles per hour represented such a significant improvement but less hard to understand that the existence of a network of improved roads encouraged journeys that individuals might otherwise have hesitated over. This increased willingness to undertake short-term visits received considerable supplemental support from the establishment of a rail network which made possible long distance travel at previously undreamt-of speed. The revolution in mobility, which improved road and rail systems brought about, is the basis of the British Archaeological Association and the Archaeological Institute's concept of annual, week-long congresses at a prominent provincial centre. They could not only get sufficient numbers of antiquaries to come from all over the country to these meetings but also give the congress an individual and local air through the use of these new transport facilities for excursions into the surrounding area. Thus, at the Gloucester Congress of the British Archaeological Association held in 1846 one day was set aside for a visit to the Woodchester mosaic pavements, by rail to Stroud and thence by hired carriages, and to Cirencester, by rail from Stroud and

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31 For an example of the haphazard responses to these discoveries see Coleman, 1968, 30-31, and for the impulse that a discovery made during railway construction gave to the founding of the Sussex Archaeological Society see Salzman, 1946, 3-5.

32 Crawford, 1932.

33 Cobbett, 1830, 31.

returning to Gloucester at the end of the day.<sup>34</sup> The break with the metropolitan-based activities of the Society of Antiquaries of London which these congresses represented was felt by many in the 1850s to have 'led the way in an important movement the effect of which is ... visible throughout England and even in some counties of Ireland.'<sup>35</sup> Without doubt local societies adopted many of the procedures of the new national societies but these annual congresses provided little impetus towards the immediate foundation of local societies in areas where they took place. However, they did provide the first serious opportunities for personal contacts between many of the more established and aspiring antiquaries and such meetings would not have been feasible without the improved transport system. Moreover, the establishment of rail links between London and the surrounding areas enabled individuals resident in the capital but with links in the nearby counties to take a more immediate interest in the activities of local societies. The improving transport facilities thus formed a necessary adjunct to the decentralisation of antiquarian affairs which was a primary requirement for a truly national interest in the material aspects of the past.

Equally important was the establishment of a cheap and efficient postal system for both national and county societies needed to send information regularly to their membership in order to inform them of current events and thereby to maintain interest. Closely related to the developments in transport the postal reforms of the 1840s brought significant changes in the life-style of many. 'It is difficult', wrote Disraeli in *Endymion* (1880), 'for us who live in an age of railroads, telegraphs, penny posts, and penny newspapers, to realize how limited in thought and feeling, as well as incident, was the life of an

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34 Trans. Br. Archaeol. Assoc. 3rd Ann. Cong. Gloucester 1846 (London, 1848), 324-25.

35 T. Crofton Croker, *Diary*, 10 Nov. 1852 : Soc. Ant. Lond. Mss. 751.

English family of retired habits and limited means only forty years ago.' The penny post undoubtedly provided the most significant impulse to the postal system by bringing a previously expensive system into widespread use but it was not by itself of considerable significance to local societies since the Post Office initially lacked the ability to deliver widely in rural areas. Seven hundred new posts were established, however, by 1850 and the general revision and improvement of country services begun in 1851 was largely complete by 1858; by 1864 ninety-four per cent of the letters were delivered to the houses to which they were addressed.<sup>36</sup> Similarly valuable was the introduction of a book post in 1848 with a reduction in rates from 1855, although it is unclear how early county societies adopted this means of distributing their periodicals.<sup>37</sup> Certainly it offered an escape from some of the administrative problems which societies often experienced in their early years. Many societies appointed local secretaries who were intended to act as links between the committee and the members but more importantly to collect subscriptions and distribute the volumes produced by the society. In Sussex, as elsewhere, this system rapidly led to chaos and rank dishonesty: volumes remained undelivered or h9 were misappropriated by local secretaries who often delivered complimentary copies without the sanction of the Committee and for which the Society received no equivalent.<sup>38</sup> It is one of the curious paradoxes of the Victorian period that institutions like country archaeological societies were so consistently mismanaged in their early years while drawing their membership and committees from those social groups who were heavily involved in the management and administrations of other organisations, and it perhaps suggests

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36 Robinson, 1953, 175.

37 Robinson, 1953, 163-65, 194; Evans, 1956, 305.

38 Salzman, 1946, 20-21.

that those who were the most innovative and adroit in the field of management, the upper professional classes, did not easily obtain the power or influence to improve these more local situations.

The road, rail and postal systems all reflected the developing pace of economic activity and as such indicators their influence on archaeological societies, which are specifically non-economic in their aspirations, can only have been diffuse and unspecific but nonetheless important. Yet one might have expected the membership totals of these societies to have reflected the particular economic state at any one point in time. This they conspicuously fail to do, with the possible exception of Surrey for which there may be local factors. The clearest indication would be expected during the period 1873 to the mid-1890s, the so-called Great Depression, for by then many of the county societies were well past the first enthusiasms that accompanied their foundation. Agriculture, once considered the most depressed area of the nation's economy at that time, is now more modestly interpreted as having suffered regional variations, hardest hit in the arable south and east but remaining relatively prosperous in the pastoral north and west.<sup>39</sup> Yet however much economic historians may argue over the characterisation of the period<sup>40</sup> there can be less doubt that contemporary views were unanimous in describing it as a time of depression.<sup>41</sup> In spite of this, the county societies show little sign that they were part of a general retrenchment in the leisure aspect of life; only Surrey showed any serious decline in its membership and then not until 1885 and Dorset, with its downland arable and sheep farming, precisely those areas of agriculture suffering worst, saw the

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39 Fletcher, 1961.

40 See the admirable summary in Saul, 1969.

41 Thompson, 1963, 308; cf. Perry, 1970.

foundation of a county society in 1875.<sup>42</sup> Indeed, the earliest county societies were established in the decade which saw the rapid growth of Chartism and the repeal of the Corn Laws, hardly auspicious times for the development of new organisations in rural life. They were doubtless aided by the years of prosperity in the fifth and sixth decades of the century but in general the fortunes of the county societies tend to be individualistic and without a close relationship to political or economic events, or rather they retained sufficient value for their members as to enable them to withstand the impact of those wider affairs.

The activities of archaeological societies.<sup>43</sup>

While the broader factors discussed above were making their contribution to the viability of county archaeological societies they remained very much outside the control or influence of an individual society and its membership. It is, therefore, appropriate to turn our attention now to the actions and policies adopted by societies for these must have more nearly accorded with the explicit needs and desires of the rank-and-file supporters. The key-word for all activities undertaken was communication in order that the ordinary member might be informed of the society's modus operandi no matter how little he was contributing himself. No real privilege accrued from belonging to a local archaeological society since it indicated nothing about social status that was not more clearly demonstrated in other aspects of life; only from the nobility could there be support deriving from a sense of obligation. If, therefore, a society's long-term survival depended on its ability to involve and interest its members it is in no way surprising that

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42 See Leicester Archaeol. Soc., 1955, 14, f.n. for some apposite comments on this point.

43 Consideration of the museological aspects are deferred until the next chapter.



the general aims were usually couched in the widest possible terms that the definition of archaeology would allow even through such a definition was largely the product of legacies from the past. The Surrey Archaeological Society defined its area of interest as 'the Ancient Arts and Monuments of the County; including Primeval Antiquities; Architecture, Civil, Ecclesiastical, and Military; Sculpture; Paintings on Walls, Wood or Glass; Civil History and Antiquities, comprising Manors, Manorial Rights, Privileges and Customs; Heraldry and Genealogy; Costume; Numismatics; Ecclesiastical History and Endowments, and Charitable Foundations, Records, etc., and all other matters comprised under the head of Archaeology.'<sup>44</sup> Its comprehensive and explicit nature is unusual but this list provides a fine indication of the breadth of interests for which county societies were attempting to cater. Moreover, many societies allied themselves to other disciplines, particularly natural history, and it is interesting to note that at the first annual meeting of the Somerset society the chairman, Sir Walter Trevelyan, discussing the society's interests, referred first to natural history, secondly to architecture (Roman and medieval), and then to records (family and parochial).<sup>45</sup>

The most effective method for satisfying the wide diversity of the member's interests proved to be excursions and field-trips, often allied with more formal meetings for the reading of papers. Colonel Parker, in 1913, described excursions as 'the best possible recruiting agency. They are not only of value as leading us to visit many parts of the county Yorkshire in this instance with which we are not acquainted. They are of great educational value, and many of our new members join us on these occasions.'<sup>46</sup> It is a succinct

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44 From rule II of the original rules quoted in Lowther, 1954, 6.

45 Hobhouse, 1949, 28.

46 Chadwick, 1915, 61.

summary of their appeal for they offered regular opportunities to visit sites and monuments of a considerable range in type and date, often under privileged conditions, with a guide lecturer and little demand for individual organisation. Their popularity remains strong even today and their cessation in Surrey during the First World War was seen by one writer as a significant factor in the decline in membership of the Surrey Society during that period<sup>47</sup> - this decline, which was common to all societies, surely reflects wider factors than the abandonment of excursions but it emphasises the importance of such activities to the society's members that it should be singled out as explanation. Many of these excursions were prodigious attempts to encapsulate a feeling of the total history of an area or a place, or so the organisers would have wished their efforts described, but still there remains a constant impression that keeping the participants active and leaving them exhausted at the end of the day was equally important. 'The excursions,' wrote a Dr. Wellesley in 1853, 'I presume are too romping and tearing to admit to stopping to look at what you go to see, and early dinners of course make everything a race, so after all it is of no great consequence to do more than keep things going at full trot.'<sup>48</sup> It all demanded efficient management and the use of a bugle to marshall the participants on some of the Leicester Society's excursions suggests that for a few organisers, at least, there was not too great a distinction to be drawn between members of an archaeology society and a pack of fox-hounds.<sup>49</sup> All of this indicates that the educational aspects of excursions were not as well served as they might have been but failures in this field were more than adequately compensated for by the social benefits of such activities. Anyone who has delved into accounts of these nineteenth-century excursions must be impressed by the willingness of the

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47 Billingham, 1954, 83-84.

48 Quoted in Salzman, 1946, 25.

49 Leicester Archaeol. Soc., 1955, 11.

major landowners in an area to be visited to feed and entertain lavishly up to five hundred people and more at their own expense even when they were not themselves members of the society.<sup>50</sup> The social opportunities which such occasions afforded were reinforced by the general social intercourse between members of the society made possible by the excursions and annual meetings. It was doubtless this latter feeling that prompted 'an old member of the Cambrian Archaeological Association' to suggest, in 1866, that more formal 'evening meetings in Town and County Halls' should be replaced by 'a conversazione or soiree in the assembly room of an hotel.'<sup>51</sup> The Sussex Society was prepared to go even further to accommodate the social needs of its members at the annual meeting at Bodiam in 1856 by the employment of a 'Band' lest it turn out to be 'rather slow ... as many persons would be present who care but little for the Architecture of an Old Castle and who come to enjoy themselves and to see and be seen.' It was not a prospect that daunted Mark Antony Lower who commented,

While the chronicle and the chartulary are by no means neglected, why should we obstinately repudiate picturesque scenes, the joyous expressions of kindly feeling, the wine and the venison, and, above all, the benign influence of bright eyes and sunny faces which are ever the concomitants of our charming anniversary.<sup>52</sup>

The owners of the 'bright eyes and sunny faces' were generally reckoned to have only the most frivolous of interests in the more scholarly aspects of archaeological societies but nevertheless the presence of women at these relatively informal gatherings was consistently welcomed and there was, furthermore, a ready willingness among societies to admit women to membership in their own right.

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50 For an example of this see Billingham, 1954, 81.

51 Quoted in Lloyd, 1949, 15.

52 The remarks of Figg and Lower are both quoted in Salzman, 1946, 25.

But it remains problematic how far these attitudes were contributing to the loosening of the rigid social constraints placed at the time on relations between the sexes.

Much of the impetus and many of the guidelines for the conducting of these annual meetings and excursions came from the week-long congresses held in provincial centres by the British Archaeological Association and the Archaeological Institute, who had in turn borrowed the idea from the British Association for the Advancement of Science.<sup>53</sup> We have already noted the rather irregular links between these congresses and the foundation of local societies in the areas visited but there can be no doubt concerning the importance of the activities of the newer national societies in establishing a pattern of action for such local groups once they had been founded. The significant contribution was the rejection of the reading of learned papers as the sole acceptable procedure of an antiquarian society and the consequent acceptance of visits to field monuments as a laudable development in furthering general archaeological aims. The recognition of the value of seeing sites in the field promoted the nascent interests of local societies in two other areas, excavation and preservation. Large-scale excavations were beyond the resources of single societies and were largely left to those who still enjoyed the traditional patronage system, although societies were often willing to lend their name to an individual's efforts and even on occasion establish a special voluntary fund, as the Huddersfield Association did in 1865 for excavations at Slack.<sup>54</sup> Only when societies in their maturer years at the end of the century had benefited from endowment and legacies could large excavations be contemplated but they remained a rare occurrence. However, small

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53 For a personal view of one of these national congresses see Payne & Payne, 1971, and for the British Association see Howarth, 1922; other, more specific but relevant aspects of the Br. Assoc. are considered in Orange, 1971 (provincialism) and Orange, 1973 (origins).

54 Brooke, 1902, 231.

excavations particularly the opening of one or two barrows before the arrival of the assembled members were considered a most sensible and delightful way of enlivening an excursion or annual meeting - had not the British Archaeological Association set just such an example by their work on Breach Down during the first congress at Canterbury?<sup>55</sup> A similarly modest posture was adopted with regard to preservation since it was so intimately involved with the vexed questions of proprietorial rights and restoration. Lord Lincoln, then first Commissioner of Woods and Works, was disparaging about what antiquarian societies could achieve when he wrote to Peel in February 1844, 'in this Country the Societies which exist have done, and I believe can do, very little good.'<sup>56</sup> This was to be an unduly pessimistic assessment of what could be accomplished in a local setting but the problem remained complicated especially as societies came to realise the dangers of restoration: Ralph Nevill in leading a visit by the Surrey Archaeological Society to Farnham Church remarked 'that the church was restored in 1853, and it has thus lost most of its archaeological interest.'<sup>57</sup> The restoration of churches had not waned in response to the diminution of the Cambridge Camden Society's influence. Indeed it had become one of the hall-marks of modernity such that B.J. Armstrong, vicar of East Dereham, Norfolk, could describe Wymondham in his diary entry for July 11 1859 as 'altogether behind-hand-no gas, no pavements, no good shops and the church unrestored.'<sup>58</sup> In the face of these pressures to destroy or seriously alter many structures and sites the local societies never evolved anything more than a piecemeal and pragmatic policy towards this difficult problem and there is no

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55 Wright, 1845, 6-8.

56 Nottingham Univ., Newcastle MS. 12030 quoted in Crook & Port, 1973, 641.

57 Surrey Archaeol. Coll., 8, 1883, xiv.

58 Armstrong, 1963, 78.



evidence of any active lobbying on behalf of Sir John Lubbock's Ancient Monuments Protection Bill.<sup>59</sup> Certainly, it was the failure of the existing societies to effectively meet the challenges of ill-considered restoration and destruction that led William Morris to establish the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings in 1877.

Despite these problems the county societies effectively recognised and responded to the demand for a strong fieldwork element in their activities. Yet the longer-established societies obstinately refused to modify their own attitudes, preferring instead to maintain the more traditional approach by confining their interests to the reading of scholarly papers.<sup>60</sup> The differences in attitude should not be too strongly delineated but the separate emphasis placed by societies on alternative methods to achieve common aims is quite marked. The appeal of fieldwork is further emphasised by the growth of field clubs which Wright saw as beginning in the Welsh Marches, significantly an area lacking early county societies. Such societies embraced those subjects which could be well studied in field trips, including antiquarian matters, but placed less emphasis on the long-term academic aims adopted by county societies.<sup>61</sup> Their foundation does appear to have inhibited the growth of societies in the more usual county mould<sup>62</sup> although some at least assumed the role of county Societies.<sup>63</sup>

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59 Enacted in 1882, 45 and 46 Vict. cap. 73. For the problems prior to its passage and its early difficulties see Evans, 1956, 301, 330-33, 365-69; Thompson, 1960; Barley & Barry, 1971.

60 cf. Graham, 1970, 245.

61 Wright, 1867, 74-76.

62 e.g. the Cotteswold Field Club in Gloucestershire : for the early years of the later Bristol and Gloucestershire Society see Austin, 1926.

63 e.g. Hampshire : see Williams-Freeman, 1943.

Just how many members of a local society took a regular part in the excursions organised by county societies is impossible to compute but even if a member took no active part in the society's affairs at all he still received its journal. Almost without exception each society, upon establishment, announced its intention to produce a regular publication which would contain reports on activities and, more important, articles and notes which represented the fruits of antiquarian labour in its area. Indeed it was the appearance of Archaeologia Cambrensis and the efforts of its editors that brought about the establishment of the Cambrian Archaeological Association.<sup>64</sup> There was to be little concern for social needs in the production of the journal; it was to be the yardstick by which every member could judge the efforts of the society. Always the main demand on society funds the journal was intended as an unashamedly academic piece, a thing of worth to be kept as part of one's library. Although they were never attempting to equal the lavish production and wide range of interests that the older establishment societies sought to achieve in Archaeologia and Archaeologia Scotica, the local societies clearly sought to emulate the scholarly standards of those journals within their own much narrower spheres of concern. This support for existing antiquarian traditions, as embodied in the efforts of the Society of Antiquaries of London and Scotland, was not without implication for that tradition. The financial limitations imposed on local societies meant that the format of the Archaeologia and its Scottish counterpart, obviously related to the lavish topographical publications of the eighteenth century, could not be adopted and instead an altogether more modest octavo volume was generally produced. Yet this was to achieve the same results as John Britton's deliberate abandonment of the traditional topographical format. The new smaller format owed much to the growing periodical press although the first periodical carrying topographical information, the Gentleman's Magazine, had been first issued in 1731 and reached a

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64 Lloyd, 1949, 11.

circulation of fifteen thousand by the mid-eighteenth century.<sup>65</sup> The use of the new size led to more efficient and rapid production and if the older societies felt able to ignore the fieldwork aspects of the new societies they did not choose the same approach for publications : the new, small style Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of London completed its first volume in 1849 and volume one of the Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland covered the three sessions 1851 to 1854. The London Antiquaries' production was a rather formal affair between 1843 and 1849, the first volume, and was originally produced to counter criticisms of the Society's management but its introduction of woodcuts in 1849 can only be interpreted as a response to the publication efforts of the younger societies.<sup>66</sup>

In addition to the alterations in the accepted ways for presenting archaeological information the emergence of a considerable number of new journals inevitably led to an increase in the published material. Small excavations and chance discoveries which would previously have languished unpublished or at best recorded in a manuscript diary began to appear in ever-lasting numbers in the pages of the county journals. It not only led to an information explosion but it also changed the whole structure of archaeological publication which ceased to be dependent upon the wealth of the author or patron or the whim of a publisher. A wide spectrum of county society was, in effect, invited to subsidise the work of its local scholars and although this could be seen as merely an extension of the subscription system used so successfully in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries it is on an altogether different scale and, moreover, membership of the societies was not wholly dependent on literary output since they consciously sought to provide more for

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65 Plant, 1965, 57.

66 Evans, 1956, 237, 276.

their members. This is the crucial distinction between archaeological societies and literary clubs even if they came perilously close to an amalgamation of function.<sup>67</sup>

Yet these quite fundamental changes in the presentation and type of archaeological information was brought about by societies with the wholly traditional aims of augmenting the county histories, 'an important object which this and Kindred Societies have in view is to supplement the older County Histories by a close attention to the details of parochial history.'<sup>68</sup> They were not, however, blinkered in their attitudes for there was an early and general realisation of the benefits of exchange of publications between societies which, in turn, necessitated the establishment of libraries for members. We have already seen that it was the preservation of John Britton's collection of books that led to the formation of the Wiltshire Society and this emphasises the conserving aspect of society libraries but the libraries main function remained, in common with the journal, that of communication in the vastly increased field of antiquarian information.

It is clear then that although given impetus and direction by events on the broader intellectual scene and having had a relatively late development through antiquarianism's lack of any firm base in either the professions<sup>69</sup> or economic affairs county archaeology societies had a social role in rural life and from this they derived much of their vitality. Furthermore, it was this role that controlled their success after the new views of the past had so entered

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67 e.g. The Powysland Club whose name and original prospectus suggest that the original intention was to form a literary club yet it never seems to have sought to realise these aims : see Lloyd, 1968.

68 Surrey Archaeol. Coll., 6, 1874, vii.

69 For the rather mixed blessings which professional involvement brought to the organisational development of architecture see Crook, 1969, 66-71.

the mainstream of thought as to be a mere commonplace without novelty or the need for positive support. In seeking to establish a pattern of activities which would augment this social element in their make-up societies were able to utilise the very considerable improvements in communication which were the consequences of the agrarian and industrial changes in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The development of such a pattern required a more varied series of events than had been customary hitherto, a firm reflection of the marked break with tradition that these new societies represented. By replacing the individual patron with a large number of supporters who passed judgement on the societies' achievements in the payment or otherwise of their subscriptions there was an inevitable broadening of activities in order to maintain the publication of learned material in the journals. The importance of the opportunities which such journals provided for the recording of small-scale work cannot be gainsaid but the encouragement which this gave to individuals, more aware of practical techniques because of the excursions organised by societies, was not without its problems since the societies were largely unable to offer any training for investigation other than visits to excavations in progress. Field-visits, with their social as well as educative function, enlarged people's understanding of the monuments around them without inducing much academic respect for these sites especially when such respect would clash with proprietorial rights. We must not, then, see county archaeology societies as primarily innovative in intent or practice, particularly in matters of standards, but rather as the mechanism for broadening public involvement in archaeological affairs and the establishment of a firm relationship between that public and the working antiquary in the provision of improved facilities for publication.



## **9 Collections : public and private.**

It is appropriate that, after the steady reiteration throughout this study of the importance of collecting as a motivation for barrow digging, we should conclude with some attempt to place such acquisitiveness in its wider context. Since the development of public museums provides a better basis for determining the general attitudes of society to such institutions and the concepts which they embody these are dealt with first, followed by some consideration of the growth of private collections and their relationship to their public counterparts. Although not much discussed here, it should be emphasised that libraries were intimately connected with museums and represent another facet of the same aspiration. The Public Libraries Act of 1850 recognised this with its remark 'that it is expedient to promote the establishment and extension of Public Libraries, and to give greater facilities than now exist for establishing and extending Public Museums of Art and Science in Municipal Boroughs, for the instruction and recreation of the people'<sup>1</sup> and it made the necessary provisions. Necessarily, in the approach outlined here there will be some unevenness caused by the need to discuss the arguments during the nineteenth century over the value of a national collection of British antiquities and the specific attitudes of barrow diggers to the collection and conservation of their discoveries. In the acquisition and preservation of antiquities we are dealing with, at one and the same time, that which for many antiquaries gave personal meaning to their work and that which was foremost in bringing archaeology within the awareness of the wider public.

The concept of a museum<sup>2</sup> and its role has not remained constant since it was first formulated and, although generically linked, the expression and emphasis on particular aspects has shown a good deal of variation. The consequences of this for individual subjects has been and remains

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1 13 and 14 Vict. cap. 65 quoted in Murray, 1904, 268.

2 I have found the comments of architectural historians and critics more perceptive than those obviously concerned with museological developments. Consequently, I have relied heavily on Brawne, 1965, 7-10 and Crook, 1973, 19-38.

considerable. With origins in the Hellenistic and Roman civilizations, collections until the fifteenth century fulfilled two distinct purposes, either the provision of personal enjoyment or the contribution towards essentially religious ends. The latter assemblages generally formed part of the fittings of medieval churches, particularly those which were places of pilgrimage, but the treasures at sanctuaries such as Delphi provide earlier examples. Although in some degree they involved public display, such collections lacked the pedagogic emphasis we now associate in some degree with museums. These miscellaneous assemblages were intended to give a material amplification of the eternal since the cyclical historical viewpoint in medieval thought involved a primary interest in magical and religious aspects of life. The amorphous nature of these medieval collections, incorporating works of art and 'curiosities', was not without influence when the Renaissance caused a greater emphasis to be placed upon man's achievements without them being simply a weak reflection of divine omniscience. The enjoyment of works of art in themselves formed the basis of the great Italian collections which first reflected these new attitudes in the sixteenth century, but it never eradicated the appeal of natural curiosities. Indeed such curiosities formed important elements in the first two British institutions, the Ashmolean and British Museums. Both were heterogeneous in their origins and shared the same process of accumulation and dispersal but the difference in scale was enormous for the British Museum was the first one to be secular, public and national.

However, not until the nineteenth century was there a serious expansion of public museums in Britain. Less than a dozen existed in 1800 but the number had grown to almost sixty by 1850 and there were virtually two hundred and fifty by the late 1880s. Between 1850 and 1914 nearly three hundred were established and almost a hundred occupied new buildings.<sup>3</sup> In many cases the same building served to

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3 Crook, 1973, 90; Jones, 1966a, 230.

accommodate museum, art gallery and library which reflected the concern felt in urban areas, where these new foundations were concentrated, to compensate for the bleak physical environment with an improved cultural one. Improved literacy and education generally lay behind the increase in such institutions although it was the Museums Act of 1845, enabling the levy of a  $\frac{1}{2}$ d rate in boroughs with a population greater than ten thousand, and subsequent legislation which provided the administrative impetus. In many cases, the establishment of a museum involved the union of private philanthropy and public resources for patrons like Sir Andrew Walker in Liverpool, Edmund Harris in Preston and John Bowes of Barnard Castle were often a crucial factor in the translation of local initiative into a fully operating institution. It has been customary to lay greater stress on the importance of public libraries rather than museums in providing opportunities for worthwhile amusement and relaxation in mid-Victorian Britain<sup>4</sup> but this may well be a product of the greater significance which public libraries have gradually acquired during the intervening century. Certainly, the temperance movement, who were particularly keen to promote viable alternatives to the public house, did not ignore museums. The 'best consequences' resulted from the opening of the British Museum and a public meeting in 1837 sought to secure added benefits from the similar opening of Westminster Abbey, the National Gallery and like places. Moreover, in 1853 a prison chaplain stated that the Crystal Palace was infinitely preferable to a gin palace and a museum or zoo better than a jerry shop or theatre.<sup>5</sup> However, we cannot realistically see museums, or indeed libraries, as having provided serious competition for the gin palace and their role as desirable alternatives to such places is insufficient to account for their increase in numbers. Equally important was the opportunity they were intended to provide for

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4 e.g. Best, 1971, 212-13.

5 Taylor, 1843, 269-71; Joseph, 1853, 117. See also Tobias, 1972, 210-14.

the working classes to obtain a better understanding of the trades and industries in which they were employed and to observe designs of the highest quality since exposure to such information could only benefit trade and manufactures.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, to this very practical relevance could be added the less specific, but not unimportant, aim of bolstering the social order : 'where our people are systematically excluded from the sight and enjoyment of the proofs of our present refinement and progress in the arts, and never by the remotest chance see such testimonies of the national growth to greatness - of our progress from early times in art and science, or learn to be proud of our national history by its monuments - of its heroes by the memorials of them which art can alone provide, there is an element of decay', wrote one commentator as part of his advocacy of provincial museums.<sup>7</sup>

In addition to these explicit justifications for the foundation of museums there were other reasons which contemporaries were unwilling or unable to define with clarity but which are, nevertheless, strongly expressed in the buildings erected and the displays installed.<sup>8</sup>

Museum architecture was, at the beginning and end of the nineteenth century, generally Neo-classical in style whereas in the middle of the century Gothic buildings became temporarily popular. In adopting a Neo-classical style there was clearly some conscious attempt to reflect the earlier Hellenistic ideals in the recreating of an antique temple. The specifically temple format so often adopted has meant that classically-styled museums and art galleries are one of the most typical products of Greek Revival architecture and the 'temple of the arts' was a dominant museological theme during the nineteenth century

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6 Murray, 1904, 270.

7 Wilson, 1855, 56.

8 Crook, 1973, 88-96, 200-03; Brawne, 1965, 8; Jones, 1966b.



despite the intervention of High Victorian Gothic. In the middle of the last century the influence of Ruskin and the importance of the natural sciences as opposed to classical scholarship combined temporarily to eclipse the appeal of the Neo-classical style for museum buildings. The first major Gothic museum was at Oxford where Woodward's design, enthusiastically backed by Ruskin, sought through elaborate and detailed decoration to come to terms with another important theme in Victorian museology, symbolism.<sup>9</sup> Less ambitious schemes were adopted in provincial centres as far apart as Dundee and Exeter but the culmination of the Gothic style may well be Alfred Waterhouse's design for the British Museum Natural History building in South Kensington.<sup>10</sup> Yet, though with little else in common, both architectural styles lent themselves to the construction of buildings with a monumental quality which suitably reflected national or civic pride and were fitting tributes to the philanthropy which was so often an integral part of their foundation. Similar factors lay behind the display systems adopted for behind the espoused aim of ministering to the culturally impoverished was the implied demonstration of national or local communal wealth. Aiming, perhaps, at providing the visual counterparts of the literary education beloved of Victorian Britain, the displays were all too frequently nothing more than well illustrated labels as museums unconsciously sought to become 'the cultural counterpart of that other Victorian innovation, the department store'.<sup>11</sup> Like those stores the emphasis was on variety and mass to such an extent that the primary communication was not involved with the object but with a positive statement about the society which had made such displays possible. In providing the objects to fill their displays, museums had to rely heavily on private gifts throughout the nineteenth century, the Museum Act of 1845 being specifically designed

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9 Ferriday, 1962; Muthesius, 1972, 165-66.

10 Crook, 1973, 203-08.

11 Brawne, 1965, 8.

to enable local authorities 'to purchase lands and erect thereon buildings suitable for Museums of Art and Science'<sup>12</sup> and, in subsequent years, private benefactions were matched only by public parsimony.

This, then, is the background against which interpretations concerning the collection of prehistoric and early historic antiquities by public museums must be seen. It is immediately obvious that the academic role of these institutions was extremely ill-defined and not easily reconciled with the primary aim, as stated in the 1845 Act, of providing 'for the Instruction and Amusement of the Inhabitants' of the borough. Such desires, frustrated by inadequate provision for purchasing material, meant that even after a local museum was established its collecting efforts in the field of antiquities could only be, at best, spasmodic for it remained in unequal competition with local collectors and, therefore, heavily dependent on those collectors' generosity to augment its holdings. However, this bleak situation was relieved by the permanent collections assembled by county archaeological and other local societies. Museums supported by local rates were essentially an urban phenomenon whereas most archaeological discoveries not the result of deliberate and planned excavation were the product of agricultural activities in rural areas. In these areas, the local societies were usually the only institutional collecting agency and, by virtue of their academic aims and the presence of most local collectors among their membership, they were able to bring considerably more influence to bear on collectors to deposit material in the society's museum. By and large, the activities of local societies in this field did lay more emphasis on public or institutional collecting through the establishment of their own museums and the holding of temporary museums, partly designed one suspects to impress individual collectors with the value of larger assemblages, during their main meeting of the year. Comprised entirely of objects drawn from private collections

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12 Quoted in Jones, 1966a, 231.

these temporary exhibitions, to which much importance was attached especially before the foundation of a society museum, were often open to the public but all this was only achieved by judicious exploitation of the private collector's pride in his acquisitions. Thus, while making material available for public inspection, the temporary museum reinforced private interest in archaeological finds by providing a situation in which the individual could gain enhanced social standing and prestige, at least among those sharing his interests. Similar factors contributed to the steady stream of objects exhibited at the ordinary meetings of the archaeological societies. The problem, then, of the relationship between the private collector and the public or quasi-public museum in the permanent preservation of the objects did not become acute until the mid-nineteenth century and for most thinking antiquaries it could only begin to be solved when a national collection had been established.

Only a firm commitment of government support for a national collection of British antiquities would have been acceptable to these antiquaries and it was generally agreed that it should form part of the British Museum. A lead in these matters had to come, it was felt, from central government if the local museums just being established were to play their part by the acquisition of local antiquities. The idea of a national collection was by no means novel, rather Britain was almost the only major nation not to have one already by the middle of the nineteenth century. As we have seen, the value of such assemblages had been powerfully demonstrated by Thomsen's use of the three age system as a classification scheme for the National Museum in Copenhagen and the subsequent appreciation of its wider significance. Indeed Worsaae had written on just these lines in the preface to the English edition of his book on Danish antiquities, 'I hope the day is not far distant when the British people will have formed a national museum of antiquities commensurate with the importance of their remains.'

It is only in that way that they can be enabled to read the history of their country through its national monuments'.<sup>13</sup> It should be emphasised at this point that such a national museum was not envisaged as an attempt to reduce significantly the role of the private collector but rather aimed at providing a collection based on donation and purchase of privately owned material when it became available. The issue was, for most British antiquaries, quite simply whether the British Museum would belatedly adopt a more active policy in the acquisition of native antiquities.

It was not that the British Museum had no native objects in its collections but, as Pettigrew remarked in 1845, it 'contains only particular specimens, not a series minutely illustrative of the antiquities of various nations and times, and it is specially defective in that which more particularly relates to us, and which should certainly characterise a national collection'.<sup>14</sup> Thomas Wright was even more vigorous in his attack for he believed that 'in the British Museum our native antiquities appear to be held in very little esteem, and, in general, articles sent there are lost to public view. It is discreditable to the Government of this country that we have no museum of national antiquities, which might under a judicious curator, at a very moderate expense to the nation become one of the most interesting and popular institutions of the metropolis'.<sup>15</sup> The desire, clearly apparent in Wright's remarks, to abandon hope that the British Museum could be improved and to concentrate on the establishment of a separate national museum meant that the pressure was more diffuse than it might have been but was at the same time more alarming to a fiscally-orientated government. There was a deep-seated reluctance on the part of government to enter into further commitments

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13 Worsaae, 1849, vi-vii.

14 Pettigrew, 1846, 3.

15 Wright, 1845, 149.

in the field of museums<sup>16</sup> and consequently to accompany complaints about the inadequacy of the British Museum with demands for a new national institution was to court inaction on both points. In addition, there were strong feelings that the complaining antiquaries wished 'to make cumbrous collection of numberless particulars, merely because they are fragments, and to admire them merely as they are antique' as Pettigrew realised in formulating these remarks. He went on to warn that 'it is not the true religious study of antiquities, but a devotion for relics; it may make us enthusiasts, fanatic triflers, or dupes, but can never administer real and sober knowledge to our understanding'.<sup>17</sup> The attacks of the antiquaries were, therefore, not immune from criticism themselves.

On the other hand, the British Museum had been dilatory in developing a positive attitude towards acquiring native antiquities. Those that had entered its collection were almost wholly there as a result of private donation and there had been some conspicuous examples of refusal to purchase. Cunnington's daughters were sadly disappointed in their hope of receiving some financial compensation from a sale of his material to the British Museum<sup>18</sup> for the time spent by their father in building his collection. Two Trustees, W.R. Hamilton and Viscount Mahon, admitted to a commission enquiring into the affairs of the Museum in 1849 that they had given no thought to extending and improving the collection of British antiquities or to the question of establishing a separate Department of British Antiquities. These replies were all the more remarkable since Lord Prudhoe had offered the Museum the hoard of bronze objects from Stanwick in 1841 on condition a room was set aside for national antiquities. The Commissioners discovered that although the promise of two rooms

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16 cf. Herrmann, 1972, 45-54.

17 Pettigrew, 1846, 5.

18 Woodbridge, 1970, 243.



had been made to Lord Prudhoe in 1845 when the hoard was acquired the Museum had not yet, in 1849, provided them. They concluded their report by urging on the Treasury that the formation of a collection of British antiquities was an object 'to which the liberality of Government might be directed with unquestionable advantage'.<sup>19</sup> These deficiencies, however, were not unrecognised, as has been claimed,<sup>20</sup> by those outwith the ranks of Parliamentary Commissioners and antiquaries. The Times published a scathing attack,

while we collect birds, beasts, and fishes from every nook in land or sea, while we hunt up butterflies and impale earwigs, while we treasure up the marks of an ichthyosaurus in the mud, revel over the eyetooth of a mastodon, and dance in ecstasy over the stump of a river-god's statue, while we rejoice exceedingly over the sculpture of Mosul or the arrow-headed characters of Persepolis, and gather up Egyptian bricks and African fetish bones - we neglect or disregard all traces of the early fathers of our race, doom to destruction the impress stamped by the stately march of the Romans on our soil, mix up in a metallic jumble all the various and widely different relics left by the ancient conquerors, each of whom transfused his blood into our people, and cramming them into some obscure room of the huge and costly edifice erected for the benefit of all nations but our own, permit the inquiring foreigner, as best he may, to find out our department of British Antiquities.<sup>21</sup>

This hostile statement came at a time when the Museum was finally establishing a gallery for British remains in compliance with its promise to Lord Prudhoe six years earlier. The new gallery was, however, in A.H. Rhind's opinion, 'of no very extravagant dimensions, divided nevertheless between national remains and examples of the artistic skill of the middle ages, such as brilliant specimens of pottery and porcelain, which, by the way, stand in singularly inappropriate

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19 Kendrick, 1952, 139-40.

20 idem, 140-42.

21 Times, 1 May 1851.

proximity to the rude efforts in handicraft of the early Britons'.<sup>22</sup> Notwithstanding these criticisms the effect of the new displays must have been fairly dramatic for the casual visitor; the 1841 edition of the Synopsis of the contents of the British Museum lists only sixteen British objects, all Roman, on show to the public whereas the 1851 edition describes material sufficient to fill eighty-five cases. Yet the juxtaposition of prehistoric and medieval pieces must have caused many to believe that the arrangement was based on Hamilton's further remarks to the 1849 Commission that 'it ought to be rather for the improvement of the fine arts than merely as an historical collection of objects'.<sup>23</sup> Thus, by the early 1850s there had been no clear response to the antiquarian criticism which had begun in the opening years of the previous decade. Some degree of optimism could be based on the opening of the new gallery but this was counter-balanced by the outmoded, but apparently immutable, philosophy of the Trustees.

What remained totally unresolved was the willingness of the Trustees to pursue an active acquisition policy in the field of British antiquities, something that could not become clear until a major collection came on to the market. Quite accidentally, the first collection was that assembled by the Rev. Bryan Faussett during his barrow excavations in the preceding century. Apart from some mention of these finds by Douglas in Nenia Britannica, the collection had remained almost unknown to, and certainly unseen by, most antiquaries until 1844 when the then head of the Faussett family, Dr. Godfrey Faussett, allowed the collection to be visited by the British Archaeological Association's first congress at Canterbury in 1844. Two aspects distinguished this collection, first, the quality of the material and second, the survival of manuscript material which

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22 Rhind, 1855, 10.

23 Quoted in Rhind, 1855, 15.

allowed virtually every grave-group to be determined. Dr. Faussett had intimated, in his reply to the vote of thanks passed by the Canterbury congress, his willingness to cooperate with the Association in securing the publication of the material<sup>24</sup> although this had not been achieved when Faussett died in 1853. This was then a collection which everybody recognised to be of national importance and for which the lack of publication emphasised the need for maintaining its integrity. Moreover, it contained objects that were important both in the field of fine arts and archaeology and, as such, seemed bound to appeal even to the Trustees of the British Museum. Consequent upon the death of Dr. Faussett, the family decided to sell the collection. Roach Smith claimed that he was instrumental in encouraging its offer to the British Museum<sup>25</sup> but he may have been inclined to overstate his own involvement since his remarks in a letter to Bateman, that 'although each party consults me in turn both take care not to let me know how the matter stands',<sup>26</sup> does not support his own claims for a central role in the affair. The official report, laid before the House of Commons in 1854,<sup>27</sup> indicates that Edward Hawkins, then Keeper of the Department of Antiquities, made an approach to the family to ascertain the nature of the collection and whether it was for sale but Faussett, in a letter to Bateman,<sup>28</sup> said that it had always been his family's intention to offer the British Museum first refusal and that they were prepared to suffer some financial loss, provided it was not too considerable, in order that the Museum should have the collection. Unfortunately, all these claims were the product of the ensuing controversy and so seemed aimed more at presenting each faction in the best light rather than establishing a true sequence of

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24 Smith, 1856, 221-22.

25 Smith, n.d., 182.

26 Bateman correspondence, C.R. Smith, 17 November 1853.

27 Copies of reports, memorials, or other communications to or from the Trustees of the British Museum, on the subject of the Faussett collection of Anglo-Saxon antiquities. 9 June 1854.

28 Bateman correspondence, G. Faussett, 2 December 1853.

events which might otherwise have shown the beginning of a changing attitude to British material in the British Museum. The independent valuation set the collection's worth at a little under seven hundred pounds but in October 1853 the Trustees 'declined to give so large a sum, as there were no sufficient funds'. Following this decision, many of the leading archaeological societies made representations to the Trustees and W.M. Wylie offered his important collection from Fairford, Gloucestershire to the Museum as a gift if the Faussett collection was purchased but the Trustees declined to purchase on two further occasions early in 1854. The material was then sold to Joseph Mayer to become part of his collection. Lord Seymour, on behalf of the Trustees, attempted to justify their decision by saying that all parts of the world were producing antiquities and, whereas objects found abroad would be lost to the country if the British Museum declined to purchase, objects found in Britain would probably be acquired by a provincial museum.<sup>29</sup> It was a curiously crass statement to offer in defence of such woeful inadequacies.

The whole affair, together with the haggling over Roach Smith's collection soon afterwards,<sup>30</sup> only convinced Rhind in his view that the amount spent annually on British material was 'so infinitesimally small ... that ... it would hardly ... bear to be numerically stated'<sup>31</sup> and left a legacy of discontent among antiquaries that survived for over a generation. Warne wrote in his preface to Ancient Dorset that 'the series [of coins] will be found more complete than can be found elsewhere, excepting, perhaps, the British Museum, where unknown treasures may lie hid; but the defective arrangement of the National Collection renders the research for the production of our local mints a well nigh hopeless task'.<sup>32</sup> However, it was clear by

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29 Times, 4 July 1854.

30 Kendrick, 1952, 144; Smith, 1886, 224-36.

31, Rhind, 1855, 13.

32 Warne, 1872, preface, iii.

the mid-1850s that no new institution for British antiquities was likely to be founded and, although complaints continued to be levelled at the British Museum, demands for a separate museum died away. Kendrick rightly attributes the more positive attitude to British material in the museum to the employment in the Department of Antiquities of A.W. Franks, who joined the museum in 1851 but his influence is not wholly apparent until the late 1850s.<sup>33</sup> It is also important to realise that the Trustees' decisions were often taken against the advice of their staff in matters concerning acquisitions. Further, although there was little justification in Lord Seymour's remarks in 1854 there was a growing desire on the part of both antiquaries and local museums to see collections remaining in the area of their discovery. Difficulties occurred in satisfactorily effecting the transition from private collection to public museum except where this took place as a result of gift by the owner; Cunington's material was finally deposited at Devizes, Bateman's collection went eventually to Sheffield although in a manner which violated the terms of his will and Mortimer's to Kingston-upon-Hull despite his misgivings that it might not remain in Yorkshire.<sup>34</sup> Indeed, this growing interest on the part of local museums is best viewed as the provincial counterpart to the national feeling that established and augmented the national collections in Scotland and Ireland. But in the field of antiquities it was a development inhibited by the parsimonious attitudes discernible at national level and reflected in the continuing importance of the private collector.

The individual collector of British antiquities was never a significant figure in the world of the saleroom during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, mainly because such objects did not come within

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33 For a consideration of Franks' contribution see Kendrick, 1952, 144-46.

34 Annable & Simpson, 1964, 6; Smith, 1883, 18; Mortimer, 1905, viii & xii.



the contemporary definition of art.<sup>35</sup> In very general terms, the market for antiquities during those years was dominated by a demand for Greek and Roman material reflecting the Neo-classicism of the time but, surprisingly, the impact of the Gothic revival was not seen until the mid-nineteenth century when medieval material developed an increased appeal. At the same time as medieval and early Renaissance material was beginning to find favour with collectors, the introduction of comparative collecting brought the eclecticism of earlier generations into disfavour. We have seen this reflected in the conflict of attitudes over the collection of native antiquities by the British Museum. However, British material remained largely associated with the assemblers of cabinets of curiosities, so beloved of the caricaturists in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, which had their origins in a time when visions of the world were expanding with each voyage of discovery and mineral specimens or primitive ornaments were the latest marvels.<sup>36</sup> Not until the didactic element implicit in comparative collecting was firmly established was this association clearly broken.

Before the middle of the nineteenth century, that is before the explosion of interest in antiquarian matters which has been described in previous chapters, the collection of native antiquities was the interest of a small number of people. It was a personal affair in which the collection by and large reflected the efforts of the collector. Because the numbers involved in this and related fields of collecting were small acquisitions could only be by personal discovery and exchange, supplemented by infrequent rewards to casual finders such as local labourers. Significantly, the one barrow digger with the

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35 Surveys of collecting which take no account of British antiquities but provide a background picture are Reitlinger, 1963; Steegman, 1970; Herrmann, 1972.

36 Reitlinger, 1963, 57.

resources to be a collector in areas considered to show more taste and discrimination was Colt Hoare, who was never a serious collector of portable antiquities. He allowed Cunnington to keep the finds discovered in excavations he paid for and only bought the collection from his daughters to prevent it going to public auction after the British Museum had declined to purchase. However, a box containing some seventy specimens of predominantly Scandinavian material accompanied the Stourhead collection to Devizes Museum and it was suggested at that time that they may have been acquired by Hoare during a visit to northern Europe early in his antiquarian career.<sup>37</sup> But against this must be set the evidence from the excavation of the Lugbury barrow where the only find, a flint, was retained by the landowner, not something the assiduously acquisitive Cunnington would have allowed had he been alive.<sup>38</sup> Of course, Hoare might have been more disposed to collecting had he not had the able Cunnington to take on the responsibility for, as his willingness to purchase a collection he had paid to assemble shows, he was not oblivious to the demands of preservation.<sup>39</sup>

Cunnington himself was part of a small network of collectors whose interests embraced natural history and geology as well as antiquities and whose activities ably demonstrate the current processes of acquisition. A particularly fine example of collections formed by this group is the herbarium assembled by Aylmer Bourke Lambert and recently the subject of an excellent study.<sup>40</sup> Lambert was a friend of Cunnington and Hoare, often accompanying them during their barrow digging and he was one of Hoare's sponsors for election as Fellow of the Linnean Society in 1812.<sup>41</sup> His herbarium numbered

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37 Cunnington, 1885b, 341.

38 Thurnam, 1857, 170.

39 See also his remarks concerning the Deverel urns in Miles, 1826, v.

40 Miller, 1970.

41 Woodbridge, 1970, 238.

some thirty thousand specimens acquired through the good offices of at least one hundred and thirty collectors as geographically diverse as Pallas in Russia and Ruiz and Pavón in Peru and included those on Captain Beechey's voyage to the Pacific. In size of collection and range of contact with other collectors, Lambert was altogether atypical when compared to figures like Cunnington for he was wealthier and consequently had more diverse social contacts. Moreover, botany was a good deal more international in its appeal than antiquities so that once a collection had become sufficiently important its continued expansion was assured. But Lambert's herbarium illustrates the quite astonishing collections that could be built up at this period through informal contacts since he himself never once travelled beyond the British Isles nor acquired material by what we should now recognise as purchase. Field collection and exchange, then, were the media by which collections were assembled at this period.

Cunnington's exploits in the field were no less prodigious than Lambert's but his contacts were a good deal more limited. However, his correspondence records him sending specimens to Richard Iremonger and the following from Edward Duke shows he also sought material :

I will send you by the Bath Coach tomorrow a small box containing duplicates of the round & bell-shaped beads. Your request, as to the stained bone ornaments (of which I have only four) and the gold ear-rings, I trust that you will not be offended at my declining, and believe me that I do this, not from an unmeaning attention to your wishes, but from the great additional value I set on them, as having been dug up from the estates, and from the consideration that the bone ornaments are dissimilar in their figurations, and therefore not duplicates of each other, and that to part the gold ear-rings would be to spoil them as a pair.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Cunnington letters, Iremonger, 9 September 1805; Duke, 5 November 1806.

Duke had apparently begun barrow digging primarily to build up a collection which was described by Hoare in 1806 as 'the most valuable ... that was ever collected in so short a space of time'.<sup>43</sup> Faussett too seems to have used the normal exchange procedures to augment a collection based on fieldwork although his activities as a collector are not well documented.<sup>44</sup> Only Douglas mentioned having recourse to a dealer when he remarked to Cunnington that he had acquired some finds from Stukeley's excavations from 'Mr. White of Newgate Street ... a well known collector and dealer in curiosities'.<sup>45</sup> This appears, however, to have been a rare occurrence which may only betoken Douglas's relative isolation early in his career as an antiquary since Faussett's only mention of sales is confined to coins, an aspect of collecting not readily amenable to acquisition in the field.<sup>46</sup>

Around the middle of the nineteenth century, the growing interest in antiquarian matters was reflected in the increased demand for native antiquities. It was not a demand which could be easily satisfied since, on the whole, the new collectors did not wish to follow the established procedures but sought to circumvent them with money. These new antiquaries represented a comparable phenomenon to that described by Lady Eastlake as having taken place a couple of decades earlier in the field of painting :

The patronage which had been almost exclusively the privilege of the nobility and higher gentry, was now shared (to be subsequently engrossed) by a wealthy and intelligent class, chiefly enriched by commerce and trade; the note-book of the painter, while it exhibited lowlier names, showing henceforth higher prices. To this gradual transfer of patronage another advantage very important to the painter was owing; namely, that collections, entirely of modern and sometimes only of living artists, begun to be found. For one sign of the good

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43 Cunnington letters, Hoare 33, 17 November 1806.

44 Smith, 1856, 209-11.

45 Cunnington letters, Douglas, 5 June 1809.

46 Smith, 1856, 213.

sense of the nouveau riche consisted in a consciousness of his ignorance upon matters of connoisseurship. This led him to seek an article fresh from the painter's loom, in preference to any hazardous attempts at the discrimination of older fabrics.<sup>47</sup>

The parallels are not, of course, exact but the essential points, the emergence of a new group of collectors, wealthy but inexperienced, willing to venture into previously little-considered areas, remain acceptable. Lady Eastlake is perhaps a little disingenuous to suggest that lack of connoisseurship inhibited these new collectors since this is not evident in their activities in the field of British antiquities which did not at that time have the notoriety of paintings as far as forgeries were concerned. The problems inherent in reconciling the social desirability of owning an important and worthwhile collection with the commercial ethic of financially wise and prudent purchase had not emerged before this period because so little previous acquisition had been the result of serious trading. Inevitably, the rise in the number of persons wishing to collect British antiquities and willing to purchase them, led to an increase in dealers on whom the mantle of connoisseur was placed by the inexperienced.

In noting this changing pattern of collecting, it must not be supposed that it involved a complete rejection of past approaches. Major collectors, such as the Lukis family, Estlin and Greenwell were all actively involved, as we have seen, in field collection and indeed all barrow digging is quite justly viewed in that way. However, all these people were prepared, and even willing, to use the services of dealers to augment their holdings on a scale that would have horrified earlier collectors. Only Mortimer of all the major late nineteenth-century diggers, preserved the attitudes and modes of the previous

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47 Eastlake, 1870, 147.



generations because, one suspects, he did not have the economic resources to do otherwise. Moreover, some of the major collections of antiquities, like that of John Evans, were largely the product of purchase. Yet the altered emphasis on purchase did not pose too many problems for first-rank collectors who had acquired sufficient expertise from their other activities to avoid the worst pit-falls. But for smaller collectors, heavily dependent on the authentications of the dealers, the chance of acquiring forgeries or frauds was considerable. Attempts to cut out the dealer and purchase direct from labourers in urban areas like London were unsuccessful because lack of knowledge prevented the recognition of planted material.<sup>48</sup> Further, the court case which resulted from the spectacular "Billies and Charlies" affair provided hints of deliberate collusion between well-known and reputable dealers and the forgers.<sup>49</sup>

More germane, however, than the problems of forgery in urban areas to our concerns here are the activities of Flint Jack and his assertion to Llewellyn Jewitt that he made material for the barrow digger James Ruddock who then claimed he had discovered them during his excavations.<sup>50</sup> Edward Simpson, better known as Flint Jack, was one of the most skilful and successful forgers ever of prehistoric material and his claims with respect to Ruddock cannot be lightly dismissed.<sup>51</sup> Among Flint Jack's other customers was another barrow digger, Edward Tindall, and rivalry between him and Ruddock in this area soon led to quarrels over the respectability of each other's collections. Ruddock claimed that Tindall's collection contained many forgeries, a

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48 Examples are provided in Hugo, 1860.

49 The case is reported in the Times, 6 August 1850.

50 Jewitt, 1868b, 71-72.

51 The main sources for Jack's life are Jewitt, 1868b and an unsigned article, probably also by Jewitt in All the year round, 17, 1867, 259-64. Further contemporary accounts are quoted in Blacking, 1953 but it is not otherwise wholly reliable.

view confirmed by an apparently independent observer,<sup>52</sup> and that when challenged Tindall altered his claim that his collection was solely of his finding to that of 'solely of his finding or that of his agents'. In return, Tindall asserted that Ruddock knowingly passed on forgeries, that his collection was riddled with them and that, in short, he was not to be trusted. All this was common knowledge before Jewitt published Flint Jack's allegations and was certainly known to Bateman, the purchaser of Ruddock's collection, since the quarrel is best documented in a series of letters from both Ruddock and Tindall among Bateman's correspondence. It is, therefore, difficult to assess the credence one should give to Jack's remarks since Bateman was an experienced collector, fully conversant with the kind of material in Ruddock's collection, and well acquainted with Flint Jack's work. Moreover, he had taken a considerable interest in Ruddock's work through his friend, William Bowman, long before he agreed to purchase. Equally, Jewitt was by no means a disinterested observer of Yorkshire barrow digging<sup>53</sup> and it is, of course, impossible now to determine how much embellishment he gave to Flint Jack's words which confirmed his own estimation of Ruddock's material. Against this, however, one must recall Bowman's statement that Ruddock often did his barrow digging alone<sup>54</sup> and note that Jack's claims are also supported by the annotations of Greenwell's copy of Ten Years Digging.<sup>55</sup> These annotations are in two hands, the smaller number being Greenwell's and the more voluminous ones by someone with the initials CM, presumably Charles Monkman who wrote up Greenwell's activities for the Times.<sup>56</sup> Most of the assertions concerning Ruddock are by

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52 Gents. Mag., October 1857, 446-47.

53 As Jewitt, 1868a shows.

54 Bateman correspondence, W. Bowman, October 1849.

55 Now in the Dept. of Archaeology, University of Durham.

56 Way papers, J.C. Atkinson, 18 September ?1868 : Soc. Ant. Lond. Mss. 700 : 33.

Monkman but since Greenwell disputes one of his allegations it may be assumed that the rest had his approval. In addition to suggesting that Flint Jack's work is represented in Ruddock's collection, an idea he could have acquired from Jewitt, Monkman makes the independent claim that the many flint instruments which Ruddock found were largely made by himself and burnt to avoid detection. On balance, then, it seems likely that Ruddock did include forgeries with false provenances in his collection but it is equally probable that this was a common practice among his Yorkshire barrow digging contemporaries. The problems associated with forgeries, particularly collusion between antiquary and forger to supplement the deficiencies of a collection, highlight the difficulties that followed in the wake of increased antiquarian interest when possession of a major collection became bound up with social prestige.

Very few contemporary descriptions of private collections survive today so it is worthwhile to quote from two that do for the insights that they provide concerning the range of attitudes prevalent among even major collectors. First, then, a description of Cunnington's collection by Richard Fenton,

Nothing could be more curious and systematic than the arrangement of the museum : the contents of every tumulus were separate, and the articles so disposed as in the case of ornaments, such as beads, in such elegant knots and festoons, as to please the eye which looks to nothing farther. The story of several was so perfectly told by the relics they contained, that an epitaph could not have let us more into the light of the rank and character of the dead. In one drawer were displayed all the utensils employed to fabricate arrow-heads, other weapons and implements that required sharp points, there being various whetstones, of a coarse and finer grit, with grooves in each, worn down by the use made of them; together with bone in its wrought and unwrought state, evidently proving it to have been the sepulchre of an artist, whose employ this was. In another we were shown some flint arrow-heads, very similar to those I saw at Milford,

which had been dug out of a turbary in the island of Nantucket, which Mr. Cunningham accompanied with the history of the tumulus wherein they lay.<sup>57</sup>

And now a description of Joseph Mayer's museum at Liverpool by T.N. Brushfield,

Last week I paid a visit to Mr. Mayer's Museum in ... Liverpool - a large private house with two large brass plates on the entrance railings with the inscription "Egyptian Museum". To me the house was cold & comfortless, in many parts exuded an odour of cats, and altogether would have been much better if the services of a charwoman were more frequently had recourse to. I was much grieved to see such a splendid collection of objects - home and foreign - lumped together and left in a confused jumble. A cotton spinning man let us in - we paid sixpence each - there was no catalogue, or rather a catalogue did exist but the custodian said that it was of no use as the "things had been so much shifted", but that a new catalogue was in course of preparation. We were there between 2 & 3 hours, by ourselves, no other visitors, no guide, nobody except the janitor at the door who appeared to be some form of anchorite whose duty it was to read novels and know nothing of antiquities. There were 7 or 8 rooms full of good things from Celtic ... down to Medieval - a few modern articles. I was astounded at the amazing number of objects - everything appeared to be out of place, as though sent into a large house to get mouldy. Altogether the place impressed me with the conviction that the owner was a mere collector who having gained possession of a number of objects, neither knew how to arrange them, what use to make of them, or anything about them - but wished to have a name for being the possessor of them - it may be uncharitable to condemn anyone in such a sweeping manner but the house and contents most certainly gave me that idea, and I think my opinion is still further made a conviction by what appears in a small shilling guide ... of the London & North Western Railway ... which I purchased two days after my visit. In the description of Liverpool there are several engravings and descriptions of shops which bear upon the very face of them the name

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57 Fenton, 1811, 251-52.

of advertisements - (I was told by one of the Chester publishers yesterday that they were paid for as such) and amongst others an engraving of Mr. Mayer's Jewellers shop, and a description of it and of his Museum of antiquities! ... Is it not the regular trick of a Jew?<sup>58</sup>

Even allowing for Fenton's sympathy and Brushfield's hostility and bigotry these two passages clearly illustrate the change of attitude during the first fifty years of the nineteenth century. Cunnington's collection is ordered and personal, of interest to but a few and shown only to acquaintances and friends whereas Mayer's is very much a part of his social status and even an adjunct to his business activities, open to the public with admission charges and no personal involvement of the owner. The expectations of the visitor are radically different also : Fenton expects and receives an anecdote concerning objects which take his fancy while Brushfield wants a catalogue, a guide and well-ordered displays, reflecting the influence of publicly owned museums. The way ahead lay in the grafting of Cunnington's orderliness doubtless in part the result of Hoare's urging,<sup>59</sup> on to the rather clinical public displays of Mayer although this was not to be without its difficulties and inadequacies.

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58 Bateman correspondence, T.H. Brushfield, 28 June 1855.

59 Cunnington letters, Hoare 21, 9 April 1806.



## Conclusions.

Barrow digging was not an activity which attracted the most intellectually creative for it was altogether too prosaic and haphazard a subject. Its practitioners, and their results, had instead a symbiotic relationship with those concerned with more general questions in that, although information from sepulchral monuments helped to form broader attitudes, these views were in turn largely responsible for determining the excavators' priorities and interests. The failure of any one or group of barrow diggers to generate genuinely new and dynamic approaches surviving the lifetime of the excavator poses considerable problems of interpretation. Consequently, this lack of innovative capacity has meant that available information is not susceptible to the philosophical models used within the history of science, even such apparently fruitful ones as Kuhn's paradigm approach.<sup>1</sup> No clear divisions, implicit in a pre-paradigm/post-paradigm formulation, emerge in what was an essentially accretive development with unsustained areas of interest. Although 1840 has been used here as a convenient break, the changes in attitude around that date are more reflective of alterations in the social composition and basis of antiquarianism than of fundamentally new approaches while the subsequent developments were not the product of barrow excavations. Equally, it was not thought necessary to define explicitly the principles and approaches consistent with good excavation of sepulchral mounds and this inevitably led to a host of inconsistencies which more than anything else emphasise the disparate interests of barrow diggers at any given point in the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries. Further, these inconsistencies are not just apparent as one ranges across a contemporary group of excavators but are equally marked in the attitude of individual barrow diggers in their approach to the totality of the subject. Thus, for example, Thurnam could indulge in careful and detailed study of skulls, involving

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1. Kuhn, 1970.

accurate measurement, apparently without thinking that similar approaches with the associated finds might yield more satisfactory results than ill-defined visual assessments. Similarly, Greenwell could work closely with W.C. Lukis, enthusiastically supporting his surveys of megalithic monuments, but never feel that plans were appropriate for his own excavations. Without unduly emphasising this lack of consistency, no attempt has been made in this study to impose a sense of order through the development of unitary interpretations covering several aspects but rather each area of barrow digging has been allowed to produce its own conclusions. The resultant tangle should not be a thing which we are seeking to make too tidy if we wish to understand the barrow diggers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Rather surprisingly, motivation was the subject of more scrutiny than any other aspect of barrow digging if only in a negative sense. Antiquaries throughout the period knew why one should not excavate barrows without necessarily being able to state very definitely why one should. Indeed, aspirations were altogether more important than execution in barrow digging until the end of the nineteenth century. In large measure, such concern stems from the collecting side of barrow digging for, although this was a matter of importance for all diggers, it could not of itself ensure a place for the study among the academic spheres of history and, later, anthropology. To admit to being a mere collector was to remove one's activities outwith the pale of a legitimate search for knowledge. Collecting did, however, represent for most barrow diggers the single most important reason for excavation and the objects were the tangible rewards for their efforts but sepulchral mounds were not to be plundered, as Greenwell remarked, just to fill an empty niche in the hall or to provide the mistress of the house with something to entertain her guests. If, then, the acquisition of objects was insufficient justification what other aims did a barrow digger have to have in order to legitimise his work? Answers to this question are invariably insubstantial and

vague. Hoare's avowed wish to chart 'gradual progress from the bleak hill to the fertile valley, and from barbarism to civilization' could, by and large, stand for most barrow diggers but, like Hoare, they were reluctant to specify exactly how the excavation of burial mounds furthered this aim. Equally, 'in the absence of History', thought Miles, 'the spade becomes no mean historian ... and barrows may be considered as excellent beacons to throw a gleam of light upon the more prominent features of those manners, customs, and rites, which are so obscured by the dark mists of intervening centuries', a sentiment with which few would have disagreed. Since it was universally agreed that barrows represented the burial places of those people at the very beginning of, or earlier than, written records, this in itself provided sufficient reason to explore them without the need for a detailed exposition of exactly how individual efforts interlocked with general aims.

Behind the stated reasons were what may be termed the hidden motivations. Barrow digging was not, with the exception of Hoare although even he was not much involved with excavation, a pursuit which appealed to the aristocracy but it was sufficiently laudable to be deserving of their patronage. It, therefore, provided for the small landowner and particularly for the men of trade, like Cunnington and Mortimer, an opportunity for social advancement which would otherwise not have been so readily available. It was not, I think, sufficient inducement for this to become a prime factor in undertaking barrow excavations but equally its importance is not to be underestimated. Situations similar to that of Cunnington are observable in other areas of study particularly those like geology which were dependent on field observations for the provision of data and intelligent but humble men were not slow to see the possibility of cracking, be it only a hair-line fracture, the rigid social structure of the times. The institutional framework provided by the county societies broadened the opportunities in the social field for they involved aristocratic

support and participation in an essentially middle-class undertaking. Further, these new organisations offered a society in which the active barrow digger could achieve some distinction without reference to his social standing in the larger community. Unfortunately, we are generally without the necessary information to enable a determination of the degree of social mobility in individual cases.

It has been briefly noted above that barrow diggers' attitudes were highly reflective of more general views and that their interests and priorities did not derive from a close study of previous finds or careful assessment of the potential of excavation. Before about 1840, modes of thought were essentially literary and topographical and antiquarianism did not escape the sag in historical scholarship that occurred during the middle four decades of the eighteenth century. Even though there was a curious reverence for the Johnsonian dogma that it is impossible to penetrate the past beyond the time for which there were written texts available, barrow excavations did represent the first steps out of this orthodoxy. The problems were compounded by the short chronology derived from fundamentalist Biblical criticism, which gave a spurious importance to the early classical authors' descriptions of Britain, for it appeared that they were not too far removed from the 'precise aera of the first colonization' of these islands. Further, it was difficult to reject the educational background in which most barrow diggers were nurtured at that time and the potency of the Neo-classical revival in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century did nothing to facilitate the necessary separation of prehistoric studies from classical texts and the Bible. However, new approaches and attitudes were developing in the close relationships between antiquaries and natural scientists, for at the end of the eighteenth century there was much less qualitative distinction in public estimation between the two groups. The rapid strides of science particularly through the emergence of practical applications from that time until the middle of the nineteenth century and beyond, left antiquarianism trailing in its wake to such an extent that the period



after 1850 is characterised by antiquaries seeking to re-establish the links with science which had been commonplace two generations before. This was then only possible through a firm rejection of links with topography and history and the adoption of modes of thought more obviously scientific than those produced by images of Eards, Britons and Druids. The new alliance was with the emergent social sciences to which archaeological information offered much needed depth and perspective. There was still a strong emphasis on the collection of facts and the avoidance of speculation, not maintained by the wish to counterbalance the amount of unsupported hypothesis in the work of previous generations, but by the possession of broadly defined truths which provided a framework for interpretation wherein small pieces of information took on greater meaning than the sum total of all the pieces. Of course, barrow diggers were very much on the fringe of the social sciences but they still had much stronger corporate identity than the excavators of the eighteenth century. In the presentation adopted by diggers, these changes are particularly marked as the lavish topographical folios with illustrations placing emphasis on the rudeness of the objects gave way to octavo and quarto volumes containing more accurate depictions of the finds and showing the weakening of narrative in favour of individual description.

Hitherto in this summary we have been concerned with the position of barrow digging in the broader intellectual arena but let us now turn to the activities of the excavators. Here too the most salient feature which can be observed is the demise of the fieldwork and survey tradition, of which the excavation of sepulchral monuments was a part, in the early decades of the nineteenth century. This clearly reflects the rejection of the topographical heritage and the re-emergence of fieldwork, at the end of the nineteenth century, as a wholly separate antiquarian activity emphasises the fragmentation of archaeological interests that occurred towards the close of our period when excavation had established itself as the prime method. Barrows were principally excavated by two techniques, the central shaft from the apex of the

mound and the trench from the side to the centre or beyond. The former methodology was popular first and almost exclusively used until the middle of the nineteenth century when it became subject to considerable criticism although the pragmatism that was ever present in barrow digging meant that it was never wholly eradicated. Indeed, the diversity of technique that accompanied the rise of the use of the trench as the most popular approach is best seen as attempts to minimise the actual excavation effort but maintain the recovery level in terms of objects. Thus, the expected standardisation which should have resulted from the improved organs of communication, particularly the new county journals, in the second half of the nineteenth century was diminished by the increase in small-scale excavation encouraged by those same publications. It would, of course, be unrealistic to expect too much uniformity in excavation technique in view of the fact that most of the actual digging was done by hired labourers, on many occasions without supervision. Moreover, few followed Hoare and Cunnington in using a trained group of labourers so that experience was not greatly in evidence on many barrow digging occasions. A similar piecemeal approach is apparent in the planning of major barrow diggers who seem to have been remarkably haphazard in their choice of barrows, with little interest in completing one area before moving on to another. Occasionally this may have resulted from not wishing to interfere with agricultural affairs or failure to obtain the permission of the landowner but there are many remarks among the barrow digging literature to show that long-term planning was not a feature of most excavator's work.

The resulting analysis was not particularly substantial in view of the large number of barrows excavated during the eighteenth and nineteenth century. Because of continuing concern with the objects accompanying the burials, structural matters received very little attention. In part, this was occasioned by the widespread belief that barrows represented no more than simple heaps designed to cover and mark the burial,

an attitude that was not conducive to an interest in the mound. Only in Wiltshire was the multiplicity of external forms clearly observable and early in the nineteenth century Hoare had established, in fine fieldworking tradition, a classification which required only minor modifications from Thurnam. However, as the arena shifted farther north away from Wessex, such classifications were altogether less useful and many diggers only recognised a two-fold grouping of long and round barrows while some even claimed that the former represented no more than the result of subsequent additions to a basic round form. Even the more frequent use of the trench, with the consequent improved opportunities for observing the constructional sequence, did not result in increased concentration on structural analysis. Greater concern was shown for the origins of the materials used in making the mound, particularly in Yorkshire, than for the techniques of building and few indeed felt it necessary to present a constructional sequence deduced from their own observations. Where the structural element could not be avoided, as in the case of cromlechs, and chambered barrows, the subject was bedevilled by controversy over function which effectively limited further analysis since the functional arguments were finally won by those favouring the unitary nature of megalithic remains and those successful protagonists did not feel able to proceed from there to a position of sub-division on the basis of individual features.

Function was also an important element in the classification of small-finds, particularly pottery, since there was insufficient definition of the concepts of association and primary and secondary burials for the development of chronologically based typological sequences. The need was recognised but not until the work of Abercromby in the early years of the twentieth century did it become a practical reality in the case of pottery. This is somewhat remarkable since the essential elements for such a scheme were available in the racial analyses of skulls, particularly by Thurnam. His work in this area involved careful study, including quantification, of the skulls themselves, combined with a

judicious use of associated objects and through them a chronological scheme of demonstrated validity. The latter was, of course, the three-age system which dominated nineteenth-century barrow digging chronologies. Yet its adoption by the social evolutionary archaeologists, like Lubbock and Evans, as an emphatic demonstration of the technological progress of man, tended rather to obscure the difficulties apparent in its application to specific graves. Further, the evolutionary approach to prehistory strangled the racial approach to human skeletal material and, in so doing, prevented the adoption of the same methodological approach to artifactual material to such an extent that even Thurnam never felt able to jettison the functional base in classifying the grave-goods. Function remained pre-eminent because it was so much more amenable to the social interpretations implicit in an evolutionary approach.

Although there has perhaps been a tendency, on the part of recent commentators, to underestimate the amount of barrow digging in the eighteenth and early decades of the nineteenth centuries, there can be little doubt that it did increase in the final sixty years of the last century. This does no more than indicate the change in public attitudes to antiquarian activities most marked around 1840. By that time, romanticism had weakened the appeal of Roman and Hellenistic culture as the sole repository of things of value and re-directed attention towards the beauty of the British environment and the interest of the material remains strewn across it, even if the latter did not show the same level of sophistication as corresponding sites in the Mediterranean area. More specifically, the revival of interest in Gothic architecture, represented as the only truly national style, and the novels of Sir Walter Scott and his followers, with their wealth of antiquarian detail, focussed the attention of the public on the intrinsic interest of national antiquities. Although the predominant interest was at first in medieval material, prehistoric or primeval finds acquired considerable interest because of the collapse of the fundamentalist Biblical chronology, its



replacement through the work of the geologists with an enormous time-scale for earth-history and the subsequent demonstrations of the high antiquity of man. Antiquarian affairs were, thus, in the early Victorian period, at the very centre of intellectual and particularly scientific affairs, this new-found importance being reflected in the establishment of national and county archaeological societies, often in company with natural history as if in tacit recognition of the significance of an alliance with other scientific pursuits. These societies greatly expanded the opportunities for participation in archaeological activities, both active and passive. Great use was made of the improved travel facilities to provide the membership with field excursions which did much to maintain the cohesiveness of the societies by introducing a sense of participation while, at the same time, through the publication and exchange of periodicals, an immensely enlarged forum was created for the exchange and development of information and views. At this time, too, there were the first tentative moves to provide public alternatives to private collections as a means of preserving national antiquities, the educational value of which, supplementing the written word, was recognised for the first time. This did not seriously affect the private collector who was offered increased opportunity of acquiring social esteem as a result of the wider recognition of the importance of his collection. Barrow diggers maintained the earlier traditions of personal field collection but they were more willing, in the period after 1840, to supplement their own finds by purchasing other material.

In concentrating on the relationship between barrow diggers and their activities and the more relevant aspects of broader antiquarian interests, together with the views and interests of the society which shaped them, I have sought to provide a background picture against which the work of a particular excavator might be seen in some perspective without intending to construct individual dioramas. The latter, however, cannot I believe be created without the preliminary



sketching which is the aim of this study. Inevitably, it has involved a good deal of long-range observation from rather detached positions but I hope it will contribute to a better appreciation of the barrow diggers on their own terms, for without that our historical sense of the past development of the subject will be greatly impaired.

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## NOTES

- i Anonymously written books and articles have been given a full reference in the appropriate footnote.
- ii Abbreviations for manuscript sources are given in parenthesis behind the fuller description.
- iii Abbreviations for periodicals are in accordance with the International list of periodical title word abbreviations prepared for the UNISIST/ICSU-AB working group on bibliographic descriptions. Based on the American National Standards Committee Standards Committee Z39, National Clearinghouse for periodical title word abbreviations, word abbreviation list, 1970.

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**Appendix : Barrow-digging poems.**

I have drawn together in this appendix poems written about, or prompted by barrow digging because they represent the most important group of material reflecting feelings and attitudes to the excavation of burial mounds. Nowhere else does one consistently see the impact of the excavations on the excavators and the general feelings and events accompanying those excavations as in these often lighthearted poems, which place the diggers in their wider social context.

The poems and their notes are presented as they appear in the original manuscript or printed version except that references to illustrations not reproduced are omitted. I have also excluded Samuel Carrington's The barrow diggers' restitution..., which Marsden has claimed to be a barrow digging play.<sup>1</sup> This, however, is an incorrect description for it constitutes a series of dialogues, modelled one suspects on the works of Plato and other classical philosophers and ranging across the whole field of antiquarian, anthropological and geological studies. Although there are some points concerning barrow digging its contents are altogether too general to allow of its inclusion in this appendix. I have chosen, therefore, to make references to it at appropriate points in the discussion and not to include excerpts here.

---

1 Marsden, 1974, 43.

Poem occasioned by the opening of a barrow at Woodyates,  
October 1804

by

Rev. William Lisle Bowles

(Source : Hoare, 1812, 239-41; notes from Hoare notebook, Soc. Ant.  
Lond. Mss. 302 : ii, 57-60).

Let me, let me sleep again;  
Thus, methought, in feeble strain,  
Plain'd from its disturbed bed  
The spirit of the mighty dead.  
O'er my moulder'd ashes cold  
Many a century slow hath roll'd,  
Many a race hath disappear'd  
Since my giant form<sup>1</sup> I rear'd;  
Since my flinted arrow<sup>2</sup> flew,  
Since my battle-horn I blew,  
Since my brazen dagger's<sup>3</sup> pride  
Glitter'd on my warlike side,  
Which, transported o'er the wave,  
Kings of distant ocean gave.  
Ne'er hath glared the eye of day,  
My death-bed secrets to betray,  
Since, with mutter'd Celtic rhyme,  
The white-hair'd Druid bard sublime,  
Mid the stillness of the night,  
Wak'd the sad and solemn rite,  
The rite of Death, and o'er my bones  
Were piled the monumental stones.  
Passing near the hallow'd ground,  
The Roman gaz'd upon the mound,<sup>4</sup>  
And murmur'd with a secret sigh,  
'There in dust the mighty lie.'  
Ev'n while his heart with conquest glow'd,  
While the high-raised flinty road,  
Echoed to the prancing hoof,  
And Golden eagles<sup>5</sup> flamed aloof,  
And flashing to the orient light  
His banner'd legions glitter'd bright;  
The victor of the world confess'd  
A dark awe shivering at his breast.  
Shall the sons of distant days,  
Unpunish'd, on my relicks gaze?<sup>6</sup>  
Hark! Hesus rushes from on high,  
Vindictive thunder rocks the sky,  
See Taranis descends to save  
His Heroe's violated grave,  
And shakes beneath the lightning's glare,  
The sulphur from his blazing hair.



Hence! though my grave ye spoil,  
 Dark oblivion mocks your toil:  
 Deep the clouds of ages roll,  
 History drops her mould'ring scroll,  
 And never shall reveal the name  
 Of him, who scorns her transient fame.

#### Notes

- 1 The bones of the skeleton found in this tumulus were very large.
- 2 We found four beautiful barbed arrowheads of flint.
- 3 Also a beautiful brass dagger. These instruments were probably received by the Britons in barter from the Phoenicians, or some polished nation.
- 4 The Roman road passes close to this group of barrows of which the one here alluded to is remarkable for its beautiful form, etc.
- 5 The Roman standard.
- 6 The poet alludes to our opening this barrow - during the process, we were surprized in this unsheltered plain, & obliged to take refuge in the barrow. The scene certainly awful & the storm of rain, hail, thunder, etc. was one of the most violent I ever witnessed.

NB. The poem as recorded in the Hoare notebook differs from the published text in a number of minor ways which I have not thought it necessary to record.

To Mr. Cunnington from Everley on hearing that he was indisposed  
and could not join our party

by

Richard Fenton

(Source : Letter to William Cunnington from Richard Fenton, 1805 :  
Cunnington Mss., Devizes)

Go cheering gale and leave thy downs awhile,  
Hygiea's soft commission winged to bear,  
That gives disease's pallid cheek to smile  
And in pain's haggard eye dries up the tear.  
To Heytesbury's low vale thy influence lend  
And breathing there new health and life inspire,  
Dispel each vapour that unnerves my friend  
And ere it rages, check the fever's fire.  
See! where the tyrant death in ambush waits,  
To save the outlines that invest his heart,  
Haste to his succour, disappoint the fates,  
And step between him and the menaced dart,  
Bid many a healthful year roll o'er his head,  
Ere he be number'd with the mighty dead.

A barrow-opening at Everley, Autumn 1805  
 by  
 Richard Fenton  
 (Source: Fenton, 1811, 263-67).

Day has pal'd his gairish light,  
 And yields his empire to the night;  
 The spirits of the neighb'ring down  
 Claim the season as their own,  
 In murky mists as hov'ring round,  
 They circle each his separate mound,  
 And, with sad terrific yells,  
 Mourn their violated cells.

In this dark, this witching hour,  
 First let us due libations pour;  
 And be the awful tribute shed  
 To reconcile the mighty dead;  
 But watch, and see no eye profane  
 Peep on us through the broken pane<sup>1</sup>;  
 And that none with footsteps rude  
 On our mysteries intrude:  
 Then let the solemn rites begin,  
 Bring the urns, the largest, in<sup>2</sup>;  
 Round them all the smallest place,  
 Like satellites their state to grace;  
 And let the spear and dagger's pride  
 Rival each other, side by side:  
 Bring many a relic green as leek,

---

1 This was literally the case, the window of the inn being in a shattered state.

2 As a finale to the entertainment, on the last evening of our meeting, the different urns and other relics, the produce of our researches, were laid out with great taste on the board after dinner, as an antiquarian dessert.

Crusted with the verd antique;  
 The drinking-cup, with nothing in 't;  
 Arrow-heads of bone and flint;  
 With the leaves of gold that shone  
 On the Arch-druid's breast alone,  
 When his office bade him go  
 To cut the sacred mistletoe;  
 Whetstones bring of every kind,  
 From the coarse to the refin'd;  
 Amulets of various form,  
 Gifted to raise or lay the storm;  
 The talisman of power to steep  
 The lid of care in balmy sleep;  
 And the adder-stone, whose sway  
 The spirits of the deep obey;  
 In festoons then round them set  
 Beads of amber and of jet;  
 Next bring the smallest urn we have,  
 Taken from a Druid's grave,  
 Urn which we the thimble call,  
 Than nest of humming-bird more small,  
 With a precious balsam fill'd  
 By magic's wondrous power distill'd,  
 Essence of rarest gums and dews,  
 Which Tydain<sup>3</sup>, parent of the muse,  
 From Defrobani's distant shore  
 To his much-lov'd Britain bore,  
 Unchangeable in smell and taste,  
 Not subject to corrupt or waste;

---

3 Tydain Tâd Awen, the father of the muse, makes an illustrious figure in the Welsh historical triads; some will have him to be the same with Tant or Hermes.

The flame approaching, let it melt,  
 And through the loop-hole of a celt  
 Drop three drops into the fire,  
 The mystic number we require;  
 Whence issuing a perfume is found  
 To purify the space around,  
 Of potency to guard from blights  
 'Gender'd in autumnal nights,  
 And th' initiated to screen  
 From every harm that lurks unseen;  
 With many a flinty arrow-head,  
 Found in the hunter's narrow bed,  
 'Bove which, companion of the chase,  
 His faithful dog had burial-place:  
 Lastly, bring the relic known  
 To be the rarest thing we own;  
 The kidney pebble, which appears  
 Once, perhaps, a thousand years,  
 For all the ills a sovereign cure  
 Which sportsmen in their reins endure.

Nothing now, I ween, remains  
 But to chaunt old Arcol's strains,  
 Which to hymn the day he chose,  
 When Abury's mountain columns rose;  
 And, the stupendous labour o'er,  
 His harp he vow'd to string no more:  
 In the chorus, got by heart,  
 Let John and Stephen<sup>4</sup> bear a part:  
 Illustrious barrow pioneers!  
 Who never yet have had their peers.

---

4 The two labourers, father and son, who are constantly employed on this work.



But the notes seem flat and dull,  
 The choir is not as usual full;  
 Full how can the concert be,  
 For Druid Mordred, where is he,  
 At our solemnities whose pride  
 And office still was to preside?  
 Whilst aguish vapours cloud his sight,  
 Hating converse, hating light;  
 See! where in his Hakpen bower<sup>5</sup>  
 He languishes away the hour,  
 Dead to its furniture around,  
 And rich mosaic on the ground.  
 Great Mordred absent, who can tell  
 How to pronounce the closing spell?  
 Which, supplied by him alone,  
 Demands a more majestic tone;  
 Then, till health restore our friend,  
 Abrupt our ceremonies end.  
 Quick the relics then withdraw,  
 With regret, but mix'd with awe.  
 Or shrieks of troubled ghosts I hear?  
 Or is it fancy mocks my ear?  
 Rest, perturbed spirits, rest,  
 Vanish and mingle with the bless'd;  
 Think no longer, that, your foes,  
 We come to break your dread repose;

---

5 Alluding to a bower which the gentleman here alluded to, Mr. Cunnington, of Heytesbury, has so arranged, as to represent on its floor, with different coloured pebbles, the plan of Abury, which was one of the grandest temples ever designed by man; consisting of an immense circle of twenty-two acres, with an avenue on each side of a mile long, to figure a winged serpent. Hakpen is an oriental word signifying the serpent's head.

But from motives pure we trust  
 To scrape acquaintance with your dust;  
 Those numerous piles of pious toil  
 Man may level with the soil;  
 But with all the beauteous swells  
 Which cover your sepulchral cells,  
 Whatever changes be their lot,  
 If swept away and clean forgot,  
 This sacred, death-devoted plain  
 In Crocker's<sup>6</sup> colours shall remain;  
 For know, the costly page that saves  
 From chance of future spoil your graves,  
 The splendid monument by Hoare  
 Shall last till time shall be no more!

---

6 A most ingenious draftsman, who attends Sir Richard Hoare on these occasions to make drawings of the contents of the tumuli, as well as tumuli themselves, for illustrating the learned Baronet's intended work.

Three sonnets to Mr. Cunningham, to whom the world is indebted,  
under the patronage of Sir Richard Hoare, for discoveries that  
cannot fail to throw new light on the primeval history of Britain.

by

Richard Fenton

(Source: Fenton, 1811, 285-86).

At meeting him on Salisbury Plain

O Thou, on whom each antiquarian eye  
Is turn'd, as when the mariner from far  
Stretches his aching vision to descry  
Through Night's dark vault some tutelary star,  
Benighted long I hail thee as the day  
That bids the wanderer all his fears dismiss;  
What joy to meet thee, pilot of my way,  
And meet in such a latitude as this,  
Where o'er the boundless ocean of a plain  
To steer the self-same course that thou hast been,  
Is ever safe, as in the South Sea main  
Wherever Cook's adventurous track is seen;  
For, till thy time unknown, 't is thine to boast  
To have discover'd well this curious coast.

### On opening the Prophet barrows

Hither were wont mad prophets to repair  
 For facts unborn to search Time's mystic womb,  
 And vent their impious ravings to the air -  
 Imposture all! who dares to pierce the gloom?  
 Fallacious ray allied to error found,  
 No ignis fatuus leads our steps astray;  
 Fearless we tread, though death's deep night surround,  
 Where'er thy polar star directs the way.  
 The rod augurial in the miner's hand  
 The mineral world is gifted to unfold;  
 More wondrous still the magic of thy wand;  
 It turns whate'er it touches into gold.  
 Oh! for that splendid epoch, when the ore  
 Its sterling impress shall receive from Hoare!

On attending the Rev. Mr. Duke, to whom the above group of barrows belonged, to direct the three operations of opening them: being the first time of his being present at such a ceremony.

Auspicious morn, by prophets long foretold,  
 To Sarum's plain once more that calls my friend,  
 The dark sepulchral mysteries to unfold,  
 And Duke's initiation to attend:  
 Oh! let the young noviciate for his guide  
 Look up to thee, in mind thy precepts bear,  
 That when thy mantle thou shalt throw aside,  
 The mystic robe he may deserve to wear.  
 In Egypt's piles, the wonder of mankind,  
 Sages in vain the labyrinth pursue,  
 But in our rival pyramids we find  
 No secret chamber that eludes thy clue:  
 Like Maia's son, where'er thou wav'st thy hand,  
 The dead appear obedient to thy wand.



"Jones, just as he was retiring, handed me the inclosed poem, the effect of the Muses' gestation on the cold summit of Dunkery, while we were in the act of violating those primitive sepulchres that crown it, ..."

(Source: Fenton, 1811, 167-70).

That plaint again! was it the howling blast?  
 Again that shadow! 't was a cloud that pass'd;  
 Oh! no; - for see I not a giant form  
 Half hid in mists incumbent on the storm?  
 A more than human voice methinks I hear; -  
 Or broke the distant thunder on my ear?  
 " 'Tis not the thunder on thy ear that breaks,  
 It is the spirit of the mighty speaks;  
 That, hov'ring round these death-devoted piles,  
 Th' inactive sabbath of the grave beguiles. -  
 Then, wretch, forbear, suspend thy impious deeds,  
 Know in each stroke no vulgar victim bleeds.  
 The stated flux of many a thousand tides  
 Has lash'd this sea-confining mountain's sides;  
 And springs of thousand ages dews have shed  
 To flower the heath that blooms around the dead,  
 Since first upon this solitary waste,  
 With mystic rites, my sacred urn was plac'd;  
 Fill'd by the Druids from th' extinguish'd pyre,  
 And virgin guardians of th' eternal fire.  
 Barbarian! yet till thine no hand profane,  
 Scythian or Roman, Saxon or the Dane,  
 Has dar'd the grave's dark secrets to betray,  
 And give my dust irrev'rently to day:  
 E'en they, all reeking from their bloody toil,  
 And insolent with conquest, and with spoil,  
 With rev'rence gaz'd on the stupendous mound,  
 And trod with chilling awe this hallow'd ground. -

Yet callest thou thyself of British race?  
 Renounce the spurious title; rather trace  
 To the fell Saxon, or more murd'rous band  
 Of fierce sea-kings that once o'erspread this land.  
 Perhaps thou think'st I liv'd unknown to fame,  
 A savage of these wilds, without a name: -  
 Know, that to sway a sceptre was my boast,  
 From Ex's fountain to the Severn's coast:  
 At Dunkery's rough base my palace rose,  
 Whose site the still remaining rampart shows;  
 With thorns o'ergrown, and now become th' abode  
 Of beasts obscene, the serpent and the toad;  
 Where circling mead united rival kings,  
 And rival bards maintain'd the strife of strings:  
 Above was seen the mountain's front of snow,  
 And Horner's torrent waters rag'd below. -  
 Here o'er the boundless heath I drove my car,  
 And practis'd in the chase the mimic war;  
 For real war ne'er shook my peaceful throne,  
 Safe in my people's guardian love alone:  
 I saw the wandering rider of the main,  
 Yet never panted to enlarge my reign:  
 The Tyrian I forbade not to explore  
 My earth's rich bowels for the tempting ore;  
 He gave in vain to my undazzled view  
 Gems that refracted rays of every hue;  
 Yet breath'd I not a wish by impious trade,  
 Which prompts mad man through seas of blood to wade,  
 In distant climes to seek the flaming mine,  
 Of peace destructive, where such baubles shine:  
 He saw his metal well supplied by stone,  
 And polish'd iv'ry rivall'd by my bone;  
 Saw that the sea, my native factor, brought  
 The jet and amber to my coasts unsought.

No wonder then, that, curious to behold,  
 All richly studded, and o'erlaid with gold,  
 The stranger's gift, the dagger by my side,  
 Slept in its scabbard useless and untried;  
 For ne'er in wrath my bended bow I drew,  
 Ne'er, wing'd with death, my flint-tipp'd arrow flew,  
 Save when the branching victim was decreed,  
 In aid of regal luxury, to bleed;  
 Or when a horde of that ferocious brood,  
 Whose trade was robb'ry, and whose sport was blood,  
 Dark ocean rovers, chanc'd to touch my land,  
 And left their limbs to bleach along the strand;  
 Sad monument! to mark to distant times  
 What certain vengeance waits such daring crimes;  
 To punish those who Freedom's sons provoke,  
 Man lifts the arm, but Heaven directs the stroke.  
 Freedom! at thy dear mention I would fain  
 Reanimate my clay, and live again. -  
 Thou first, best gift, the strongest proof of love  
 To mortals ever granted from above!  
 How wert thou wont to glad my happy plains!  
 Where but the shadow of thy name remains!  
 And, ah! I see with sorrow every day  
 That e'en this shade is flitting fast away:  
 And are there they - be vengeance on them hurl'd!  
 Who wish it fairly banish'd from the world?  
 Yes! - there's a monster, to whom hell gave birth,  
 And let him loose to desolate the earth;  
 Who, trampling man, almost defies his God,  
 Idol of Gaul, beneath whose iron rod  
 The nations of the world are taught to bend,  
 Save Britain only, Britain to the end.  
 Girt with her azure zone, may she disdain  
 Basely to drag the tyrant's galling chain,  
 And, firm in native energy, oppose

Hers, and the worst of human nature's foes;  
 Preserve her birthright to her latest breath,  
 And leave the proud inheritance in death!  
 Oh! that I could, to combat in her cause,  
 Fate's chain unbinding, alter Nature's laws!  
 Oh! that my ashes could to life awake,  
 A separate form my every atom take;  
 As from the dragon's teeth when sown, of yore,  
 The soil a sudden crop of warriors bore;  
 Then would I urge thy violence to bare  
 My dust prolific, nor entreat to spare;  
 Myself had then been foremost to have bless'd  
 The thought that led to violate my rest;  
 Ample atonement wouldst thou then have made,  
 And thus propitiate my offended shade.  
 Though to my dust be miracles denied,  
 Yet there less powerful virtues may reside: -  
 Then scatter wide my relics to the gale,  
 That every breath the hero may inhale.  
 In this wide amphitheatre on high,  
 Beneath the grand pavilion of the sky,  
 Here let remote posterity convene,  
 (A cloud of power, I will invest the scene,)  
 Here let my sons, and let their aged sires,  
 Vet'rans from whose yet unextinguish'd fires  
 May be deriv'd as much as needs of flame  
 To light up glory in the youthful frame,  
 Meet round this pile, and, as at holiest shrine,  
 Their hands in pact inviolable twine;  
 And, more to sanctify the solemn rite,  
 Oh! may not only hands, but hearts unite,  
 Till like one man become, and pledges given  
 Of union firm, by dread appeals to Heaven,  
 In one compatriot vow they shall agree  
 To die like Britons, or continue free!"

Lines occasioned by opening a barrow on Charlton Down, Dorset  
by

Miss S. Manning

(Source: letter from Rev. Thomas Rackett to Charles Hatchett,  
18 November 1811, quoted in Dewar, 1968, 234).

Here is the spot where rests  
The Ashes of the brave  
And here a rounding Mound of earth  
Points out the Briton's grave.

Come! Seek his close recess  
Explore the hidden prize  
And bring again to chearing light  
What so obscurely lies.

Stop dig not in such haste,  
Yet but a moment pause,  
For underneath that jetty mould  
Is laid the Ancient Vase.

Examine its contents  
Observe each brittle bone,  
And silent sit, and meditate  
Upon the Spirit gone.

And were these scorch'd remains  
Arrayed in every grace?  
Did Health & Beauty once adorn  
This Chief of Albion Race?

Did strength attend his Arm?  
Was terror in his stride?  
Did Victory in warlike deeds  
Upon his forehead ride?



Was triumph in his spear?  
 How came he by his death?  
 Was it the death of Nature paid  
 That he resigned his breath?

Or was it by the stroke  
 Of furious foeman's lance?  
 Or did the deadly arrows rage  
 In fatal mischief glance?

All this we'll leave unknown  
 Content with what we think  
 On finding that all mortal things  
 In sad oblivion sink.

The Urn we will remove  
 As a Memento take,  
 And musing in thy mold'ring dust  
 Regard it for thy sake

Again thy ashes move  
 Return them to their cell  
 Inter once more this fragile part  
 Where it was wont to dwell.

Reflect an instant now  
 The Solemn scene is o'er  
 And know terrestrial honours are  
 A shadow, nothing more.

Then let not pomp & state  
 Be all our care on earth,  
 Let us prepare while time permit,  
 For a Celestial Birth

Beth Pennard, or the British Chieftain's Grave  
by  
John Skinner

(Source: Skinner MSS, Bath)<sup>1</sup>

The following lines were composed to commemorate the opening of an ancient British barrow near the village of Abury on the Wiltshire Downs, wherein was discovered a perfect skeleton, lying about a foot and a half below the natural surface of the ground. A clay cup of rude but rather tasteful workmanship was placed near its head: this, Sir Richard Hoare (under whose direction the Barrow was opened) retained; and the earth being carefully filled in the grave was left exactly in the same situation in which it was found; some copper coins being inserted to mention to future antiquaries the date in which it was opened, namely August 11th, 1814.

As fleeting clouds of thistle's down  
By Summer's noontide breezes blown  
Skim lightly o'er the plains,  
So have successive ages sped  
As light o'er yon green hillock's head,  
Which shrouds a chief's remains.

Serene he sleeps - nor war nor woes  
Pervade this mansion of repose  
To agitate his soul:  
Unseen by him red lightning's glare,  
Unheard, tumultuous thro' the air,  
Terrific thunders roll.

Not tranquil thus by Ossian sung  
Were shades who o'er their ashes hung  
To grieve for glories past  
Or roll'd in mists along the heath  
Portending future feuds or death  
Loud shriek'd before the blast.

---

1 Copies were sent to Sir Richard Colt Hoare and James Douglas.

Soft slept the chief - tho' closing round,  
 Contending squadrons shook the ground.

When charg'd the scythed car,  
 When Belgic clansmen vainly brave,  
 Fell choak'd in blood beside his grave,  
 Transfix'd by Roman spear.

And still he slept - ah! woe the while,  
 E'en while profaning Abury's pile,  
 Unaw'd by curses dire,  
 Their ruthless hands the Hierarch slew,  
 And heaps of willing victims threw  
 To glut his altar's fire.

The spirit slept: and slept serene,  
 Tho' once he priz'd the sacred scene,  
 Beyond all earthly store,  
 Treading with awe the Serpent's maze,  
 At the huge sarsens oft would gaze,  
 Bend lowly and adore!

For much he priz'd the Druid band,  
 Their high behests, their dread command  
 Implicitly obey'd,  
 And frequent on the harrow'd rock,  
 Kill'd the first fatling of the flock,  
 Beneath the greenwood's shade.

Freely he gave, tho' valued most,  
 For herds exchang'd on Cornwall's coast,  
 His azure beads of glass,  
 His ivory studs, and rings of jet,  
 His amber drops, and costlier yet,  
 His knives of Punic brass.

These gifts on Abury's seer bestow'd  
 Express'd the gratitude he ow'd  
     For counsels well receiv'd  
 Then till his death their blessings gave  
 Then laid the chieftain in his grave  
     The barrow heap'd - and griev'd.

Scenes of past times! Rever'd ye pass  
 On retrospection's magic glass  
     But, ah! how short your stay  
 One glimpse we catch one form behold  
 Next instant all in vapours roll'd  
     Like Meteor melts away.

Oh! might I join the weeping throng  
 Who bore the honour'd chief along  
     Arch-Druid hear my prayer:  
 Tis done: two thousand years are fled  
 The void outstripp'd - I mourn the dead  
     With Bards novitiate there.

What mingled harpings, soft and slow,  
 Proclaiming solemn notes of woe  
     Among the valley trill!!  
 What awful forms of giant mould  
 Whose limbs the whitest robe enfold  
     Descend yon sacred hill!!!

I see the slowly moving train  
 In trunk of oak the corpse sustain  
     Down Silbury's arduous height  
 For there the funeral rites begun  
 Assembled there the rising sun  
     They watch'd thro' mists of night.

And as it dawn'd with sprigs of yew  
 They sprinkled his pale corpse with dew  
     Prefiguring the hour  
 When like the splendid Sun will rise  
 His soul immortal to the skies  
     Pure as the dewy shower.

And now the foremost ranks proceed  
 In silence reach the Serpent's Head  
     Where sarsens mark the ground  
 Then hand in hand each Druid joins  
 Filling the mystic circle's lines  
     While thousands halt around.

Apart the Hierarch from the rest  
 In centre plac'd the dead address'd  
     Low bending o'er his bier  
 Tho' from the anxious crowds conceal'd  
 Such silence reign'd throughout the field  
     Each accent all might hear.

"Spirit blest! we wait on thee!  
 "Heir of vast Eternity!!  
 "Above, below, on ev'ry side  
 "Whose chain immense, extending wide  
 "Embraces in its copious range  
 "Mortals subject here to change:  
 "But when releas'd they mount on high  
 "To thrones appointed in the sky,  
 "Nor grov'ling dark and weak as now,  
 "Servants of error, pain, and woe,  
 "But high, immutable, and pure,  
 "Resplendent as yon Sun endure,  
 "Unmov'd as centre of the pole  
 "Round which resplendent planets stroll,



"With filial gratitude and love,  
 "From Earth - ascend to Heaven above.  
 "For this our brother lift your prayer  
 "And joy in hope to meet him there."  
 He ceas'd - in chorus, harp and song  
 His requiem thus the bards prolong:  
 "Spirit blest we wait on thee,  
 "Heir of vast eternity!  
 "Altho' we grieve, we grieve alone,  
 "To linger here when thou art gone,  
 "For, oh! how sweet, life's troubles o'er,  
 "With thee to wake, and grieve no more!"

The harpings still'd, their charge again,  
 From Hackpen bears the funeral train,  
 Tow'rds Abury's sacred groves  
 Marshall'd the host in order due,  
 Along the winding avenue,  
 The mute procession moves.

With furrow'd fronts, and beards like snow,  
 Downcast their eyes, their paces slow,  
 Arms folded on the breast,  
 Proceeds the first, the Druid's band,  
 For worth, for wisdom and command,  
 Rever'd beyond the rest.

The bards succeed, whose pious care,  
 Alike the dead and living share,  
 Well skill'd to heap on high  
 The hero's grave; or chant his praise,  
 Rousing each clansman by their lays,  
 To dare alike and die.

Next skin clad warriors strong of limb,  
 Painted their breasts, their features grim,  
     Inur'd to scoff all ill,  
 Stalk on: yet e'en these sorrowing trace  
 In foremost rank a vacant place  
     Their comrade us'd to fill.

A crowd promiscuous forms the rear,  
 Pour'd forth in streams from hamlet near,  
     Whose painted huts are seen  
 Dotting in lines the higher ground,  
 Like beehives heap'd on stages round,  
     Above the velvet green.

From hence fair maids whose tresses flow  
 To veil in part their breasts of snow,  
     The steps of age sustain,  
 And children, with endearing smile,  
 The brow of sadness to beguile,  
     Bound playful o'er the plain.

And now the leaders reach the lines  
 Where serpent's neck the body joins,  
     High girthing with a mound,  
 A darksome grove of moss grown oaks,  
 Whose echoes to the woodman's strokes  
     Had ne'er return'd a sound.

Here groups of sarsens, bald and white,  
 Like ghostly spectres daunt the sight,  
     Forth starting from the gloom,  
 Averting rash offenders' feet  
 From this lone spot, this last retreat,  
     Where Druids love to roam.

And now soft steals the solemn dirge,  
 In chorus sung from outer verge,  
     Where bearers halt the dead,  
 And nearer yet, and still more near,  
 The twanging harp strings strike the ear,  
     And rustling footsteps tread.

By turns disclos'd, by turns unseen,  
 'Twixt giant oaks, and coppice green,  
     The mute attendants wind,  
 And now the bier at altar's base,  
 Fronting the east, with awe they place,  
     And form in ranks behind.

To guard the rites from eye profane,  
 Attentive at their posts remain,  
     A well appointed band  
 Beside each sarsen pil'd around  
 The trenches brink beneath the mound  
     Does sep'rate sentry stand.

Deep silence reigns! - The dying breeze  
 Scarce stirs one leaf on topmost trees,  
     Scarce creeps the trickling rill,  
 Not one lone thrush delights to sing,  
 Nor flits one airy linnet's wing,  
     'Tis solemn, sad, and still.

Deathlike the pause! Thus ere from cloud,  
 Tumultuous bursts the tempest loud  
     On poor bewilder'd swain.  
 Wildly he views the mantle spread,  
 In pitchy folds above his head,  
     And darken all the plain.

Sudden it rends - in mute amaze,  
 His eyes admit the vivid blaze,  
     His ears one constant peal,  
 Rushes the rain in torrents fast,  
 Impetuous urges on the blast,  
     The groaning mountains reel.

In dread suspense, so silent wait,  
 As tho' on verge extreme of fate,  
     Pale warriors round the bier,  
 Their labouring breath with pain they drew  
 Their eyeballs glaz'd and fix'd their view.  
     Yet say! Could Britons fear?

Hence ye profane! These accents broke,  
 Electric as the thunderstroke,  
 Which rives the sinews of the oak,  
     Avaunt! nor dare intrude,  
     Within our solitude,  
 Nor caves profound, nor thickest gloom of night,  
 Conceal the trembling traitor from our sight.  
 At once we drag him forth to light,  
 Lay wide the chamber of his breast,  
 Disclose his impious thoughts compress'd.  
 Woe, woe, to him in close disguise,  
 Who ambush'd 'gainst his fellow lies,  
 By fraudulent arts supplants the wise  
 Or wrests from Virtue's hand the prize  
     By treachery.

I view the wretch, in torments tost,  
 His schemes detected, purpose crost,  
 His substance wasted, kindred lost,  
 Surviving half his span at most,  
     Despairing dies.

Woe woe to him whose scowling brow,  
 Mocks God above, and man below,  
 Whose head at altar scorns to bow,  
 Whose heart to throb at others woe,  
     From mountain high.

May his vile corpse be thrown in air,  
 His entrails croaking ravens tear,  
 And ravning wolves the banquet share,  
 Scorn'd by mankind, without one heir,  
     To heave a sigh.

But may the candid and sincere,  
 Who speak and act unmov'd by fear,  
 Who God and wisdom both revere,  
 As did the chief who lieth here,  
     Most placedly.

While living every comfort find,  
 From friends, from kindred, and mankind,  
 In body healthy, sound in mind,  
 In ripe old age, to fate resign'd,  
     Respected die.

The bards in chorus join the strain,  
 Pleas'd echo chaunts it back again.

On altar now the pile they raise,  
 And wake dull embers to a blase,  
     Thick smoke ascends in air.  
 And when the milk white steer they bring,  
 That morning bath'd in sacred spring,  
     Thus glow'd the votive pray'r!



Oh, Pow'r Supreme! who fill'st on high,  
 The boundless regions of the sky,  
     With majesty sublime,  
     Who ere the birth of time,  
 Calling this shapeless globe from chaos rude,  
     To torpid clay did'st bounteous give,  
     In countless form the boon to live,  
     To men - Oh! vast benignity!  
     A spirit which might never die,  
 But dwell for age with thee in full beatitude.

Great Power before thy throne we bend,  
 For thy acceptance leave our friend.

As streams the fainting bullock's gore,  
 When prone he falls to rise no more,  
     And earth's fond parent hides,  
 Within her ample veil the gashing tides,  
 From her deriv'd, by her prolific bed,  
     To Pow'r Supreme, permit to flow,  
     Foul guilt, and earth's contracted woe,  
         Of vice each crimson stain,  
         With victim's blood, let earth retain,  
 And ripe for glory, wake the hallow'd dead.  
     Lo! at thy awful throne we bend,  
     With thee kind Father leave our friend.

His arm extending as he spoke,  
 Raped returns the unerring stroke,  
     Prone falls the steer to ground.  
 In line direct his bubbling blood,  
 From altar rushes to the wood,  
     Beyond the circles bound.

Auspicious sight! The druid cries,  
 Without one groan the victim dies,  
     Strait forth his gushing life stream flows,  
 And mark you not on kindred pile,  
 With vervain heat, how strait erewhile,  
     The smoke propitious from the altar rose.

In bounty lo! Our Father smil'd,  
 In mercy welcom'd back his child,  
 We hail great Tanais the gracious sign,  
 To thee with joy our honour'd charge resign.  
     Raise bards the strain! To heaven belong,  
     Your prayers, your praises, vows and song:  
     Responsive wake from gladsome syre,  
     Those hymns which gratitude and joy inspire.

In modest silence, sage Armynedd bow'd,  
 The first in sciences mid the tuneful crowd,  
 With rapid fingers o'er the strings he ran,  
 The notes according, thus the sire began:  
     From heaven my sacred theme descends,  
     With heaven again my subject ends,  
     In ceaseless round - like serpent's coil,  
     Like unhewn sarsons circled pile,  
     Like the gigantic cromlech's form,  
     By age uninjur'd or the storm,  
     All amblematic to the eye,  
     Of that dread term eternity!  
     So would my strain that awful word,  
     To all the slumbering world record,  
     Rouse each dull sense beyond this sphere,  
     Of pain and woe of doubt and fear,  
 To seek that Being whence springs that endless chain,

Who was, and is, and ever must remain.

I ask you sun which gilds the day,

Pale moon which rules the night,

I ask each planet with bright ray,

Deriv'd from solar light,

If all in order as you see,

Existed from eternity?

At once the firmament replies,

That Being which lighted thus the skies,

Which bade the sparkling planets roll,

In stated course round central poll,

Was wisdom infinite alone,

Creating all, yet made by none.

That Pow'r Supreme! Whose glories all discern,

Is self existent, boundless, and eterne.

In realms of bliss by grateful angles tongue,

Thy ceaseless praise eternity is sung:

And shall weak grov'ling sons of earth,

Madly disclaim their godlike birth,

With mists of sense and base desire,

Perversely dim the ethereal fire,

Prefer like brutes their devious course to run,

And end in darkness as they first begun?

Awake ye slumbering dead,

Ye living slumberers awake who careless tread,

Life's precipice, or dozing lie,

On brink of dread eternity!

To wisdom wake, ere from its earthly load,

The soul dismiss'd, interior views its God.

Can thought conceive, can tongue relate,

The horrors of her future state,

For ages destin'd to sustain,

Extremes of agonizing pain,  
 Below immur'd in vilest forms,  
 Of beasts, and insects, fish, and worms,  
 Conscious of every pang but feeling most,  
 Her state degraded heavenly honours lost.

Awake my starfi! Renew thy strain,  
 Behold an ever blooming train,  
     Throng round th' ethereal sire.  
 Their gracious smiles, their beauteous forms, behold,  
 Their waving locks, their crowns of burnish'd gold,  
     And wings of glowing fire.

Thrills not each spirit with delight,  
     Concluding life's career,  
 To soar above the troubled sphere,  
 Above sad pain and pallid fear,  
     To hail with gratitude the sight  
     And gaze with eagle's steadfast eye.  
 Oh, thou blest sun! Oh, blest eternity!

From heaven my sacred theme descends,  
 With heaven again my subject ends  
 In ceaseless rounds, like serpent's coil,  
 Like unhewn sarsens circled pile,  
 Like the gigantic cromlech's form,  
 By age uninjur'd, or the storm,  
 All emblematic to the eye  
 Of that dread term eternity!  
 So would my strain, that awful word  
 To all the slumbering world record,  
 Rouse each dull sense beyond this sphere,  
 For all to dust will crumble here.

To that first cause whence springs the endless chain,  
 Who was, and is, and ever must remain,  
 He ceas'd:- with hands uprais'd and eyes of fire,  
 The druid thus excites th' attendant choir:

Sound, sound the harp! Resume the song,  
 The strains let air and earth prolong,  
 Return them ocean's rocky caves,  
 And spread them forth ye foaming waves,  
 And as they mount in tempests high,  
 Toss them resounding to the sky,  
 That thence with rapid lightnings hurl'd,  
 They may arouse a slumbering world.  
 Yet air, earth, sea, nor fire contain  
 A compass suited to my strain,  
 The realms of heaven alone record,  
 With dread eternity thy word.

Throughout the grove, beyond the mound,  
 In chorus full the notes resound,  
     While thousands swell the strain,  
 Now high ascends th' aspiring lay,  
 Now murmuring sinks and dies away,  
     Till all is hush'd again.

The bier resum'd with measur'd space,  
 In mystic round the druids trace  
     The inner circle's line.  
 Then to the crowds the issued forth,  
 From portal op'ning tow'rds the north,  
     And in procession join.



Slowly their winding course pursue,  
 The hosts thro' western avenue,  
     Describing sinuous maze  
 Of serpent's tail. This barrier past,  
 The mournful bearers halt at last,  
     Beside the chieftain's grave.

Two feet beneath the verdant glade,  
 By bards a narrow cist is made,  
     Yet ample to contain  
 Those listless limbs, in speed and force  
 Which rival'd once the fleetest horse,  
     Light bounding o'er the plain.

Ah! What is strength, or power, or pride,  
 Ambition, beauty, all beside,  
     Vain playthings of an hour,  
 Destin'd to spring and pass away,  
 To bloom, to wither, and decay  
     Like summer's short-liv'd flow'r.

'Tis done! - within the boundless space,  
 Where mightiest of the human race,  
     Their lordly views must shroud.  
 The corpse is laid - his glist'ning eye  
 The hierarch rais'd - and with a sigh,  
     Address'd the mournful crowd:

Brothers, the friend whom we deplore,  
 To us exists on earth no more  
 His task perform'd, his progress run,  
 In brightness like the autumnal sun,  
 He sits - more glorious still to rise,

Thro' shades of night to glad the skies.  
 Ages may pass ere summon'd hence,  
 His soul receives her recompence.  
 Yet these like vapoury mists may seem,  
 Or like the flitting of a dream,  
 For what is Time? 'Tis only known  
 By active thoughts, or actions done  
 Add years to years, we toil in vain  
 To trace the never-ending chain.  
 E'en could we number of the sea  
 Each separate sand - eternity  
 Far more exceeds the full amount  
 Than does one unit all we count.  
 What then is mortal life? A breath,  
 Soon stifled in the grasp of death.  
 Man urges man, like wave and wave,  
 Impell'd from cradle to the grave:  
 Tribe pours on tribe, and host on host,  
 Like billows raging on the coast,  
 In foam they break, then silent glide,  
 To mix with boundless ocean's tide:  
 What wars, what horrors must succeed,  
 What nations bow, what millions bleed,  
 Ere from on high blest angel's voice,  
 Our brother summons to rejoice,  
 Bids thro' the world mad tumult cease,  
 And charms presumptuous pride with gentlest hymns of peace.

Now fill the hallow'd cup of clay  
 With dew from cromlech's summit grey,  
 Last night procur'd in locks of wool,  
 Fill it with care, and fill it full,  
 Such bev'rage suits aetherial sprite,  
 Ere it ascends to realms of light.  
 Place it contiguous to the head,

And o'er its mouth a covering spread,  
 The liquid pure awhile to keep,  
 To guard it from incumbent heap.  
 Two thousand years of course will fly,  
 Before the vase be void and dry,  
 Then 'tis decreed, I hail the sign,  
 The grave its treasure must resign  
 To a kind chief, who will revere  
 A chieftain's reliques buried here.  
 One who with us delights to ken  
 The ancient works of Celtic men,  
 Who makes their labours by his own  
 Survive, when falls each magic stone,  
 Or roaming 'midst the hills and groves,  
 Views scenes which every druid loves!  
 The cup our benefactor's hand  
 That time shall grace, when thro' the land  
 Soft Peace and all her festive train,  
 By Britain hail'd, shall smile again.  
 To him alone, by Belus' doom,  
 The gifted treasure of the tomb  
 Shall pass, to guard with constant spell,  
 Each stream and shade, each hill and dell,  
 That all his days may tranquil glide,  
 As his we place it now beside!!  
 Brother, farewell! - Now pure the ground,  
 And raise the barrow's ample round  
 And while on earth each tribute pays,  
 Hymn the tribute of his lays,  
 To our departed friend we give  
 That in his verse, his praise may live.

He ceas'd: with care each clansman strove  
 To raise the heap, as swell'd his love,  
 While thus the grateful bard began,  
 In praise of the much-honour'd man.

Oh! First of ancient Achilles' line,  
 Courageous, bountiful, benign,  
 By man rever'd, with God divine,  
 Can any humble strains of mine,  
     Thy high desert record?

Hear rather yon sad matron's cry,  
 Yon drooping virgin's deep drawn sigh,  
 With sob of helpless infancy,  
 Or view yon warrior's streaming eye  
     They best lament their lord.

Oft have I seen in foremost throng,  
 With heart undaunted, sinews strong,  
 The chief redressing clansman's wrong,  
 At his spear's point urge hosts along,  
     Insuring victory.

And oft when bloody fight was o'er,  
 When friend and kinsman breath'd no more,  
 Mild as the dew or primrose flow'r,  
 His kind affections would he pour,  
     In drops of sympathy.

Did winter reign with keener cold,  
 Did famine then his neighbours fold,  
 Sweeping the plains where tempests roll'd,  
 He cheer'd the friendless and the old,  
     Theirs were his herds and home.

Kindly he bids their sorrows cease,  
 Their blessings grow, their joys increase,  
 And shall he not himself have ease,  
 Inherit realms of endless peace  
     Where boundless spirits roam?

Oh yes! And may his race below  
 Awhile be spar'd from war and woe,  
 And here on earth those blessings flow,  
 Which peace and union can bestow,  
     For blissful years to come.

Hesus, insatiate god of war,  
 Ah! Wherefore mount thy scythed car,  
     Why poise thy gory spear?  
 Is it because heart-rending woe,  
 Sickness and age, death's servants here,  
     In progress are too slow?

To thin the ranks of short-liv'd man,  
 Worse than the wolf in craggy den,  
     Who hunger'd feast upon the slain.  
 Those in mere sport do'st urge thy tyrant sway,  
 And madly sweep whole hosts away,  
 To mock thy mouldering trophies on the plain.

Like brute 'gainst brute in blood contend,  
 Mankind with man - friend injures friend  
 In fraudulent strife fell demons rave,  
 While virtue's drooping child,  
 From human haunts exil'd,  
 Alone finds quiet in her lonely grave.



Welcome bland peace! With joy we hail  
 Thy voice, soft stealing on the gale,  
     As sinks the sun in west.  
 We hail thee in the stilly hum  
 Of beetle flitting thro' the gloom,  
     To charm our cares to rest.

We hail thee when the lark on high,  
 At morn with carols fills the sky,  
     Or sporting on the plain,  
 Unnumber'd herds at noontide roam,  
 Or when at even conducts them home,  
     The gaily laughing swain.

Nor less when spreads the busy bee,  
 Emblem of patient industry,  
     From buds of fragrant thyme,  
 The gifts we greet thy presence brings,  
 With healing nectar on thy wings,  
     To ev'ry state and clime.

'Bove all when at the closing scene,  
 With minds unruffled and serene,  
     The good resign their breath  
 Calmly, as did our brother here,  
 We hail thee in far brighter sphere,  
     Triumphant over death.

Concluded hoary Hymnus lay,  
 In melting cadence dies away,  
     His music on the gale,  
 And as his notes dissolve in air,  
 My druid visions disappear  
     And fancy ends her tale.

Nugae Bartlovianae

by

William Whewell

(Source: Daubeny, 1869, 213-15).

Nobles and learned clerks, and ladies gay,  
 Who all, in fair assembly ranged, were by,  
 When antiquarian pickaxe broke its way  
 Through Bartlow's old mysterious tumuli,  
 Would you indeed the tinkling still retain  
 Of bells that jingled for your disport then,  
 Take here the moment's rhyme, the trifling strain,  
 (Secure with you from churlish critics' ken,) -  
 May bring some pleasant days back to your thoughts again.

Audley End, April 17, 1835.

Mr. Gage.      My antiquarian bosom burns to explore  
                  These relics of the art of men of yore.  
 Professor Sedgwick. Stay, my good Sir, control your zeal  
                  or lose it,  
                  This is no work of art, 'tis a deposit.  
 Mr. G.          Geologists, avaunt! and hide your head,  
                  Ne'er was a deposit thus deposited.  
 Pr. S.          I hold, despite your antiquarian pride,  
                  That Bartlow's tallest hill is stratified.  
 Mr. G.          Your theory of strata, Sir, is rickety;  
                  'Tis a Romano-Dano-Celt antiquity.  
 Pr. S.          Sir, your antiquity is a joke to me;  
                  'Twas left here by the last catastrophe.

- Mr. G. I tell you, Sir, that Queen Boadicea  
Killed fifty thousand men and left them here.
- Pr. S. Sir, throw your queens and battles to the dogs,  
'Twas when the Deluge made the Gog Magogs.
- Lord Braybroke. O gentle swains, be for a moment mute,  
For here is that will settle your dispute.  
The spade proceeds, the earth is outward thrown,  
And now at last we find a bit of bone.
- Mr. G. Ha! give it me. It is upon my word,  
A British heel, chopped by a Roman sword.
- Pr. S. No! with your idle tales no longer weary 'em,  
'Tis a new fossil beast, the Bartlotherium.
- Dr. X. Now, gentlemen, since bones are my affair,  
I, as anatomist, the truth declare.  
The bone is a heel bone, observe it thus,  
The beast the asinus domesticus.  
No theorist is safe from trifling ills,  
So to the Lord and Lady of these hills  
Pay, as becomes you, thanks and reverence due,  
And then proceed to theorise anew.

Nugae Bartlovianae

by

William Whewell

(Source: Daubeny, 1869, 216-18).

Where Bartlow's barrows of wondrous size,  
Stand side by side to puzzle the wise,  
In a certain year, on a certain day,  
A voice was heard in the morning grey:  
'Twas a grumbling, growling, muttering din,  
Like a man who talks a box within,  
And it seemed to come, to the standers by,  
From the centre of one of the tumuli.  
The language, as well as the ear could take it,  
Was Latin, but such as a Briton would make it,  
And this is a close translation penned  
For Carolus Neville of Audley End.  
"Brother Icenius, Crispus Caius,  
Close together our friends did lay us  
Seventeen hundred years ago,  
And our two cousins all in a row.  
Tell me, Caius, how do you lie?  
Do you find any change as the years go by?  
Are you still in your quarters narrow,  
Snug in the mould of the tall green barrow?  
With the tears of your friends around you lying  
In tiny jars to console you for dying?  
I've an awkward feel, that the outward air  
Is making its way to my bones so bare;  
It seems as if the sharp north-west  
Were somehow getting within my chest,  
And if the cold very much increases,  
I shall sneeze my barrow all to pieces.

Are you cold too? I feel, by Bacchus,  
 An epidemic disease attack us,  
 And I really feel, as learned men say,  
 A touch of a tumular influenza."  
 And another voice from another hill,  
 Replied in a hoarser grumble still:  
 "What, O Jupiter, Cousin Verus  
 Haven't you heard what passed so near us?  
 Poor Icenius, don't you know  
 They carried him off three years ago?  
 Certain robbers called Antiquaries  
 Came and disturbed his quiet lares,  
 Bored his barrow, and stole, alas!  
 His urns and bottles, his bronze and glass;  
 His worship's chair that he used to sit in  
 At the quarter sessions for Eastern Britain,  
 His handsome funeral praefericulum,  
 His wife's new-fashioned enamel reticulum;  
 Bagged the whole, - it did not matter a  
 Pin, whether vase, or lamp, or patera.  
 Even his bones, though stripped of their clothing,  
 They took him away, and left him nothing.  
 All are gone, and the world may see 'em  
 Making a bow at the Maynard Museum.  
 And now I fear these folks intend  
 To rob you, too, my respected friend,  
 And following up their barbarous custom,  
 They've dug a hole to your very bustum;  
 And that's the reason, or I'm mistaken,  
 That you feel so bored, and so sadly shaken.  
 It is really hard that one's very age  
 Can't save one from prying fellows like Gage;



When one comes to one's ten of centuries, clearly  
One should not be treated so cavalierly;  
But since it is so, and the move's begun,  
I trust we shall meet when all is done.  
So when near Caius you're set on the shelf,  
Tell him I hope to be there myself,  
And say that the thing which I doubt the least on  
Is our coming together again at Easton<sup>1</sup>."

April 17, 1838

---

1 Easton Lodge, the seat of Viscount Maynard, the proprietor of Bartlow Hills.

The Last of the Bartlovians

by

William Whewell

(Source: Daubeny, 1869, 219-23).

Nobles and captains and colonels bold,  
 Together were met their Easter to hold;  
 Dames soft of speech and gentle of eye,  
 And learned clerks right grave and shy.  
 They dug them a hole in the lofty mound;  
 Things strange and ancient there they found.  
 They rusht to the Bartlow priest's<sup>1</sup> dejune,  
 And his fowls and his pasties vanisht soon.  
 Then back to the Baron's bower<sup>2</sup> they hied,  
 And they talkt of their doings with mirth and pride;  
 And when their various tale was said,  
 Above and below each sought his bed.

And just as the first deep sleep came on,  
 The clock in the turret struck loudly One,  
 And an iron foot was heard to go  
 In that gallery long, right heavy and slow;  
 Whether hither or thither no man could declare,  
 Or if upward or downward it marcht the stair;  
 But it seemed to approach to every door,  
 And beneath it creaked the chamber floor;  
 And each at his own bed-foot with awe  
 The last of the Bartlow Romans saw.  
 They knew him well by his toga's fall,  
 By his bloodless face, and his stature tall;

---

1 Rev. Mr. Bullen.

2 Audley End.

And his eye was full of reproach and pain,  
 And his voice was strange, but piercing and plain;  
 And each lady and lord on whose ear it fell,  
 Though Latin it was, understood it well;  
 And felt the bitter words as they rose,  
 And hid their heads in the folded clothes.

"Lady<sup>3</sup>: who have restless been,  
 Me disturbing and my kin;  
 Urging men to tease us thus,  
 Till you had seen the last of us; -  
 I'm the last, and I'm before ye,  
 But think not this ends the story!  
 Every Easter-Tuesday - mark -  
 You shall hear me in the dark.

"Noble lord and lady fair<sup>4</sup>:  
 We were your peculiar care;  
 All my friends - methinks I see 'em -  
 Lie in rows in your museum.  
 You believed, when you were told,  
 Roman soldiers, blunt and bold,  
 Honour great alike would get  
 In the field and cabinet.

But you'll soon discover, as I have a notion,  
 That we are not pleased with our promotion;  
 And from Easton's shelves you'll a groaning catch,  
 At the dark still hour of the midnight watch.

---

3 Lady Braybrooke.

4 Viscount and Viscountess Maynard.

"And you, Henricus and Carolus Neville,  
 Who took such delight in a deed so evil,  
 Is it not enough that your tongue you spoil,  
 But you dig our bones from the quiet soil?  
 Be sure that when next you attempt your verse  
 You shall feel the Bartlovian Roman's curse.  
 We will muddle your heads and will spoil your sport,  
 And your shorts shall be long, and your longs shall  
     be short;  
 And when you go back to Eton you'll get  
 What a Roman citizen never had yet.

"And Poet<sup>5</sup>: you who looked calmly on  
 While this vile prosaic deed was done;  
 And Lady<sup>6</sup>: you who stood smiling by -  
 Who have made his life to be poetry -  
 How could you see, I should like to know,  
 An old acquaintance treated so?  
 For you might have known, and have told it them,  
 That I fought at the siege of Jerusalem.  
 So the last of the Romans shall haunt you still,  
 Till you write your remorse with a poet's quill.

"Professors<sup>7</sup>, who deal in stocks and stones,  
 Who dig in ditches and grub for bones,  
 'Tis your wretched trade to do as you do,  
 And I never expected aught better of you.

---

5 Rev. H.H. Milman.

6 Mrs. Milman. An allusion to an expression used by Mr. Milman in the dedication of his poems.

7 Professors Whewell, Sedgwick, and Henslow.

But you Commanders<sup>8</sup> by land and by sea,  
 Had you no feeling for men like me?  
 How could you see, as a soldier, I crave,  
 Such insult done to a soldier's grave?

"But thou<sup>9</sup>, main cause of all this ill,  
 Persecutor of dead men still!  
 With pen and with pickaxe, as if in spite,  
 Bringing ancient heroes to modern light!  
 Shewing, in printed and painted pages,  
 Their sayings and doings to distant ages;  
 Ever busy to all to expose  
 Their houses and temples, their arms and clothes!  
 Antiquary! since nought can move thee,  
 See this sword which I wave above thee!  
 Less were the shame and less the sin  
 Hadst thou of equestrian order been;  
 So lie thou there five hours in a fright,  
 And rise in the morning a Barrow-knight."

---

8 Col. Berkeley Drummond; Capt. Hon. John Gordon, R.N.;  
 Capt. Hon. W.H. Percy, R.N.; Capt. Bowles, R.N.

9 J. Gage Rokewode, Esq., F.S.A.

Nugarum Bartlovianarum Epilogus

by

William Whewell

(Source: Daubeny, 1869, 224).

"Etiam periere ruinae."

"On ancient ruins newer ruin comes,  
And the tombs' tenants find yet other tombs;  
Those poor remains no longer now remain;  
The end is ended: Nought is there again."

Ye who have seen, as former times went by,  
Those old Bartlovian Hills with wondering eye,  
Wrapt in the darkest gloom of days of yore,  
And darker still with antiquarian lore;  
And ye, too, who have seen in later day  
That night of ages gradual rolled away,  
When, one by one, those old Bartlovian men  
Were dragged from long repose to light again,  
Will not the strain a shade of darkness cast  
That brings to you the story of the last?

Yet not unmarkt by portents strange and high  
Broke the last seal of that old mystery;  
Nor did that wondrous ending pass unsung.  
Here take the lyre's last notes - for ever now unstrung.



The barrow diggers. A dialogue in imitation of the grave diggers  
in Hamlet  
by  
Rev. C.A. Wools  
(Source: Wools, 1839)

### Introduction

Historians inform us that the practice of raising artificial mounds of Earth over the dead is of great Antiquity. Some of the Antient Heathens may indeed have affected to care little whether they were buried or not, and Christians in the hope of a Resurrection to eternal life may have lightly esteemed the threats of their Persecutors that they would deprive them of a grave; but still throughout all ages of the World there has been a religious or superstitious care respecting the interment of the Ashes or Bodies of the Dead.

### Sepulchrum Tumulus Signat

Triumphant Death, on his Pale Horse,<sup>1</sup>  
Hath boundless power to slay  
With Hunger, Sword, or sad Remorse,  
Whate'er returns to clay.

But still all Nature pleads in strains,  
Which touch the tender heart,  
Oh! spurn not, spurn not the remains  
Of those who've felt his dart!

A grave the Patriarchs demand,<sup>2</sup>  
As strangers for their Race;  
The Pyramids in Ægypt's land<sup>3</sup>  
Proclaim a resting place.

A Lofty Mound of Earth declares,  
 Where Alyattes lies;<sup>4</sup>  
 Patroclus with Achilles shares<sup>5</sup>  
 A Tomb, that Age defies.

The Britons,<sup>6</sup> Romans,<sup>7</sup> and the Danes,<sup>8</sup>  
 Inter'd their slain with care;  
 And who shall disregard their pains,  
 Or funeral rites impair?

For sacred are those spots of ground,<sup>9</sup>  
 Which to the Dead we give;  
 At the last day the Trump shall sound,<sup>10</sup>  
 And their Dry Bones shall live.<sup>11</sup>

## The Barrow Diggers

### Persons Represented

Antiquarius  
Discipulus

Three Barrow Diggers  
Lookers On

Scene. A Barrow<sup>12</sup> on a Common

Enter Three Barrow Diggers with Spades, Shovels, &c.

- 1st. Bar. Dig. Is this a Roman, or a British Barrow?<sup>13</sup>
- 2nd. Bar. Dig. I tell thee 'tis a British Barrow, therefore straightways open it;<sup>14</sup> Antiquarius hath set on it, and finds it British Burial.
- 1st. Bar. Dig. How can that be, if Roman Ornaments and Arms should here be found?
- 2nd. Bar. Dig. They may be found.<sup>15</sup>
- 1st. Bar. Dig. It must be Roman, it cannot be British Burial. For here lies the point; If Roman Arms and Ornaments are found in it, it argues a Roman Act; and a Barrow Act hath three Branches, to Act, to Dig, to Shovel; we go to work willingly.
- 3rd. Bar. Dig. Nay; but hear you good friend!
- 1st. Bar. Dig. Give me leave. Here is a Common; good; here is the Barrow; good; if the Barrow contains Roman Arms, or Urns, it must be a Roman Barrow; mark you that; but if spear heads made of flints, and British Arms are here, it must be a British Barrow; if nought but an empty Cist tumulus inanis.<sup>16</sup> He that is not inclined to dig, shortens not our work.
- 2nd. Bar. Dig. But is this Barrow Law?
- 1st. Bar. Dig. Ay, marry is't Antiquarius's Barrow Law.
- 2nd. Bar. Dig. Will you ha' the truth on't. If this had been a Roman relic of funeral pomp, it would have been a very different sort of Burial.<sup>17</sup> The Romans raised not Barrows o'er their Dead.<sup>18</sup>
- 1st. Bar. Dig. Why there thou say'st: and the more pity that great folks shall countenance the grandeur of gaudy funerals, more than their poorer neighbours. To my mind they are mighty like representations of Death carrying off his wealthy victims in Triumph. Come my spade. There are no antient gentlemen; but Gardeners, Geologists, and Barrow Diggers; they hold up Adams profession.
- 3rd. Bar. Dig. Was he a Gentleman?

1st. Bar. Dig. He was the first that ever bore Arms, a Mattoc, Shovel, and a Spade.

2nd. Bar. Dig. Why, he had none.

1st. Bar. Dig. What, art a heathen? How dost thou understand the Scripture? The Scripture says, Adam digged. Could he dig without arms? I'll put another question to thee; if thou answerest me not to the purpose, confess thyself.

3rd. Bar. Dig. Go to work.

After having taken an observation with a Compass, and marked out a Section, they commence opening the Barrow.

1st. Bar. Dig. What is that earthly form all skin and bone, which eludes the Sexton, the Mason, and the Carpenter?

2nd. Bar. Dig. The Living Skeleton,<sup>19</sup> for that fragile frame out-lives a thousand Harry's.

1st. Bar. Dig. Now where is he?

2nd. Bar. Dig. Eating Soup Maigre!

1st. Bar. Dig. Eating Soup Maigre! Where?

2nd. Bar. Dig. Not where fat Kings are eaten: a certain convocation of politic worms are e'en at them. Your worm is your only Emperor for diet: we fat all creatures else to fat us; and we fat ourselves for maggots: Your fat King and your lean Skeleton is but variable service: two dishes, but to one table that's the end.

1st. Bar. Dig. Alas! Alas! shall I feed worms when I am dead?<sup>20</sup>

2nd. Bar. Dig. Ay, and a living Skeleton may fish with the worm that hath eat of a King; and eat of the Fish that hath fed of that Worm.

1st. Bar. Dig. What dost thou mean by this?

2nd. Bar. Dig. Nothing; but to show you how a King may go a progress through the carcase of a living Skeleton.

1st. Bar. Dig. I like thy wit well in good Faith; To't again; Come, what is this Barrow?

2nd. Bar. Dig. Cudgel thy brains no more about it; for your dull ass will not mend his pace with beating: and when you are asked this question next say 'tis a British Barrow; a house that will last till doomsday. Go get thee to Shapwicke and fetch me a stoup of liquor.

1st. Bar. Dig. continues Digging and Sings.

Britons rais'd an earthy mound,<sup>21</sup>  
 Whene're their Chieftains died,<sup>22</sup>  
 And I am digging under ground,  
 Where delvers have not tried.

Antiquarius and Discipulus Enter.

Ant. Has this fellow no feeling of his business, he  
 sings at Barrow opening?

Dis. He knows not that he treads on hallow'd Mould!

Ant. Tis e'en so, the hand of Antiquaries only hath the  
 Barrow Sense.

1st. Bar. Dig. continues Digging and Sings.

Clasp's, Celts,<sup>23</sup> and Arrow-heads, I'll try  
 To claw within my Clutch,  
 And if a Shield I should espy,  
 I'll vow there ne'er was such.

With Popish Tricks,<sup>24</sup> and Relics rare,<sup>25</sup>  
 The Priests their Flocks do gull;  
 In casting out the earth take care,  
 Huzza! I've found a Skull.

Carefully takes up the Skull.

Ant. That skull had a tongue in it and could sing once. How  
 the knave jowls it to the ground, as if it were a slave's jaw-  
 bone or that of the first Murderer! That might be the pate of  
 a Druid,<sup>26</sup> which this ass now o'erreaches; one that would  
 gorge his Deities with human blood: might it not?

Dis. It might.

Ant. Or of a Warrior,<sup>27</sup> who could say kill and burn captives  
 to appease the Dead. Or a Chieftain that prais'd another  
 Chieftain's horse, when he meant to beg it.

Dis. Ay, Antiquarius! or it might be a Slave's!

Ant. Why e'en so; and now my lady Worm's chapless and  
 knocked about the mazzard with a Sexton's shovel. Here's fine  
 revolution an we had our spectacles to see't. Prodigious to  
 think on't.

1st. Bar. Dig. continues Digging and Sings.

A Mattoc, Shovel, and a Spade,  
Will dig up human bones;  
To play at Marbles<sup>28</sup> Britons made,  
Some small round Portland Stones.

If Casques we find, or iron Arms<sup>29</sup>  
Of curious form and make,  
Why surely they 're Roman charms,  
Your British Creed to shake.

Ant. Cease prattler cease! Why should they not be the  
Casques; Arms; or Bosses<sup>30</sup> of British Chieftains in Roman  
service? No golden filagree work nor carved ivory;<sup>31</sup> No  
Amethystine Beads, nor Chrystal Balls,<sup>32</sup> No Coins,<sup>33</sup> No  
Medals, No well-formed Urns,<sup>34</sup> nor colour'd Stones from  
Rome will here be found; but Tin, Glass,<sup>35</sup> or Amber Beads,<sup>36</sup>  
the Tusks of Boars, or Unbaked Urns<sup>37</sup> of rudely shape with  
limpet shells will denote 'tis a British Barrow.

1st. Bar. Dig. continues Digging, and comes to a Cist, and Sings.

This Cist<sup>38</sup> of chalk just like a grave  
For such a guest is meet,  
As if asleep here rests the brave,  
Below the Turf three feet.

Ant. How independent the knave is! we must speak by the card.  
By the little Lord, Discipulus, since the passing of the Reform  
and Municipal Bills, I have taken note of it; that the toe of the  
Democrat comes so near the heel of the Aristocrat, he galls his  
kibe. How long hast thou been a Barrow Digger?

1st. Bar. Dig. Of all the Ages of the World I came not to't in that  
Age when the whole Earth was in a state of Fusion.<sup>39</sup>

Ant. How long's that since?

1st. Bar. Dig. Cannot you tell that! Every Mechanic can tell that.  
It was that very day that young Pluto<sup>40</sup> was born: he that was a  
Geologist. He that gave a New System by Posting through the  
bowels of the Earth in his chariot drawn by four Horses.



Ant. Ay marry! how did he do that?

1st. Bar. Dig. With Lucifer Matches.

Ant. Why?

1st. Bar. Dig. Because he was mad after Proserpine!

Ant. How came he mad?

1st. Bar. Dig. Very strangely they do say.

Ant. How strangely?

1st. Bar. Dig. Faith e'en with loosing his wits.

Ant. Upon what ground?

1st. Bar. Dig. Why here upon this ground that's gradually elevating itself. Cant you perceive its motion upwards?<sup>41</sup> How dizzy I do feel!

Ant. Peace I pray you! How long will the jaws of a Leviathan<sup>42</sup> or the Bones of a Megatherium<sup>43</sup> lie in the earth e'er they crumble into dust.

1st. Bar. Dig. Faith if they be not fused in Pluto's crucible for many thousand years.

Ant. Good! But tell me again how long will a man lie i' the earth e'er he rot?

1st. Bar. Dig. Ay, Geology and Zoology like man and wife are one in the delvings of bone grubbers. If he be not rotten before he die, he will last you some Eight years, or Nine years, a Tanner will last you Nine years.

Ant. Why he more than another?

1st. Bar. Dig. Because, Antiquarius, his hide is so tanned with his trade, that he will keep out water a great while; and your water is a sore decayer of the dead body of your libertine. Here's a skull,<sup>44</sup> (Takes one from a Green Baize Bag.) I've chang'd or filch'd that hath passed through various hands for Nine and Seventy Years. By Bumps, and Lumps, I judge 'twas not a Murderer's. The Crowner's Quest did err. The finding should have been a harmless Slayer of man. Whose was it?

Ant. Nay, I know not.

1st. Bar. Dig. A pestilence on him for a Dominie that was gibbeted. Anxious to obtain a relic of the man, a learned Leech chopp'd off his head and pickled it.<sup>45</sup> This same skull was Eugene Aram's skull. "The Schoolmaster abroad."

Dis. Why may not that be the skull of one that opened Barrows?

1st. Bar. Dig. Where is the grave organ of Acquisitiveness? I smell it not.

Smells the Skull.

Dis. I'll taste it not. Thou art a Phrenological Nonpareil.

1st. Bar. Dig. By the feel, by the taste, by the smell, by all that's wonderful I vow that 'twas the skull of Eugene Aram.

Ant. This.

Takes the Skull.

1st. Bar. Dig. E'en that

Dis. That, that's a woman's skull!

1st. Bar. Dig. rests on his Spade, and Sings.

Now by that skull sage Inglis swore,  
That Spurzheim ranks with dolts,  
And Simpson thinks with Dr. Bore,  
That 'twas a dangerous colts.

While Granville, Knott and Dr. Fife,  
Th' Identity decry,  
Shrewd Hindmarsh says upon his Life,  
The Proofs he'll flat deny.

I learn from men, I learn from Books,  
That skulls are void of brains;  
Behold the print of iron hooks,  
And Eugene hung in chains.

Ant. Eugene Aram,<sup>46</sup> I've heard of him Discipulus. He was a Pedagogue and how abhorred in my imagination he is, my gorge rises at him. He received a Murderers judgment, and by that Name he died. He suffered for his crime at fifty four, his guilt or innocence is chronicled on high. His body has moulder'd into dust. Upon his skull no certain mark has been put except the mark of Cain. Faith I hold not with Phrenology. Surely this skull belong'd to one, who liv'd not Thirty Years. Now get you to my Lady Rosa, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick to this favor she must come at last, will she smile at that? Pry'thee, Discipulus, tell me one thing?

Dis. What's that Antiquarius?

Ant. Dost thou think Discipulus, the British Chieftain looked of this fashion i' the earth?

Dis. I do.

Ant. And smelt so earthy? Pah!

Returns the Skull to 1st. Bar. Dig.

Dis. Ee'n so Antiquarius.

Ant. To what quaint uses we may return Discipulus, the Unbaked Urn perchance contains the Noble Chieftain's ashes, and why may not imagination trace his dust 'till we find it stopping a Mouse-hole?

Dis. 'Twere to consider too curiously, to consider so.

Ant. No, Faith, not a jot, but to follow him thither with modesty enough, and likelihood to lead it, as thus. The Chieftain died. The Chieftain returneth to the Dust. The Dust is Earth, and why of that Earth whereto he was converted might not a Mouse-hole be stopped?

The British Chieftain dead, and turned to clay,  
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away,  
Oh! that the Earth, which kept vast Tribes in awe,  
Should strive in vain to check a Mouse's paw.

Dis. How oft to day,  
Have we consorted with the dead?

Ant. Peace to their Manes, hear me my good friend,  
That yonder Sun now scarcely lends his light  
To grubs and eyeless skulls.

Dis. Ee'n so Antiquarius.

Ant. How long have we been here?

Dis. Eight days.<sup>47</sup> No more be done!

1st. Bar. Dig. Must there no more be done?  
We've made an inverted Cone.<sup>48</sup>

Ant. No more be done,<sup>49</sup>

Respect sepulchral rites, inhume those bones  
Shards, Flints, and Earth replace, and heap up here  
A pile of dust upon the sleeping dead,  
Till of this flat a mountain you have made  
To o'er top old Badbury, and prepare  
To conduct our fair guides unto their homes.

The heavens do low'r upon us for ill  
Obey my mandate.

The Barrow Diggers commence closing the Barrow.

Dis. 'Tis cold Antiquarius.

Ant. 'Tis very cold, the wind is Northerly.

Dis. Your cloak to its right use; 'tis for the outer man.

Discipulus assists Antiquarius in cloaking.

Ant. Thank you Discipulus.

1st. Bar. Dig. To't again, Come.

2nd. Bar. Dig. Who builds stronger than a Mason, or a Carpenter?

1st. Bar. Dig. Ay! tell me that, and shovel away.

3rd. Bar. Dig. Marry now I can't tell.

2nd. Bar. Dig. A Cist maker.

Ant. Get you home womankind go!

1st. Bar. Dig. Shovels, and Sings.

Fairies dance round the mystic rings,  
In hare-bells oft they lie;  
To say that they are changing things,  
Oh! fie, Oh! Maro fie.

When secret fear our heart alarms,  
And cares the mind oppress;  
Then women with their playful charms  
Are quick to lend redress.

Ant. This Barrow Digger is a merry knave.

Dis. Come we'll not tarry, but carry off our Treasures, More  
Antiquorum.

2nd. Bar. Dig. Dust to Dust farewell.<sup>50</sup>

## Notes to the Barrow Diggers

### 1 Rev. c. 6. v. 8.

Behold a Pale Horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him, and power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

### 2 Gen. c. 23. v. 4.

Abraham stood up, from before his dead, and said, I am a stranger and sojourner with you: give me a possession of a burying place with you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight.

### Gen. c. 50. v. 5

My Father made me swear, saying, Lo, I die: in my grave which I have digged for me in the land of Canaan, there shalt thou bury me.

3 For whatever other purposes the pyramids were used, there can be very little doubt, but that they were designed for sepulchres. Cheops intended the largest pyramid, which was a work of twenty years, as a place of Burial for himself: and his Brother Chephren constructed a smaller one for the same purpose; but both of them when dying ordered their relations to bury them secretly lest their bodies should be taken from their tombs and cast to the dogs by those whom they had cruelly oppressed. The pyramids are merely a refined improvement of the original Barrows in Ægypt.

The group of the pyramids of Teotihuacan is in the valley of Mexico, eight leagues north-east from the capital, in a plain that bears the name of the Path of the Dead. There are two large pyramids dedicated to the Sun, and to the Moon; and these are surrounded by several hundred of small pyramids, which served according to the tradition of the natives as burial places for the Chiefs of the Tribes. Around the Cheops and the Mycerinus in Ægypt there are eight small pyramids, placed with symmetry, and parallel to the fronts of the greater.

4 Lydia boasts of one monument of art second to none, but those of the Ægyptians and Babylonians. It is the sepulchre of Alyattes the father of Cræsus. The foundation is composed of immense stones, the rest of the structure is a huge mound of earth. The edifice was raised by Merchants, Labourers, and Young Women. On the summit of this monument there remained within the remembrance of Herodotus five termini, upon which were inscriptions to ascertain the performance of each, and to intimate that the Women accomplished the greater part of the work. The circumference of the tomb is six furlongs and two plethra, the breadth thirteen plethra.

5        Arrived at Ida's spreadings woods,  
 (Fair Ida, water'd with descending floods)  
 Loud sounds the axe, redoubling strokes, on strokes;  
 On all sides round the forest hurls her oaks,  
 Headlong, deep echoing groan the thickets brown;  
 Then rustling, crackling, crashing, thunder down.  
 The wood the Grecians cleave, prepar'd to burn;  
 And the slow mules the same rough road return.  
 The sturdy woodmen equal burdens bore  
 (Such charge was given them) to the sandy shore;  
 There, on the spot, which great Achilles show'd,  
 They eas'd their shoulders, and dispos'd their load;  
 Circling around the place, where times to come,  
 Shall view Patroclus, and Achilles' tomb.

      The people to their ships return,  
 While those deputed to inter the slain  
 Heap with a rising pyramid the plain,  
 A hundred foot in length, a hundred wide,  
 The growing structure spreads on every side;  
 High on the top the manly corpse they lay,  
 And well fed sheep, and sable oxen slay:  
 Achilles cover'd with their fat the dead,  
 And the pil'd victims round the body spread;  
 Then jars of honey, and of fragrant oil,  
 Suspends around low bending o'er the pile.  
 Four sprightly coursers, with a deadly groan,  
 Pour forth their lives, and on the pyre are thrown,  
 Of nine large dogs, domestic at his board,  
 Fall two selected to attend their lord,  
 Then last of all and horrible to tell,  
 Sad sacrifice! twelve Trojan captives fell.  
 On these the rage of fire victorious preys,  
 Involves and joins them in one common blaze.



The structure crackles in the roaring fires,  
 And all the night the plenteous flame aspires.  
 All night Achilles hails Patroclus' soul,  
 With large libations from the golden bowl.  
 As a poor father helpless and undone,  
 Mourns o'er the ashes of an only son,  
 Takes a sad pleasure the last bones to burn,  
 And pours in tears, ere yet they close the Urn:  
 So stay'd Achilles, circling round the shore,  
 So watch'd the flames, till now they flame no more.  
 The Greeks obey; where yet the embers glow,  
 Wide o'er the pile the sable wine they throw,  
 And deep subsides the ashy heap below.  
 Next, the white bones his sad companions place,  
 With tears collected, in the golden vase.  
 The sacred relics to the tent they bore,  
 The Urn a veil of linen cover'd o'er,  
 That done, they bid the sepulchre aspire,  
 And cast the deep foundation round the pyre;  
 High in the midst they heap the swelling bed  
 Of rising earth, memorial of the dead.

6 The Antient Britons not only burned, but buried their dead. They generally heaped up mounds of earth over the bodies or ashes of their most distinguished dead. It is uncertain when the use of coffins was introduced into this country. From the following passage of Mr. Strutt, it appears that from very remote times, our ancestors were interred in some kind of coffin. It was customary in the Christian Burials of the Anglo-Saxons to leave the head and shoulders of the corpse uncovered till the time of burial, that relations and friends might take a last view of the deceased.

In digging the foundation of St. Pauls, the excavators first found deep under the graves of the later ages, and in a row below them the burial places of the Saxon times. The graves were either lined with chalk or stone, and there were some stone coffins. Again, below these were discovered Roman Urns, and many British interments, in the latter of which were found numbers of Pins of Ivory, and hard Wood, seemingly Box, about six inches long.

7 The Romans had a peculiar Deity to preside over funerals, which were chiefly of two kinds, Public, Indicativum; Private, Tacitum. When the body was burnt and buried, it was called Bustum; but if the body was not burnt, it was with all its ornaments put into a coffin, or sarcophagus.

8 The Danes buried their dead. Most of their Kings, and great men were buried in abbeys, and in the precincts of religious houses. The bones of many of them are still preserved in chests, in Winchester Cathedral.

9 That seems to me (says Cicero) to have been the most antient kind of burial, which according to Xenophon was used by Cyrus, for the body is returned to the earth, and so placed as to be covered with the veil of its Mother. Wherever Paganism was extirpated the custom of burning was disused, and the first natural way of burying the bodies of the deceased entire in the grave, prevailed in the room of it.

10 1. Cor. 15. 52.

The trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall all be changed.

11 Ezekiel Chap. 37. from verse 1. to 11. beautifully answers the question, shall these bones rise again? which was actually asked by a labourer engaged in opening a Barrow?

12 Barrows are artificial heaps of earth and sods of turf, and are sometimes surrounded with a narrow trench. They were generally placed on elevated situations probably so that the surrounding tribes, far and wide, might see and participate in the funeral rites, which were performed on the sacrificial pile.

They were reared by the first settlers in every Country, and afford the only insight we have into the History of the Antient Britons. Antiquaries, all agree in admitting that they were raised for sepulchral interments; but Stackhouse has raised a new and exceedingly ingenious hypothesis concerning them. He writes that British Barrows, at least those in the Western Counties, when taken collectively exhibit the most complete system of vigilatory and communicating points that perhaps ever did or ever will exist; they are like so many mirrors placed with such optical skill and accuracy that they conduct the visual ray from point to point through all the windings and recesses of those circuitous dells, which they are evidently intended to overlook. That the Gauls from whom the Britons descended had amongst them a regular system of speedy communication is plain from Caesar, they convey intelligence, says he, with great celerity through the fields and cantons by shouting with all their might, thus the intelligence is communicated from one to another, so that what happened at Orleans at sun rise, was known at Auvergne before nine

in the evening, though the one place is one hundred and sixty miles from the other.

This shouting was certainly not addressed to casual or chance auditors, but to persons regularly stationed for the express purpose, otherwise these despatches must have been liable to considerable interruption and delay.

To this end and to a much more speedy communication Barrows are admirably adapted as must be obvious to any one, who shall examine them with this view.

Sir R. C. Hoare has arranged the principal Barrows, which he has opened in Wilts and Dorset, under five heads.

The Long Barrow which generally produces skeletons without Arms or Urns.

The Bowl shaped Barrow.

The Bell shaped being moulded in the shape of a Bell, and surrounded by a trench or vallum.

The Female Barrow because in it are found beads and other small ornaments appropriate to women.

The Pond Barrow. The origin and history of which has never been proved, nor will it until an entire area has been turned up.

Twin Barrows. When two artificial mounds of earth adjoin each other or are closely united together at their base, they are so called.

The Barrows in the County of Dorset are amongst the most antient in Britain, and are generally situated on elevated ground. The most remarkable are Shipton Hill between Bridport and Dorchester, seven hundred and forty nine feet in length, one hundred and sixty one feet in breadth, and one hundred and forty seven feet high. Long Barrow near Pimperne, two hundred and twenty four feet long, ten feet high. Great Barrow near Wareham, one hundred feet in diameter and twelve feet high. Deverel Barrow, diameter fifty four feet at the base, twelve feet high. Nine Barrow Down, small round Barrows which vary in size. The Bowl shaped Barrows are most commonly to be met with, about eight feet high, fifty feet in diameter, and one hundred and sixty feet in circumference.

The inside of Barrows are different in their structure, but when they are regular in their formation they consist of a coat of turf, broken chalk interspersed with fine gravel two feet, a layer of fine mould one foot, flints carefully arranged in a conical form three feet, a stratum of rich black loam with a white mouldiness between the particles, underneath this a cist cut in the chalk to the depth of three, four, or six feet.

On the twenty eighth of September eighteen hundred and thirty eight, a Barrow seven feet high, forty five feet in diameter, and one hundred and sixty five feet in circumference, was opened on Littleton Down, near Blandford. The various strata of which it was composed, were arranged in the following order. Vegetable loam four inches deep, broken chalk mixed with fine gravel and brown mould two feet, crusted chalk marl much decomposed and having a mouldy appearance. Black unctious mould surrounding and covering an Urn eighteen inches. A wall of flints forming a circle round the mould to protect an Urn, which stood on a thin layer of clay on chalk. A layer of dark brown earth formed a cone over the mould and flint wall. This latter circumstance is rather unusual, and it is not improbable that a piece of wood originally supported the rude arch of earth.

On the fourth of October, another Barrow was examined on the same Down with a similar result, but at the depth of five feet below the surface of it, a pyramidal heap of flints four and a half feet high, terminating in a single flint presented itself, and in the centre of the flints, an Urn surrounded by ashes was discovered in a cist.

The loam so constantly met with in Barrows must have been a compost of different kinds of mould, and decayed vegetable matter, strewed over the remains of the dead in these antient sepulchres; for it is totally unlike the earth that constitutes the natural soil around them. The chalk used in the different layers contains a less portion of carbonate of lime in it than that which has not been disturbed, from the circumstance of the former having been removed and exposed to atmospheric agency. Round stones also that had been worked smooth by the action of the sea, and which had been apparently brought from the adjacent shore, were found at the bottom of a Barrow near East Lulworth.

In the Barrows which have been opened in Dorsetshire, the modes of interment were various; but the deposits in the Deverel Barrow have been pronounced by Sir R.C. Hoare, to be unique and unexampled in this island. That eminent Antiquarian mentions in his *tumuli Wiltunenses* four distinct kinds of burial in Wilts, and there are certainly not less in Dorset.

For there is the skeleton with the legs and knees gathered up to the chin, the thighs crossed and the left arm doubled up on the breast evidently by design. The skeleton extended at full length with the head turned toward the right shoulder, the right arm bent and laid across the breast. The skeleton laid from north to south, and immediately under it another skeleton laid from east to west. The skeleton scarcely below the surface of the tumulus, and the Urn containing the ashes of the dead in a cist beneath it. There are two, three, or four skeletons deposited together in different positions. Again, there is the body burnt, and the bones and ashes placed within an Urn, and covered sometimes by a linen cloth fastened by a small brass pin. The mouth of the Urn being upwards and occasionally protected by flat flints or limpet shells. And there is the same form of interment with this difference, that the Urn is inverted over the ashes.



But above all in the Deverel Barrow there was every method of interment, which had been followed after cremation had been used, for although each corpse had been consumed by fire the ashes were variously deposited. In that productive Barrow, W.A. Miles Esq. found seventeen Urns in cists under stones, and four Urns on the natural soil enclosed in a rude kind of arch composed of flints, making twenty one burials in Urns. In the interior of a semicircle formed by stones he found five cists, which having been cut in the chalk contained burnt human bones without any Urn or protecting stone; and in four instances he discovered on the floor of the Barrow, bones collected in a heap with charcoal, making a total of thirty one interments. An inexplicable regularity attended the placing of these singular relics and the greater number were confined to the eastern extremity, probably as a mark of distinction. Some Urns were protected by three stones; but the singularity of this Barrow consisted in the curious assemblage of the stones. They appeared to be a species of compact sand stone, slightly tinged in some instances, as if by the ferruginous action of some portion of its composition. These stones are probably indigenous having the character of those, which are common to the surface of chalk. Their name is dry wethers.

Sir R.C. Hoare conjectures that this Barrow was raised for a family or general deposit, and that it must have been frequently opened to receive the interments.

The articles deposited in Barrows together with the skeleton or ashes of the dead, were those which were esteemed the most valuable to them in life, and this custom is of very antient origin. An early instance of it is mentioned by Herodotus, who relates that Mycerinus having lost his only child and daughter, her death exceedingly afflicted him, and wishing to honor her remains with more than ordinary splendour he enclosed her body in an heifer made of wood and richly ornamented with gold. Indeed in the first ages the practice prevailed to a great extent, especially amongst the most uncivilized nations. Cæsar informs us that not only ornaments, but slaves and clients were thrown into the funeral pile by the Gauls, and as the Britons used the same religious rites it is not surprising that in Barrows are found burnt human bones, Urns, Charcoal, fragments of unbaked Clay, Spear and Arrow Heads of flint, Hammers, and Celts of Stone, Pebbles, Iron and Brass, Armillæ of Ivory, Knives of flint, and unwrought Iron, Beads of blue Glass, Amber, Rings of metal like Tin, Buckles with thorn Tongues, Brass Pins, Brazen Daggers gilt, Stone Hatchets and Axes, Whet Stones, Ivory Skewers, Wire Ornaments set in Gold, gold Chains, thin and pure Gold, Jet, vitrified Beads, Bracelets of bone, Stags Horns of a large size, skeletons of Dogs, bones and teeth of Horses, (but few of Sheep or other cattle,) and small bones of Birds and Mice.

The contents of Barrows must not be judged by their forms. Some Antiquaries prefer to open the Bell-shaped Barrow with a trench around it. Others again select the low tumulus for examination; both at times are equally disappointed, and both at times are equally successful in their operations. Undoubtedly those tumuli are the most antient in which only ashes, or the coarsest Urns are found.

The conical shape of Barrows, their exposure to the dry air on elevated chalky soils, the turf that covers them being interlaced with small fibres, which absorb the rain or dew that descends upon them, reasonably account for the high state of preservation in which many of the Skeletons are found in the Barrows on the Downs of Dorset.

13 The Britons, adopting a similarity of usage with those nations in the east whence they migrated, reared Barrows in this Country long prior to the coming of the Romans; for the Danes and Saxons during their predatory visits could not have stayed long enough in one place to have erected such regular works, which bear internal evidence of their having been raised in time of peace. And all the discoveries that have been made with regard to the interment of the Romans prove that they have had no connection with Barrows, and there is nothing even like them near their sepulchres, stations, or encampments, nor are any to be seen in Italy or Etruria. It is also a remarkable circumstance that about a mile from Woodyates lane end, the Roman road passes over part of a Barrow. Consistently says King, with the idea of these tumuli being British, we find that in Cornwall, to which part of the Island so many of the Britons retired in order to secure themselves finally from the Roman Arms, Barrows of a similar kind exceedingly abound.

I consider, says Sir R. C. Hoare, the tumulus or Barrow as the most simple memorial of the mighty dead, and that Barrows were devoted to the interment of those distinguished Britons whose residences were fixed in the earliest times upon our open Down.

14 The way to open a Barrow, is either to remove the mound of earth entirely, or to make a section through it at least six or eight feet wide from north to south, or from east to west, or to sink a shaft down the centre from top to bottom. Sir R. C. Hoare, invariably adhered to the latter mode with a desire not to injure the external form. The greatest caution should be used in removing the earth, especially when charcoal and fragments of pottery appear intermingled with it; for it not unfrequently happens that relics or interments are found near the surface, or round the outsides of a Barrow. With respect to the deposits, Mr. Cunnington, first discovered and established contrary to the theory of Dr. Stukely, that the primary interment is always on the floor of a Barrow or in a cist dug in the chalk beneath it. In one instance Sir R. C. Hoare, after immense labour found a simple interment of burnt bones at the depth of fifteen feet. The interments are generally found about two, three, four, five or six feet below the surface of the natural soil. When a wall or heap of flints closely



arranged together present themselves, they should be removed with the hand, because a pick-axe, crow-bar, or spade at such a crisis has often destroyed an Urn, by making an irruption into the cist. On arriving at the cist, the operations should be conducted slowly around its edge either with a trowel or a knife. Want of success at first should never terminate in abandoning a Barrow until it has been thoroughly examined. Sir R.C. Hoare, found some of his greatest treasures in a Barrow, which had been previously opened, first by Mr. Cunnington, and afterwards by some farmers in the neighbourhood without success. Amongst other ornaments in this Barrow he discovered the handle of a spear or dagger, which he declared exceeded in execution any thing he had ever seen. Mr. Cunnington, also made many important discoveries in Barrows which had been opened by Dr. Stukely. W.A. Miles Esq. in his most successful examination of the Deverel Barrow, says, while I was considering whether to proceed, *spemque metumque inter dubius*, I perceived the quantity of earth (which presented a mixture of pottery and charcoal, and flints indicating the action of fire) to diminish, and a bed of flints appear. This induced me to proceed. I found however that they extended no depth towards the centre, and still less towards the east, the chief part appeared towards the west of the tumulus, and after having advanced in that direction about four feet three Urns presented themselves. A compass and line are exceedingly useful, and a pick-axe, shovel, spade, trowel, and a knife (blade seven inches by two in the widest part, handle five inches,) are the best implements to be used in opening a Barrow.

15 Where Roman Insignia have been found in Barrows, or Barrows were raised in Roman times, there is every reason to believe that they were the sepulchres of British Officers, in Roman Service.

16 The Romans raised a tumulus *inanis*, or an empty tomb, to the memory of their friends when their bodies could not be found.

17 A Roman interment of the body was accompanied with the same ceremonies as are usually found with the Urn, which contained the ashes, a striking proof that the vessels which accompanied cremation were deposited with the body buried entire. Douglas thus describes a Roman grave found on the continent. The body was placed in a tomb; a stone at the head one foot long. and half a foot broad; D. M. M. (*Dis Manibus Memoriae*) inscribed on it; a glass vessel called by Petavius, a lacrymal, a spoon, a brass armilla on the great bone of the arm, a Samian red vessel with the inscription of the maker and brass coins near the right hand, together with vessels of common earth. Guichard says that on the interment of the unchaste vestals, they were entombed with a lamp, a little bread, three pots of water, milk and oil; as this is part of the rites of the *inferiæ*, it was doubtless adopted in the sepulchral ceremonies of other individuals especially as it is common to find lamps interred

with vessels suitable to the above purposes, in many Roman interments. Muret, no bad evidence on the funerals of the Romans, says, a perpetual lamp, small vessels full of several sorts of drink, viands, and a piece of money were interred with them, and modern discoveries in Roman tombs authenticate the same. A small coin triens or obolus was put in the mouth of the deceased, which he might give to Charon, as his freight, for without it, it was thought that a soul could not purchase a lodging.

18 The only certain instance of a mound having been raised by the Romans over the slain, even after a battle, is that mentioned by Tacitus. Six years, says he, had elapsed since the overthrow of Varus, and now on the same spot the Roman army collected the bones of their slaughtered countrymen. Whether they were burying the remains of strangers or of their own friends no man knew; all however considered themselves as performing the last obsequies to their kindred and their brother soldiers. While employed in this pious office, their hearts were torn with contending passions, by turns oppressed with grief and burning with revenge; a monument to the memory of the dead was raised with turf; and Germanicus with his own hand laid the first sod, discharging at once the tribute due to the legions, and sympathizing with the rest of the army.

19 The frenchman who exhibited himself in London a few years ago, as a living skeleton. The *Moniteur Parisien* has also recently recorded the death of a woman named Marie Priou, which happened in the environs of St. Beal in the Haute Garonne, at the patriarchal age of one hundred and fifty eight years. It says she retained her faculties to the last, although her corpse when dead weighed only forty two pound, her flesh being gone her skin adhered to her bones like parchment.

20 The Egyptians thought it unlawful to expose the bodies of the dead to any animals and therefore embalmed them fearing that they might become the prey of worms after interment. Embalmers were appointed by law, and when a dead body was brought to them they exhibited to the friends of the deceased different models highly finished in wood. The most perfect was very expensive. The second was of less price and inferior in point of execution. The third was still more mean. They then inquired after which model the deceased was to be represented, when the price was determined the relations retired, and the embalmers proceeded.

21 From the want of Literary records the history of the antient Britons is lost in darkness. When Caesar resolved to pass over into Britain he called together the merchants from all parts; but they could neither inform him of the largeness of the Island, nor what nor how powerful the nations were that inhabited it, nor of their customs, art of war, nor the harbours fit to receive large ships, he therefore sent Volusenus with a galley to gain some knowledge of these things.

Shortly after his return Cæsar landed in Britain, and having put to flight the natives retired to Gaul.

Upon his arrival in Britain the second time, he found the forces of the Inhabitants greatly increased, but he again defeated them in various encounters.

The inland parts of the Island were inhabited by those, whom fame reported to be the natives of the soil. The sea coast was peopled by the Belgians. The Island was well inhabited and full of houses, built after the manner of the Gauls, and abounded in cattle. The Britons used brass money, and iron rings of a certain weight. The provinces remote from the sea produced tin, and those upon the coast iron; but the latter in no great quantity. Their brass was all imported. All kinds of wood grew in Britain the same as in Gaul, except the fir and the beech tree. They thought it unlawful to feed upon hares, pullets, or geese, yet they bred them up for their diversion and pleasure. They had a particular species of dogs most excellent for hunting, and so fierce that they used them in war. The inhabitants of Kent were the most civilized of all the Britons, and differed but little in their manner from the Gauls. The greater part of those within the Country never sowed their lands, but lived on flesh, and went clad in skins. All the Britons in general painted themselves with woad, which gave a blueish cast to the skin and made them look dreadful in battle. They had intrepid countenances, were brave, tall, long haired, and shaved all the rest of the body except the head and the upper lip.

Their Capital was situated amidst woods and marshes whither great numbers of men and cattle retired. Their towns were nothing more than a thick wood fortified with a ditch and rampart to serve as a place of retreat against the incursions of their enemies, for having fenced round a wide circular space there they fixed stalls for their cattle, and placed their huts which were constructed of wood, reeds, or wattled work with high coverings supported by a pole in the centre.

Their religious rites were the same as those of the Gauls, who originally derived them from the Britons.

In war they guided their chariots on all sides insomuch that by the very terror of the horses and noise of the wheels they often broke the ranks of the enemy. When they had forced their way into the midst of the cavalry they quitted their chariots and fought on foot. Meantime the drivers retired a little from the combat and placed themselves in such a manner as to favor the retreat of their countrymen should they be overpowered by the enemy. Thus in action they performed the part of nimble horsemen, and stable infantry, and by continual exercise and use, arrived at such expertness that in the most steep and difficult places they could stop their horses upon a full stretch, turn them which way they pleased, run along the pole, rest on the harness, and throw themselves back into their chariots with incredible dexterity.



The Britons had neither breast plates, nor helmets. Their shields were varied with particular marks and colours, and were as tall as a man. They had a long two-handed sword hanging by a chain on the right side, and a sort of missile wooden instrument like a javelin. They sometimes went into the field of battle naked, and had chains of iron wreathed round their necks and loins.

To reward the conqueror Britain contained mines of gold, silver and other metals. The sea produced pearls of an inferior size and of a dark hue tinged on the surface with a colour resembling gold, and less transparent than the Indians. With the hope of enriching himself with these, Cæsar invaded the Island.

From these accounts extracted from the works of Cæsar, Tacitus, Strabo, and Diodorus Siculus, it is apparent that the greater part of the Inhabitants of Britain were in the rudest state of barbarism when Cæsar arrived in this Country about fifty seven years before the christian æra. And the observation of Larcher, that barbarous nations have customs like themselves and that these customs much resemble each other in nations, which have no communication is strikingly verified in the early history of the Scythians and antient Britons; for whoever will take the trouble to compare the mode of life, habits, manners, and religious customs of the Scythians, as they are developed by Herodotus, with those of the antient Britons, will perceive a resemblance, which places the fact beyond the cavils of the sceptic.

It is uncertain from what source the Britons primarily derived their origin, but according to Douglas, the Scythians peopled Germany, Scandinavia, and a great part of Gaul, five hundred years before Christ, and the Belgæ of the same stock entered Britain and Ireland about three hundred years before the christian æra. It is however probable from their contents that many of the Barrows in this country were raised at least three or four centuries before Christ, and many others at a much earlier period.

How interesting then is the examination of Barrows when connected with investigations concerning the History of the first Inhabitants of this Island, for while historians relate that the early Britons led a pastoral life, and were in a state of barbarism, do not the subterranean researches of Antiquaries confirm and throw a light on these records, and cast a halo of interest around them?

Has not Sir R. C. Hoare discovered the modes of interment which were adopted, and the rude implements of bone, flint and stone, which were used, by the antient Britons evidently while they were shrouded in the ignorance of barbarism?

Has not Mr. Cunnington laid bare some of the spots, which the antient Britons selected for their cheerless habitations?

Has not The Rev. James Douglas demonstrated by the discoveries he made in the Barrows of Kent, that its Inhabitants were more civilized than those in the County of Dorset, and that their communications were more frequent with other nations?

And here I will not presume to assert that my answer to the question so often asked in vain by Sir R. C. Hoare, "Where did they get their water, as many of their settlements were far distant from any river?" is satisfactory; but I will suggest that when their towns, "which were frequently situated in marshy or swampy places," were not near a river or spring of water, they obtained it by making swallow pits, or by digging wells; for the great number of men and cattle, "which retired to their towns when the enemy approached," could not have subsisted without water. In addition to which neither Cæsar nor Tacitus, mention it as a matter of history, nor complaint, that water was obtained with difficulty, and this they surely would have stated had there been a scarcity. Besides the sinking of wells is a very antient practice.

Do we not read in Gen. c. 26. v. 18. that Isaac digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham; for the Philistines had stopped them. And in Gen. c. 29. v. 10. that Jacob went near and rolled the stone from the wells mouth and watered the flock of Laban his master?

Does not Herodotus inform us that the Scythians filled up the wells and fountains, which lay in the way of Darius. And does not Niebuhr state that the wells in the east are very deep many of them being from one hundred and sixty to one hundred and seventy feet?

Why then should there be any doubt whence the antient Britons supplied themselves and their cattle with water when their settlements were remote from rivers and were situated on elevated Downs?

22 Barrows could not have been the ordinary places of burial for the people at large, for although the skeletons of women, adults, and children are found in them, as well as those of men, yet the number in this kingdom are inadequate to the population, which was very great; therefore it is probable they were the sepulchres of the more distinguished dead both male and female. When I reflect, says Sir R. C. Hoare, on the very great population which once existed on our Hills and Downs, I can never believe that the Barrow was the general and only sepulchral deposit of that population, and from the result of long and laborious researches on this subject I have every reason to suppose that after the coming of the Romans the Barrow was discontinued, at least in the western district of our Island. I am led to this conclusion from never having found a single Urn of Roman well baked pottery within a Barrow, whereas every British village abounds in fragments of the beautiful earthenware so peculiar to that nation.

23 The instruments called Celts whether in the shape of a gouge, chisel, sword, or hatchet, belonged to an early people and are to be met with in Britain, Ireland, and all over Europe. Some are of stone, others are of a mixed metal uncommonly hard, and the Earl of Falmouth had in his collection a golden Celt, which was found in Cornwall. It was as large as the ordinary bronze Celts and of precisely the same form. Many Celts have sockets, which are well adapted for the head of staffs, and in a few instances they have been discovered in cases of metal. Doubtless they were so protected to preserve their edges from injury.

Sir Joseph Banks conjectures that the loops attached to Celts were used to bind them more firmly to handles of wood, and Mr. Douglas, in his dissertation on Celts observes, that when Celts have been found in shapes apparently fitted for mechanical works and with weapons of warlike forms that they have been used for such purposes. He also illustrates the use of the loop that is fixed to those Celts in the shape of a chisel by supposing that as they have been found with military implements they were used by the soldiers for works of art, and would be secured to his person as an appendage; while the defensive or offensive weapon would be disengaged and ready for execution.

With propriety therefore we may conclude that Celts were not only imported, but fabricated by the Britons or Romans in this Island according to their different qualifications for warlike, mechanical, or sepulchral purposes.

It may not be uninteresting to add that the Rev. E. Duke remembers a native officer from Guzerat, who, while he was staying at Sir C. Mallets, always carried a metal Celt about with him wherever he went. It was like a hatchet with a short handle and generally reclined on his arm.

24 The trick and imposition of the liquefaction of the congealed blood of St. Januarius performed annually at Naples on the festival of that Saint is ably exposed by Bishop Douglas in his Criterion or Rules by which the true miracles recorded in the New Testament are distinguished from the spurious miracles of Pagans and Papists. An itinerant chemist some years ago entertained Protestants in London with the same feat for the small price of one shilling.

Dehinc Gnatia lymphis

Iratis extracta dedit, risusque, jocosque,

Dum flamma sine, thura liquescere limine sacro

Persuadere cupit, credat Judæus appella

Non ego!



25 Prince Christopher of Radzivil, having taken a journey to Rome, out of devotion, the Pope at his departure made him a present of a Box of relics, which on his return to Poland became famous in all that country. Some months after when the Prince was talking of what he had seen effected by them and boasting of their virtue, one of his gentlemen smiled and after many promises of forgiveness ingeniously told him, that in their return from Rome he had unhappily left the Box of relics behind, but for fear of his anger had caused another to be made as like as possible to the true one, which he had filled with all the bones and other trinkets that he could meet with, and that this was the Box, which the Monks made him believe had performed the miracles!!

26 The Druids presided in matters of religion, had the care of public and private sacrifices, and interpreted the will of the Gods. They had the direction and education of the youth by whom they were held in great honor. In almost all controversies whether public or private the decision was left to them; and if any crime was committed, any murder perpetrated, if any dispute arose touching an inheritance, or the limits of adjoining estates, in all such cases they were the supreme judges. They decreed rewards and punishments and if any one refused to submit to their sentence whether magistrate or private man they interdicted him the sacrifices, which was the greatest of all punishments.

The Druids were all under one chief, who possessed supreme authority in that body. Upon his death if any one remarkable excelled the rest he succeeded, but if there were several candidates of equal merit, the affair was determined by plurality of suffrages. Sometimes they even had recourse to arms before the election **could be brought** to an issue. Once a year they assembled at a consecrated place, hither such as had any suits depending flocked from all parts, and submitted implicitly to their decrees. The Gauls derived their Druidical institutions from Britain, and such as were desirous of being perfect in them came thither for instruction.

The Druids never went to war, were exempted from taxes and military services and enjoyed all manner of immunities. These mighty encouragements induced multitudes of their own accord to follow that profession, and many were devoted to it by their parents and relations. They were taught to repeat a number of verses by heart and often spent twenty years upon Druidical institutions, for it was deemed unlawful to commit their statutes to writing, though in other matters whether public or private they made use of Greek characters. In the opinion of Cæsar, They followed this method for two reasons, to hide their mysteries from the knowledge of the vulgar, and to exercise the memory of their scholars, which would have been neglected had they had letters to trust to. It was one of their principal maxims that the soul never dies, but after

death passed from one body to another; which they thought contributed greatly to exalt men's courage by disarming death of its terrors. They taught likewise many things relating to the stars and their motions, the magnitude of the world and our earth, the nature of things, and the power and the prerogatives of the immortal Gods.

In threatening distempers and the imminent dangers of war the Gauls who were addicted to superstition made no scruple to sacrifice men or engage themselves by vow to such sacrifices, in which they made use of the ministry of the Druids; for it was a prevalent opinion among them that nothing but the life of man could atone for the life of man, insomuch that they established even public sacrifices of that kind. Some prepared huge Colossuses of osier twigs, into which they put men alive and setting fire to them those within expired amidst the flames. They preferred for victims such as had been convicted of theft, robbery or other crimes, believing them to be the most acceptable to the Gods; but when real criminals were wanting the innocent were often made to suffer.

Mercury was the chief Deity with them, of him they had many images. They accounted him the inventor of all arts, their guide and conductor in their journeys and the patron of merchandise and gain.

The Ægyptian Mercury was named Thoth or Theuth. The Grecian Hermes. The Phœnician Taute. The Celtic Teute.

In his *Hermes Britannicus* the Rev. L. Bowles says, Druidical discipline in Gaul and Britain was the same no one can deny, who admits on the authority of Cæsar, that the youth of Gaul were sent into Britain as to a school most antient and hallowed to be instructed in those rites.

That the fact was such may be presumed from the position and situation of Britain being an Island to which, as we may know from undoubted history, in the earliest ages the Phœnicians traded for Tin. When we consider moreover the many circumstances, which point out a resemblance in the Druidical rites to those of oriental regions, we shall hardly be disposed to believe that such discipline or rites originated with the rude and barbarous inhabitants of a country severed from the more cultivated parts of the globe; the "*Penitus divisos orbe Britannos*." This seems to me impossible and therefore I have no hesitation to ascribe original Druidical discipline and rites, as established in Britain, to the strangers and traders from those regions where science and knowledge first arose. As to the Gauls resorting to Britain to be instructed in those rites we have the concurrent testimony both of Cæsar and Pliny, and on such authority we may be justified in presuming that the knowledge of the Deity, whom Cæsar calls Mercury was introduced into Celtic Britain at a very early æra from some communication with the East.

In his *Antiquities of Dorset* Sir R. C. Hoare thus describes the remains of a Druidical temple and a Cromlech called the Grey Mare and her Colts, at Gorwell, in the Parish of Litton Dorset. The Downs of Dorset have certainly been the scene of the mysterious rites of the Druids, and perhaps of their last struggle with the Romans. Though little now remains of the Temple at Gorbury except the mere basis of the upright stones, it was of greater extent than any hitherto noticed in the County, one stone only and that in a very mutilated state is at present standing, the rest have all been thrown down evidently by design, and broken to pieces. The fragments which remain form a circle of between seventy and eighty feet in diameter. There are no traces of an exterior circle. The entrance was probably on the east side. The stones consist of very close and solid masses of conglutinated flints, of the same nature and texture with the crags which project from the side of the Hills above the Town of Abbotsbury. Upon the same plain nearly opposite to what we may suppose to have been the entrance of the Temple, and only a short distance from it are several other large rude stones, which appear to be the remains of a Cromlech. From their situation we may reasonably conjecture that they were an appendage to the temple, and perhaps an altar upon which the Druids consumed their bloody and inhuman sacrifices. These stones command a fine view of Abbotsbury encampment to the west, and beyond that of the sea and bold cliffs on the coast of Dorset and Devon.

The peculiar fitness of the situation for the purpose of Druidical worship and superstition, the extensive horizon and elevated plain "for astronomical observations" surrounded by deep and almost impervious valleys abounding with their favorite oak, may lead us to suppose that this place was of considerable note amongst the Druids.

27 The funerals of the Gauls were magnificent according to their quality every thing that was dear to the deceased even animals were thrown into the pile, and formerly such of their slaves and clients as they loved most sacrificed themselves at the funerals of their Lord.

Herodotus mentions that the Scythians after having transported their dead through the different provinces of the kingdom came at last to the Gerrhi amongst whom the sepulchres were. There the corpse was placed on a couch, round which daggers were fixed, upon the whole were disposed pieces of wood covered with branches of willow. In some part of this trench they buried one of the deceased's female attendants whom they previously strangled together with the baker, the cook, the groom, his most confidential servant, his horses, the choicest of his effects, and finally some golden goblets, for they possess neither silver nor brass, to conclude all they fill up the trench with earth and seem to be emulous in their endeavours to raise as high a mound as possible.

Human sacrifices were also offered among the Romans in the first



ages of the Republic. Mankind says Pliny are under inexpressible obligations to the Romans for abolishing so horrid a practice. We read however of two men, who were slain as victims with the usual solemnities in the Campus Martius by the Pontifices and Flamen of Mars, as late as the time of Julius Cæsar. Whence it is supposed that the decree of the Senate mentioned by Pliny, respected only private and magical sacred rites. Humboldt adds, history proves that the barbarous custom of human sacrifices was preserved for a length of time among the nations most advanced in civilization. The paintings found in the tombs of the King's at Thebes leave no doubt, that these sacrifices were habitual among the Ægyptians. In India the Goddess Cali required human victims as Saturn exacted them at Carthage. At Rome after the battle of Cannæ two Gauls a male and female were buried alive and the Emperor Claudius was obliged to forbid by an express decree the sacrifice of men in the Roman Empire

28 In a Barrow opened near Lulworth Mr. Milner found small round stones of the Portland kind not larger than children's marbles.

29 The Romans were equipped with bow-strings, javelins, and a sword pointed and sharp edged, a buckler and a helmet. The bow is of very remote Antiquity and has been used by almost all nations. The javelin was a kind of dart not unlike an arrow, the wood of which was generally three feet long and one thick, the point was four inches long and tapered so fine that it bent at the first stroke and in such a manner as to be useless to the enemy, every man carried seven of them to battle. The sword was for a close encounter. The buckler was of a round form about three feet in diameter and made of wood covered with leather. The helmet was a light casque for the head generally made of the skin of some wild beast to appear the more terrible in battle. The scutum was oblong bent inwards, and its parts were joined together with little plates of iron, and the whole was covered with a bulls hide, and an iron ring went round it. In the middle was an iron boss or umbo jutting out. This was large enough to cover the whole body. In regard to the Standards the ensign of a manipulus was antiently a bundle of hay on the top of a pole, afterwards a spear with a cross piece of wood on the top, sometimes the figure of a hand above probably in allusion to the word manipulus, and below a small round or oval shield commonly of silver. A silver eagle with expanded wings on the top of a spear sometimes holding a thunderbolt in its claws with the figure of a small chapel above it was the common standard of the Legion, at least after the time of Marius, for before that the figures of other animals were used.

Polybius ascribes the number of victories gained by the Romans over the Gauls to the superiority of their arms.

30 Projections or nobs of iron in the middle of Roman Shields. When coins are found in burial places it does not always follow that

the body interred existed at a contemporary date with them. The same may be predicated with truth of Roman arms found in Barrows, which is seldom.

31 The workmanship of such ornaments are decidedly Italian as well as the ornaments themselves. They were some of the articles, which the Merchants traded in with the Britons.

32 The Chrystal Ball was a magical instrument. It seems to have been suspended with straps of leather or thongs of Hart skin, twenty of these Balls were found at Rome at the latter end of the sixth century by the Canons of St. John of Lateran.

33 Not one coin, nor one letter was ever found by Sir. R. C. Hoare in any of the Barrows which he opened.

34 The Urns of the Romans were totally different from those of the Britons, but they appear to have been adapted to sepulchral uses. They were decorated with a variety of ornaments, some with the figures of men combating beasts, others with gladiators and idols, others adorned with foliage, some plain, some striated, but mostly all of beautifully polished earth. Their colours were red, light reddish brown, light blue, purple, lake, reddish brown, dark brown with animals, letters, and ornaments, yellowish brown relieved with a white tint, fine red coralline ware, light yellow and full red with black lines. The stamps on them are supposed to be the Potters name.

The bones and Ashes of the dead besprinkled with the richest perfumes were also put into Urns made of brass, marble, silver, or gold according to the wealth or rank of those interred, and sometimes a glass vial full of tears, and coins were deposited with them in the tomb. The Roman Urns discovered in this country have always been found in sepulchres near Roman stations and encampments, and if a tumulus of earth has been raised over them on a particular occasion remote from their Towns or Camps, it has not exceeded a moderate structure.

To authenticate with a greater degree of certainty the Roman burials Douglas having remarked in a letter to the Abbe Van Myssen of Tongres, that in the course of having opened many of the largest Barrows he found that they produced few Urns unlike the Roman. The Abbe replied "Your remarks are just on these tumuli, the larger ones, which are detached, contain few or no Urns. The great quantity of Urns and other vessels are found on our Hills little elevated above the plain and without circular mounds of earth over them."

Mr. Douglas had several Roman Urns of unbaked clay in his collection, which he concluded were deposited with the dead when some religious or mystic ceremony prevailed, as the Romans had a perfect knowledge of the pottery art.

35 The River Belus empties itself into the sea that washes the coast of Judea. Here the art of making glass was first discovered. The sands, which the stream carries down in large quantities, are taken up at its mouth and being mixed with nitre, dissolve by the action of fire and soon afterwards harden into glass. The Phoenicians appear to have made an early progress in manufactures. The glass of Sidon, the purple and fine linen of Tyre were held in high estimation. Through their neighbours, the Syrians, the Phoenicians trafficked largely with the eastern countries distributing the products of the latter in the west, the whole commerce of which, they may be said for many years to have engrossed, being jealous of all interference. And so studious were they to conceal from the Romans from whence they obtained their tin, that a Phoenician Captain, who found himself followed by a Roman vessel, purposely steered into the shallows, and thus destroyed both his own ship and the other, his life however was saved and he was rewarded by his countrymen for his patriotic resolution.

36 Amber Beads have frequently been discovered in Female Barrows. They were worn by Women and Children as ornaments or charms against poison and witchcraft. Amber derives its name from Ambra, and Electricity is so called from the Greek word for Amber.

37 British sepulchral Urns are of great antiquity. The remains of the dead, when burned, were collected and placed in Urns, and in one instance Mr. Cunnington discovered a large sepulchral Urn in which there was another smaller one. The ashes were sometimes enveloped in linen cloth or skins of animals before they were deposited in Urns. Their texture is a coarse unbaked kind of clay with a mixture of small white patches apparently pounded silex. They are scratched over with instruments of bone, the chevron or zig zag having been the favourite ornament of the Britons. Their colour is red, brown, dark brown, or brownish red, and some bear the black marks of the funeral pile. Those of the upright form are the most antient. Sir R. C. Hoare had only one in his Museum, but W. Miles Esq. discovered six in the Deverel Barrow. The shapes decorations and materials of the Urns found in that remarkable tumulus indicated advancement from a rude to a more civilized state. Many of them mouldered to the touch, for the damp had penetrated into the Cists.

Some Urns are called drinking cups by Sir. R. C. Hoare. They are more decorated than the sepulchral. They were placed near the corpse and supposed to contain a Viaticum for the dead, a custom which still prevails in distant countries. Sir R. C. Hoare writes, on reaching the floor of the Barrow we discovered a Skeleton, close to the head was a kind of basin neatly ornamented but fractured, on removing the head we were surprised to find it resting on a drinking cup that had been placed at the feet of another Skeleton, which also lay north and south, with this drinking cup was found a Spear-head of flint and a singular stone.



Other Urns he has named incense cups. They are richly ornamented. He concludes they were appropriated to the use he ascribes to them, because in most of them he found holes for suspension.

If any doubt should arise of Urns not having passed the fire their decomposition in water will prove the fact.

38 Cists vary in their depth and shape, they may be generally defined circular wells or graves cut in the chalk, two, four, or six feet below the level of the floor of a Barrow. They are from two to eight feet deep, and are three or four feet in diameter. Cists contain Urns, Skeletons, ashes or bones of the dead. Skeletons and burnt bones are sometimes found in rude boxes, or in the trunks of elm trees, or in shallow cases of wood in a boat like form, or on planks of elm deposited within Cists. In one Barrow, Sir R. C. Hoare discovered the Skeleton of a child with an Urn, and in a Cist beneath it the Skeleton of an adult with a drinking cup at his feet. In another at the depth of six feet he came to the floor, which was covered with ashes, and on digging further he found a Cist eighteen inches deep and within it an interment of burnt bones and six beads, which appeared as though they had been burnt. In one of the finest of the Lake group he found a large sepulchral Urn near the surface placed with its mouth downwards over a pile of burnt bones, amongst which was a fine ivory bodkin. At the farther depth of five feet were the remains of two Skeletons, and at the total depth of thirteen feet nine inches the Skeleton of a child was deposited in a Cist with a drinking cup.

The heads of the Skeletons generally incline towards the north, and on one occasion in the same barrow Sir R. C. Hoare found three Skeletons laid from north to south, one over the other, the first two feet below the surface of the Barrow, the second level with the natural soil, and the third six feet below it. Necklaces and Bracelets are found round the necks of the female Skeletons, and Arrow-heads, Daggers and Knives, near the male Skeletons.

Colden in his History of the five Nations of Canada, says, they make a large round hole in which the body can be placed upright or upon its haunches. After the corpse is deposited therein the orifice is covered with timber to support the earth which closes it, and thereby the body is kept free from being pressed. They then raise the earth in a round hill over it. They always dress the corpse in all its finery and put wampum and other things in the grave.

39 Some Geologists state that there was a time when the materials of the globe were in a fluid state and that the cause of this fluidity was heat, a power whose effect in melting the most solid materials of the earth, we witness in the fusion of the hardest metals and of the flinty materials of glass.

40 The original fluidity of the primary rocks, and the elevation and depression of certain parts by the commotion of internal matter kept liquid by heat is called the Plutonian system. Pluto the God of subterranean fire became enamoured of Proserpine and carried her away upon his chariot drawn by four horses. To make his retreat more unknown he opened a passage through the earth by striking it with a trident. The Gauls fancied themselves descended from Pluto and for this reason they computed the time by nights and not by days.

41 In the opinion of Dr. Fitton. The evidences in proof of great and frequent movements of the land itself both by protrusion and subsidence, and of the connections of these movements with the operations of Volcano's is so strong, and every day so much extended by inquiry, as almost to demonstrate that these have been **the causes by which those great revolutions have been effected**, and that although the action of the inward forces which protrude the land has varied greatly in different countries they are now at work in preparing the way for the future alteration in the exterior of the globe.

42 Job 41. v. 1. The Leviathan supposed to be the Crocodile has in proportion to its size the largest mouth of all monsters. Its length is usually twenty feet, its circumference about five feet.

43 Dr. Buckland mentions in his Bridgewater Treatise that the Megatherium is an extinct quadruped of enormous magnitude. Its haunches were more than five feet wide. Its body twelve feet long and eight feet high. Its feet were a yard in length and terminated by most gigantic claws. Its tail was clad in armour and much larger than the tail of any other beast amongst extinct or living terrestrial Mammalia. Thus heavily constructed it could neither run nor leap, nor climb, nor burrow under ground, its occupation of digging roots for food was almost stationary. The regions of America were once its residence.

44 Dr. Inglis was then called upon to exhibit before the Section the head of Eugene Aram and deliver some remarks upon it. The Doctor said it would be necessary for him in the first place to prove the identity of the skull and his explanation amounted to this. After the execution of Eugene Aram at Tyburn his body was conveyed to Knaresborough where according to his sentence he was hung in chains. After he had hung sometime Dr. Hutchinson a Physician of that Town anxious to obtain some relic of the man, took a ladder to the gibbet and cut off his head. After Dr. Hutchinson's death, his widow married a gentleman at present a surgeon at York, and in consequence the skull came into his possession. Through the influence of Thomas Slingsby the skull was given to the Rev. Mr. Dalton, for the purpose of having it examined by Spurzheim. There were indications upon the skull of the iron hooks

by which the culprit was gibbeted. It may be proper to remark that Spurzheim mistook the head for that of a female. The Doctor then entered into a review of the circumstances under which the criminal was condemned. He said if he had been found guilty at all by a jury of the present day, it would, under no circumstances have been of murder, but of manslaughter. Dr. Granville thought the identity not satisfactorily proved. Very probably Dr. Hutchinson had a collection of skulls, and it did not appear that the widow could be certain as to the identity of this particular one, unless some particular mark had been put upon it. Dr. Fife and Dr. Knott agreed with Dr. Granville as to the identity. It was perfectly impossible that it could be identified. There was no evidence that the same skull sent to Dr. Spurzheim had been returned. Dr. Hindmarsh said he would almost trust his honor that this could not be the skull of Eugene Aram. It appeared to be the skull of a male person not above thirty years of age, Eugene was fifty four when he suffered. Mr. Simpson considered it was the skull of a person very likely to be a criminal character, and he declared his opinion that he would be a dangerous man, after a few words from the chairman, the thanks of the Section were given to Dr. Inglis. The above conversation is abridged from a report, in the Literary Gazette of the proceedings in the medical Section of the British Association at Newcastle, September, eighteen hundred and thirty eight.

45 Blackwood facetiously observes that the celebrated Van Butchel was worthy of our respect not so much for his beard and spotted horse, as for his determination and success in defrauding the black fraternity of their unreasonable expectation. He was at no sumptuous cost for his wife. It has been said that an annuity had been bequeathed to him as long as she should be above ground. Be that as it may; he did preserve her above ground, and above ground she may be now perhaps. For he was the inventor of a new pickle, and in the experiment the great John Hunter was coadjutor. It is quite pleasant to think that one human being in the great city could escape the hands of the black harpies. The old woman in Horace was to be carried out oiled to see if it was possible for her to slip **through the hands** of her heir and the undertakers, but the pickle of Van Butchel was a happier thing, for through it, she was never carried out at all, but preserved at home.

46 In the Annual Register for seventeen hundred and fifty nine, the following account is given of Eugene Aram.

Eugene Aram's parents were of the middle gentry of Yorkshire. He was removed when young to Skelton near Newby, and thence to Bondgate near Rippon. It was here he received the first rudiments of literature. After the age of sixteen he was sent to London where he soon quitted the drudgery of the counting house for the study of Poetry, History and Antiquity. After a stay of a year or two in London he returned to his native place, whence he engaged in a school



at Netherdale, where he married. Having perceived his deficiency in the learned languages he next applied himself to the Greek and Latin languages, and to every one of the Classics, Historians, and Poets. In the year seventeen hundred and thirty four he went to Knaresborough the scene of his misfortunes; there he attained some knowledge of Hebrew, and went through the Pentateuch. In seventeen hundred and forty four he returned to London and served as Usher in Latin and Writing in a School in Piccadilly, and learned the French language. He succeeded to several Usherships in different places in the south of England, and in the intervals became acquainted with Botany and Heraldry; he also ventured upon Chaldee and Arabic. Not satisfied with this unwearied application he began the Celtic language, and resolved to make a comparative Lexicon, having collected for that purpose above one thousand notes.

In June seventeen hundred and fifty eight he was arrested at Lynn, in Norfolk, where he was Usher in a school, for the murder of Daniel Clark, on Friday the eighth of February, seventeen hundred and forty four or five. On the third of August seventeen hundred and fifty nine he was tried and condemned on the testimony of Houseman an accomplice. On the morning after his trial he confessed the justice of his sentence, and as he had promised to make a more ample confession on the day he was executed it was generally believed every thing previous to the murder would have been disclosed, but when he was called from his bed to have his irons taken off he would not rise alleging he was very weak. On examination his arm appeared bloody, proper assistance being called it was found he had attempted to take away his own life by cutting his arm in two places with a razor, which he had concealed in the condemned hole some time before. By proper application he was brought to himself and though weak was conducted to Tyburn, where, being asked if he had any thing to say, he said No. Immediately after, he was executed and his body conveyed to Knaresborough Forest, and hung in chains pursuant to his sentence.

47 Antiquaries disregarding the approach of darkness have not unfrequently bivouacked on the bleak and elevated Downs of Dorset in the prosecution of their researches, and W. A. Miles Esq. has given the following interesting and vivid description of his proceedings on a November night.

Men were employed in dragging furze from an adjoining spot and it was a fine subject for the talent of an artist to have described the Urn smoking at the flame, while a red and flickering gleam played upon the countenances of the labourers, who speaking in low and subdued tones, and having their eyes, fixed upon the flames and dead Men's bones were afraid to look into the surrounding darkness. The swell of the passing breeze as it fanned the fire raised them from their reverie, or roused their attention from some direful story of goblin damned, which was gravely related and as faithfully believed.

The effect produced by the narrative of the village thatcher added most strongly to the horror of their situation as he gravely declared that his father and his elder brother had been most cruelly dragged about and beaten by some invisible hand on the very Down on which we stood. There was no danger of a Deserter from my party as fear kept them together, and our group was augmented by the curiosity of the passing peasants, who deviating from their homeward course wondered why a fire blazed upon the unfrequented Down, a spot on which it is more than probable no fire had ever gleamed since the last deposit was pompously and religiously placed in the Barrow just explored, save at the May-eve rites. But now how changed the scene. The Urn when last it was seen by man, so hallowed, so venerated, the form, the features of the chief whose ashes it contained, fresh to the minds and perhaps dear to the memories of those who assisted at the sepulchral ceremonies, now after a lapse of many hundred years, calmly reeked before a burning faggot to the rude gaze of an astonished peasant.

48 Near Piddletown, Dorset, are one hundred and twelve pits, which have been termed by King inverted holes, and by Stukeley inverted Barrows. Their diameter, depth, and distance from each other are different. On the east there are some very large and deep ones, but they lessen toward the west. They are all of a conical form, broad at the top but grow narrower at the bottom. There are no heaps of earth near them, only some tumuli whose size and number are inconsiderable. They contain neither bones nor ashes, nor has any ore, stone, clay, coal, nor any material been discovered in them that could have been an inducement for digging them.

Doubtless some pits were originally inlets for water, and others were caverns or mines, but there is one strange circumstance which distinguishes these conical pits from all others and shows that they were artificially formed and carefully designed by the antient Britons in times of hostile invasion for hiding places or for habitations, for to this very hour although they are in spots where neighbouring cavities much more shallow will form little pools of water after rain, and others become standing pits of water of no small depth, yet these will hold no water at all and are dry, being so contrived as just to reach down either to the sand or gravel where the water will always run off. In Derbyshire although a part of an adjoining wood is swampy, yet in similar pits after rain no water is found.

The Irish call them sculking holes with great propriety, for thirty or forty men might stand in them on account of the sloping sides and wide extended mouth, whilst it would be impossible for enemies traversing the plain to discover the place of their concealment till near their edge. Their ascent is neither dangerous nor slippery after rain. The air is clear at the bottoms of these pits, which are sheltered from the wind. Provisions might be placed in them

under the feet of those concealed and not be liable to any more danger than in any other part of the country. The antient Britons were not the only people, who made use of such inverted conical pits or caverns. If the Scythians were averse to be seen, their places of retreat could not be discovered.

The Germans had a number of subterranean caves dug by their own labour and carefully covered over with dung, in winter their retreat from cold and the repository of their corn. In those recesses they not only found shelter from the rigour of the season, but in time of foreign invasion their effects were safely concealed. The enemy laid waste the open country, but the hidden treasure escaped the general ravage, safe in its obscurity, or because the search would be attended with too much trouble.

The Esquimaux, who dwell near Davis's Strait, in California, and Nova Zembla pass the whole winter in subterranean caverns without ever venturing into the open air.

Some of the American tribes are so extremely rude, and advanced so little beyond the primitive simplicity of Nature, that they have no houses at all. During the day they take shelter from the scorching rays of the sun under thick trees, at night they form a shed with their branches and leaves. In the rainy season they retire into coves formed by the hand of nature, or hollowed out by their own industry.

49 Plate eleven (pl. 43) is intended to give the Reader an idea of an open section of the Barrow in the Frontispiece, the valley of the Stour meandering through the verdant meadows between Crawford Bridge and Shapwicke, Spetisbury Camp, Hod Hill, and the hills of Dorsetshire in the distance.

The Barrow is ten feet high, eighty eight feet in diameter from east to west, ninety nine feet in diameter from north to south, and two hundred and ninety feet in circumference at the base. It is very remarkable on account of the extreme lowness and humidity of its position; for it is only five hundred and twenty eight feet from the river Stour, which frequently inundates its base together with the greater part of the flat common in which it is situated. Notwithstanding this unusual circumstance, a vast extent of country terminated only by hills and the horizon, is visible from its summit, and when viewed in connection with Spetisbury and Badbury camps it forms the point in the angle of an obtuse triangle, and appears to have been well calculated for a communicating link between those truly British earthen works.

In the month of April the examination of the Barrow was continued for Eight Days with an indomitable spirit of perseverance. Perceiving many pieces of charcoal and small fragments of moist unbaked clay whenever the labourers approached towards the east, the Author was induced to order the section already ten feet and a half



in length and eight feet wide from east to west to be enlarged, so that the floor of the centre of the Barrow might be reached without making an irruption into the Cist or rudely disturbing whatever it might perchance contain. While the labourers were carrying this operation into effect they uncovered the apex of the Barrow and found seven large flints arranged in a circular form immediately under the turf. Having observed the singular appearance of the variegated soil in that part of the Barrow which had been opened, and the increasing indications of a second Deverel Barrow towards the east, the Author traced out a fresh section from east to west, and the labourers commenced opening it from the base of the Barrow. Five days were consumed in excavating the section as it appears in the plate, and when the floor of the centre part of the Barrow was nearly attained on the morning of the sixth day it measured forty six feet and a half in length, eight feet in width, and ten feet in depth. The soil had hitherto chiefly consisted of heavy plastic clay containing a considerable quantity of vegetable remains slightly impregnated with pyrites, and it is a curious fact, that until flints in a convex form coated over with red clay presented themselves, scarcely a single stone or flint had been met with. As the removal of the flints advanced, a breathless anxiety prevailed, which was only occasionally interrupted by the ejaculations of the labourers, when they supposed that they had fortunately found some relic of antiquity incased in dark clay, or were on the point of bringing to light treasures, that had been concealed in the earth before the christian æra. The regularity of the strata of clay, flints, and burnt matter, kept up a feverish state of excitement, and the labourers redoubling their exertions and caution, iterum iterumque clamabant, for on the floor of the Barrow, beneath the flints, a circular space six feet in diameter was covered with blue clay. In the centre of this spot, and directly under the crown of seven flints, there were most decisive marks of cremation, and in the midst of charcoal, ashes, and burnt vegetable matter, one of the labourers discovered with a triumphant shout a ruby coloured, barrel shaped, glass bead, that had evidently undergone the action of fire. Below these sepulchral signs, loose gravel intermingled with charcoal and fine brown mould, continued to the depth of two feet, when another layer of blue clay covered a stratum of green sand. By no means disheartened, one of the labourers excavated, until he came to a level with the bed of the river Stour, four feet below the floor, and fourteen feet below the crown of the Barrow. The water springing up he retreated by a ladder from the Well or Cist, and the fiat was issued. "No more be done."

To those who feel no interest in these matters, and are inclined to exclaim with a smile, *Heu limæ labor! Parturiunt Tumuli nascitur ridicula sphærule perforata!* what Barrow allurements can be adduced to turn the current of their thoughts to subterranean investigations, but when the peculiar situation of the Barrow, the

various conjectures, which have been hazarded respecting its contents, its nearness to the river Stour, the Via Romana or Ikenild Street, the camps of Badbury and Spetisbury are taken into consideration, the Author cannot but congratulate his Antiquarian friends that he was not baffled in his laborious undertaking; for he has every reason to conclude from the discovery of many small pieces of moist unbaked pottery and charcoal, and from the annular patches of Urn shaped dark clay, which were visible in different parts of the Barrow, and from the plain and decisive marks of cremation on the floor in its centre, that it was raised at a very early period for sepulchral purposes.

After the Author had deposited with due ceremony and care a memorial of his excavations on the floor of the Barrow, and had seen it restored to its original shape, he examined that part of the Via Romana or Ikenild Street, which passes near its base. Although the dorsum of the Roman road is not very high in Shapwicke Common, yet it may be easily discerned by the most heedless observer. It is forty feet wide and is constructed of gravel and small flints; but on the opposite side of the river Stour it is composed of large flints firmly cemented together with mortar. Some of the flints measure fifty one inches in circumference and seventeen inches in diameter. And very recently while the labourers of Mr. M. Small were occupied in lowering a hill midway between Badbury Camp and Shapwicke, they discovered in a Cist cut in the chalk a Skeleton doubled up, and near it an exceedingly curious bone instrument, which has at one end a small circular hole drilled through it, and at the other extremity eight short teeth like those of a comb. It is four inches long and one inch wide and is part of the rib of a Deer.

On an eminence to the left of the Barrow is Spetisbury Camp. It is an antient British fortification and is situated in the southern part of the Village of Spetisbury, almost facing Crawford Bridge. Its oval form is seen to the best advantage from the road that leads from Shapwicke to Crawford. Its area is one hundred and forty eight paces east to west and one hundred and twenty paces from north to south. It lies open to the river from east to north, and has an entrance on the north-east side.

Having noticed the leading objects represented in the Frontispiece and closing scene the Author cannot refrain from briefly describing the earthen works on Hod Hill, which stands alone majestically grand in the Parishes of Stourpaine, and Hanford, near Blandford. This remarkable Hill is often enveloped in clouds and the misty indistinctness of the horizon, and often it is seen overlooking the surrounding country far and wide and towering high above the hills, the plain, and the valley beneath it. On its summit is a fine and extensive British Camp containing within it the vestige of a small Roman work. The more antient one of the Britons consists of a double agger and fosse, the outer rampart being in the form of a semicircle. On the north and south where it is almost inaccessible, the agger is high and the fosse is deep. On the east and west, where the Hill is not so steep, they are low and shallow in proportion.

On the inside at the base of the inner agger, there are several swallow pits adjoining each other. The Camp has five entrances; two on the east, one on the west, one on the north, and one on the south. In the area, which extends over several acres, there are many circular depressions in the soil surrounded by shallow trenches. They are twelve or fifteen feet in diameter, and were undoubtedly the places where the antient Britons pitched their tents or settled their rude habitations. Although they are scattered about the area of the British Camp; yet they are more numerous between the front of the Roman Camp and the outer agger of the British works than on any other part of the Hill. Inside of one of these shallow pits Mr. H. Durden having excavated four feet below the surface of the turf discovered two circular perforated stones with flat sides carefully deposited under an immense number of flints. The one is rather larger than the other.

#### Large Stone.

Diameter. Inches	15 $\frac{1}{2}$
Depth	5 $\frac{1}{4}$
Circumference, four feet	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
Diameter of the hole at the top	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
At the bottom	3 $\frac{1}{2}$

#### Small Stone.

Diameter. Inches	12 $\frac{1}{2}$
Depth	3 $\frac{1}{2}$
Circumference, three feet and a half	0
Diameter of the hole at the top	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
At the bottom	3 $\frac{1}{2}$

The material of which these stones consist is a fine sand stone, and far too friable in its nature for grinding corn. From the circumstance of the holes in each of them being of the same dimensions, it is not unlikely that they were used together; but to what particular purpose they were adapted neither Antiquarius nor Discipulus is able to decide. The Author will therefore leave it to those, who are skilful in starting and following up an ingenious hypothesis to unravel the mystery in which these singular stones are involved.

The earthen works in the eastern angle of the British Camp were undoubtedly occupied by the Romans; for they are totally different from the huge and extensive ramparts of the Britons that surround them. It is evident that after the former had possessed themselves of the original encampment, that they took advantage of the works, which had been previously thrown up by the Britons and traced out their camp in the figure of a parallelogram, thereby saving them-



selves the labour of rearing fresh ramparts on two sides of their own entrenchments; for the termination of the Roman lines are blended with the antient British agger, the curve of which appears to have been somewhat straitened. The ramparts on either side of the two entrances are four feet deep, and minutely correspond with each other. Before each of these entrances is a deep cavity not unlike an oblong Pond Barrow. Within the area of the Roman Camp while some labourers were delving for stones they found two or three fragments of querns formed from compact green sand stone, twelve or thirteen spear-heads of all sorts shapes and sizes, a fibula with a tongue to it, a very curious brass ornament with five links attached to it, two pair of tweezers, iron and brass rings from one inch to four inches and a half in diameter, nails, iron and brass buckles and a medal of one of the Cæsars. These Roman relics of antiquity are in the cabinet of Mr. H. Durden, and no other earthen works in Dorsetshire so clearly exemplify the difference between a British and a Roman Camp, and afford an ocular proof of the latter being contained in the former, as those on Hod Hill.

50 The ideas conveyed in the beautiful lines on the Celtic Warriors Grave must have left a deep impression upon the minds of those who have ever been engaged in the examination of Barrows, for they are not only expressed in language congenial with the feelings of an Antiquary, but also describe in solemn accents of simple plaintiveness the tranquillity that may be supposed to encircle the brow of the Pyramidal grave of a British Chieftain.

In the Barrow the dead do not grieve,

Not a sob, not a sigh meets our ear;

Which compassion itself could relieve,

Ah, sweetly they slumber, nor hope, love nor fear,

Peace, Peace is the watchword the only one here.

The real Antiquary will always respect the Skeletons, Ashes, and Bones of the dead, which he may discover in his subterranean excavations. With hallowed feelings sanctified by the knowledge that the dry bones shall live, he will do unto them as he would wish should be done unto his own remains when he has passed away and has been forgotten; for in opening Barrows it is not the Antiquary's object to violate the receptacles of the Dead, but from the relics which may be found in them, to trace the manners and the customs of the early Britons, as the spade is almost their only Historian. When the Antiquary meets with Skeletons near the surface of the earth he will bury them deeper than they were before they were denuded. When he opens a Cist he will not disturb its contents unnecessarily. The Ashes and Bones of the Dead he will collect together with reverential awe, and he will never fail to restore those circling mounds of earth over them, which pointed out to him as they will point out to future Antiquaries, if not destroyed, the Tumuli of the antient Britons.

The last new ballad on the proceedings of the second day of the meeting of the British Archaeological Association at Canterbury, September 10th, 1844.

Anonymous.

(Source: Printed sheet, Roach Smith's Canterbury Congress papers, Soc. Ant. Lond.)

My dear brother Bob,

This is the scud, that took place in the mud,  
While we sat and looked on from the carriage;  
Such a dash was not seen, such a splash has not been,  
My dear Bob, since the day of my marriage.

Fine ladies so soiled, as onward they toiled,  
While Professors so grave grubbed away;  
Would have made you declare, had you only been there,  
It was ten times as good as a play.

There were clergy in cloaks, cutting all kinds of jokes,  
(For many were far from their homes;)  
There were "cutters" and "pasters" and some sketch-book wasters  
All intending to make weighty tomes.<sup>1</sup>

My Lady Montresor, was pleased beyond measure,  
And the President-esses<sup>2</sup> no less;  
Such fun was ne'er seen, on Breach Down or Green,  
Since the rollicking days of Queen Bess.

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1 Meaning perhaps, to give both weight and measure,  
Their weighty letter press spun out at leisure.

2 Mrs. Barham and Mrs. Pettigrew.



Such dragging of skirts! such giggling of flirts,  
 As you see in a storm in Hyde Park;  
 With no end of umbrellas, to shelter the Fellows,  
 Who seemed bent upon digging till dark.

The "Buckland" Professor, a very great messer  
 In clay, and in rubble, and chalk;  
 Jumped into a grave, some relic to save,  
 And there held a pretty long talk.

Sir William Betham, of course too was with 'em,  
 It's nothing without "Ulster King;"  
 How he handled the thigh-bones, and other queer dry bones,  
 Sometimes shouting out - "No such thing!"

There were Nancy and Sally (not she of "our alley,")  
 But the fat, fair, and frisky, Miss Tibbs;  
 A rare antiquary, (so said Irish Aunt Mary,)  
 Since the moment she left off her bibs.

Then the chuckles o'er buckles, as down on their knuckles,  
 They picked up little odd bits of brass;  
 The clowns standing round, asking what they had found,  
 If coins? and they thought they would pass.

Of the two Secretaries, we heard nothing but "Where is —"  
 Their names being lost in the bustle;  
 I rather suppose they were absent, because  
 They liked not with Boreas to tussle.

While sly Pettigrew (for he very well knew  
 It would rain) kept his mummy away,  
 Having promised on Friday, should it prove wet or dry day,  
 Mummy HAR should then moisten his clay.

So there we sat still, half a mile from the mill,  
 And a "right merrie" trio we were;  
 And when to the Bourne, all their horses they turn,  
 Why we were the first to be there.

Shall I tell you for why? we saw by the sky  
 There would be no change in the weather;  
 So instead of staying last, we chose to ride fast,  
 And not all come to luncheon together.

The best of good feeding, with true courtly breeding,  
 Was prepared for us all at Bourne Park;  
 Had the party been weeded, to say truth it needed,  
 We could gladly have staid there 'till dark.

But all things must end, and so, my dear friend,  
 Did this very enjoyable day;  
 Should kind fate, my dear brother, grant me such another,  
 May you not be miles far away.

Barrow-digging by a barrow-knight  
 by  
 An Esquire [S. Isaacson] .  
 (Source: Isaacson, 1845)

## Fytte I

### ARGUMENT

Preliminary observations - Appropriate thoughts - Ancient men  
 and manners - Determination to inspect the barrows - The host's  
 delight - Study of mankind - The pioneer - Barrow-digging  
 tools - The Commissariat - Grace-cup.

The witching hour of twilight  
 Had passed - the lamps were brought. -  
 The meerscham to the eye might  
 A Thrible be thought. (a)

The assembled few in sober strain  
 Of ancient legends spoke,  
 Of the time when earth was one vast main,  
 And the Druid bent to oak.

They talked of Israel's chosen race  
 Of eastern pomp and pride,  
 Of the Ancient Briton's resting place,  
 With his dagger by his side.

Of Roman urn, and Saxon celt, - (b)  
 Of the hunter chief of old, -  
 Of flints and beads, - the leathern belt  
 Which girt the warrior bold.

And then, in wonderment per force,  
 They sought some ancient tome,  
 Which might of olden time discourse,  
 Of their fathers and their home.

Might tell of how they lived and died  
 In their fastnesses afar,  
 Unscathed by either pomp, or pride,  
 Or circumstance of war.

The treasured relics too were brought,  
 And almost viewed with awe,  
 All eyes the inspiration caught,  
 As celt and urn they saw. (c)

A universal longing  
 Assailed each teeming breast,  
 High thoughts of old came thronging,  
 And all would find a Kest. (d)

Would view the Ancient Briton  
 'Neath his barrow like a tent,  
 Where the Druid priest would sit on,  
 And the warrior dead lament.

They talked of Stonehenge, Abury,  
 Of the temple and the priest,  
 Of Arbor-Low, and Silbury, - (e)  
 An antiquarian feast.

Till chat enthusiasm gave, -  
 They'd a barrow-digging go,  
 For each hillock sure must prove a grave,  
 Each pile of earth a Low.

The master rose with proud delight  
 To find his guests enjoyed the sight,  
     And to his chaplain said, -  
 Full many we've tried in days of yore,  
 Full many, I hope, we shall live to explore,  
     E'er 'neath one we are laid.

'Tis a high and a holy feeling I rede, (f)  
 The fruit of Christian and patriot seed,  
 Which leads us to study the human race,  
 Their various rites and customs to trace.  
 To watch as it were the cradled man,  
 Untaught as a child the world to scan,  
 Unhoused, untented, beneath the sky  
 Reposing in wild simplicity. -  
 Next a hole in the rock, for the living a grave,  
 Mother Earth to the earthy for shelter gave.  
 Their larder the forest - their cellar the brook -  
 Their table a desert - and hunger their cook.

But oh! with man in numbers grew  
 In like proportion vices too.  
 The forest tree, the lonely cave,  
 No longer safe protection gave; -  
 And towns arose, and men of might  
 Claim'd o'er their equal brothers right.  
 And e'en, when death had set them free,  
 They paid to chieftains fealty.

Else wherefore trace we through the land  
     The barrow, mound divine!  
 Why towers the Cromlech o'er the strand, (g)  
     Of ancient chief the shrine?



Or why, when o'er those spots we tread,  
 Do we pronounce the sod  
 Holy as that, where, erst we read,  
 The Hebrew met his God?

In talk like this the night advanced,  
 No eye once towards the time-piece glanced;  
 For all in fact possessed the will,  
 To make both sun and moon stand still.  
 While old wives' tales and village gossip,  
 Of bed and sleep quite made the loss up;  
 And all exclaimed, their grog whilst swigging, (h)  
 There's naught on earth like barrow digging!

At this uprose the barrow-knight, (i)  
 Near jerked the bell down with delight.  
 Called for his favourite pioneer -  
 In find-foretelling quite a seer - (k)  
 Said, quickly, bring the barrow tools,  
 Pick, shovel, scratcher, trowel, rules, -  
 Exhibit the deposit box,  
 Which mine own key alone unlocks.  
 Your lady beg to walk up hither -  
 Tomorrow, spite of wind or weather,  
 We take the field, intent to hit on  
 Remains of Saxon or of Briton,  
 The celt to find enclosed in Low,  
 And arrow head, if not the bow.

Nought would have better suited Parker, (l)  
 In these pursuits a very Fakir.  
 In fact I very little doubt  
 He'd beat the Eastern out and out,  
 And leave no stone unturned to find  
 A place of worship to his mind.  
 And, like a pious son of Rome,  
 In triumph bring each relic home.  
 Rats' bones, - horse teeth, - or tusk of boar, -  
 The tallies of the days of yore; (m)  
 Which to the antiquarian shew  
 The value of the dust below.

But long ere this was said or thought  
 Parker with noble ardour fraught  
     Put on the air of sexton -  
 Shoulder'd his spade quite dignified  
 And shouted with becoming pride  
     Why I could preach that text on.  
 Of temple, hillock, low could tell  
 From morn, till evening shadows fell  
     Upon the Hall of Haddon. (n)  
 Of opening barrows tales impart  
 Which would with wonderment the heart  
     Of all true diggers gladden.

These cheering words imparted he withdrew  
 At railroad pace - it might be said he flew,  
 T' impart the joyous tidings to the lady,  
 That creature comforts might by dawn be ready.

For be it known  
 That barrow-diggers are not men of stone,  
 But science,  
 To follow which requires means and appliance  
 By the vulgar nam'd  
 Food, - breakfast, - dinner, - supper. -  
 Which latter by the men of old was fam'd,  
 Coming, at end of day, on night mare's crupper.

Apprized of our design the ladye bright,  
 Like Dian entered radiant with light,  
 Or more appropriate simile chance here is,  
 She talk'd of viands like the Goddess Ceres.  
 And as to ancient fanes our steps we bent  
 She thought on piety we were intent,  
 So ham, veal, rabbits, lamb, at once were thrust,  
 With varied condiments beneath a crust -  
 A savory pun for pious men to eat,  
 Whilst sugar'd cates, and tarts made up the suite.  
 Then like the landlady of France so handy,  
 She added a choice stoup of real pale brandy.  
 And on the morrow's noon right well I wist  
 These findings were as welcome as a kist. (o)

But ho! the grace cup! Midnight has begun,  
 And barrow-diggers rise before the sun -  
 At five we start - to all a fair good night,  
 Propitious dreams, and slumbers sweet and light.

## Notes to fytt I

The Esquire, knowing the origin of the cacoethes scribendi malady, which terminated in these Fyttes, and the spirit in which they are written - namely for the private amusement of a few choice friends, and in perfect bonhomie, does not feel called on to dip his steel pen in prussic acid; nor with malice prepense to hold up to the public gaze only the weeds, like certain atrabilious contemporaries, who shelter their pretensions behind the shield of Minerva.

The man who reads merely to find fault, ought to be pelted to death with paper pellets. - But here is much for all tastes.

The Knight leaps

From grave to gay, from lively to severe,

with the grace and activity of a young Rhinoceros. As, however, *carte blanche* is allowed; the notary, not having the fear of the Archbishop of Granada before his eyes, will speak out, as plainly as Jefferson Brick - if he sees occasion, - but at the same time exhibit as much good manners as St Francis of Sales; - and now

## IN ARMA FEROR

(a) A highly classical and archaeological simile. The mind's eye at once beholds the smoke ascending from the meerschäum like incense offered to the domestic Lares.

(b) The reader's attention is especially directed to the vast field of speculation here opened to his view. The *primaeval* races rise in succession before him in their domestic, military, and venatical character. Each line is a library.

(c) The library and museum, rich in practical lore - for the celt and flint speak intelligibly to the heart, - each stone being a sermon, - would inspire an automaton and almost convert a mere dilettante into a working antiquary.

(d) Kest or Cist, thus written indifferently by ancient writers, is the tomb or receptacle for the body, or urn containing the deposit of burnt bones, either constructed of large stones arranged for that purpose, or sunk in the solid rock. It is not unusual to find a cist within a cist. In Fosbroke's *Encyclopaedia of Antiquities*, CIST-VAEN is described as "three large stones placed on their edges, like three sides of a box, and a cover at top for the reception of corpses. They are found in barrows, or cairns, mostly at the east end; but sometimes singly on a larger scale." This is not altogether correct; the forms of the cist, the number of stones of which it is composed, and its shape continually varies; an admirable representation of one may be seen in the Vignette on the title page of this book.

(e) The being, whether lord or layman, who can view unmoved these stupendous monuments of our father-land is devoutly to be pitied. He may be able to appreciate the architectural beauties of a pigstye or a turnpike gate, - or with study and application, erect an ice-house, - but he is neither antiquary nor architect, - merely a builder, - we would trust him, possibly, with a skeleton-house, - certainly not with a skeleton-deposit.

(f) The whole of this passage is very graphic; the gradations of civilization cleverly shadowed forth; and we are imperceptibly enlisted in the pursuit which leads to such interesting investigations.

(g) Cromlechs, or large stones, placed in the fashion of a table, but in an inclining position upon others smaller, with or without stone circles annexed, are by some writers deemed altar-stones; but we agree with Borlase that they are generally if not invariably sepulchral.

(h) These lines are too conversational and vernacular. But

*Quando-que bonus dormitat Homerus.*

Great wits are sometimes caught napping.

(i) The attention of all aspirants for a name to live in the annals of Barrow-digging are earnestly directed to the description of the tools and preparations; and the enthusiasm of the pioneer ought not to be lost sight of.

(k) FIND, the barrow diggers' term for the treasures of the LOWE, its frequent occurrence renders an interpretation necessary for the benefit of the country gentlemen.

(l) Fakir, or Fakeer, an appellation given in the East to persons who especially occupy themselves in religious exercises; but their devotion to the Holy Stone of Mecca is scarcely superior to that of Parker to a Stone Celt. See his effigies at the head of this Fytte.

(m) The number of instruments, whether of stone or metal, the quantity of bones of animals, especially the antlers of the red deer, and the heads of dogs, or tusk of boar or horse, as also the simple pebble brought from the distant brook by the hand of affection, constitute data by which the character of the departed may very generally be pronounced.

(n) Haddon Hall, near Bakewell, one of the most perfect and beautiful specimens of Elizabethan mansions, - revered by the neighbourhood from traditionary associations, - and worshipped by the romantic of either sex, for the sake of Dorothy Vernon, - whose legend will shortly follow.

(o) If greybeards cavil, - or splenetic-billious looking individuals sneer, - or hireling critics, the mere hangmen, as Dryden calls them, of the press, - condemn what they can neither understand or appreciate, - we assure them neither Knight nor Esquire will have their pipe put out. The legend was written for a friendly few, - determined to laugh and grow fat, - and so, 'Good Den Sir Peter.'



## Fytte II

## ARGUMENT

The lark reminds us of our duty - Breakfast - The start - Matin  
 song of the barrow diggers - Rapidity of transit - Conjectures of  
 the natives - Reflections on a Lowe - Real objects of the science.

At five the lark took up his pipe (a)  
 And smoked the coming day.  
 Whilst we, for barrow-digging ripe,  
 Went joyous on our way.

And as the sun o'er verdant hills,  
 His early radiance threw,  
 Regardless of all worldly ills  
 We hail'd the glorious view.

But a long journey ere we fed  
 Each piously eschewed, -  
 And begged when jumping out of bed  
 The coffee might be brew'd.

Of toilet mysteries my muse  
 Disdains a word to say -  
 The age of pigtails and of queues  
 Has long since passed away.

The only ill that now is felt  
 Except a want of rint,  
 Is razor blunt as ancient celt, (b)  
 And soap as hard as flint.

But lo! the breakfast waits - the urn  
 Its matin song rehearses, -  
 To break his fast where'er we turn  
 No living man averse is.

First cups of tea are swallow'd quick,  
 Of coffee there's great slaughter.  
 Each votes the ham and eggs quite slick,  
 To toast they give no quarter.

But all our pleasures vanish fast,  
 Once-hungry men confess it;  
 When, pondering o'er the meal that's past,  
 They faintly moan "God bless it."

So having taken quantum suff.  
 A Latin phrase implying  
 That every mouth has had enough,  
 To start each one is sighing.

Dog cart and Stanhope straight appear  
 The way is clear before us.  
 But, e'er we start, one hearty cheer,  
 One soul-enlivening chorus.

#### MATIN SONG OF THE BARROW-KNIGHTS

AIR - The Chough and Crow.

The bat and owl to roost are fled, (c)  
 The Lark soars up to heav'n,  
 The thrifty hind has left his bed,  
 And teams a-field are driven,  
 The milk-maid carols through the glen,  
 The lambkins skip and play,

Uprouse ye then, by barrow-digging men,  
 It is our opening day.  
 It is, it is, it is our opening day.  
 It is, it is, it is our opening day.

The sky is blue, and bright the sun,  
 Enlivening every ray,  
 'Tis time our labours were begun,  
 'Tis such a glorious day.  
 The horse stands prancing at the door  
 And welcomes us with neigh.  
 Uprouse ye then, my barrow-digging men,  
 It is our holiday.  
 It is, it is, it is our holiday.  
 It is, it is, it is our holiday.

With whip in hand and elbows squared  
 The knight reins in the steed.  
 But first inquires if all's prepared,  
 To excavate - or feed.  
 If pickaxe, brandy, shovel, beer (d)  
 Are rightly stowed away.  
 Uprouse you then, my barrow-digging men,  
 It is our holiday.  
 It is, it is, it is our holiday.  
 It is, it is, it is our holiday.

The steed, as conscious of the sport,  
 His master's inspiration caught.  
 And proudly curved his graceful neck  
 Impatient of the lengthened check.  
 Then neighed aloud and toss'd his head  
 As forward towards the goal he sped. -

Mile after mile he quickly paced.  
 The rustics wondered at our haste.  
 And, standing still as any stock,  
 Ask'd of each other "What's o'clock.  
 Which prov'd, as clearly as ought may,  
 They were not up to time of day.  
 Some, dreaming not of barrow-box,  
 Thought 'twas a fight 'twixt men or cocks -  
 Untaught that knights take no delight in  
 The barbarous sport of public fighting. -  
 Others of distant fairs were guessing,  
 Where early called by business pressing  
 We urged our steed, - but none I ween  
 Anticipated Gretna Green.  
 Unless the chaplain in his plaid (e)  
 Might seem a dame in masquerade.

"Lives there a man with soul so dead (f)  
 Who never to himself hath said,"  
     When viewing ancient mound,  
 Here rest the ashes of the great,  
 Who erstwhile kept their simple state  
     On this time-hallowed ground.

If such a heartless corpus live, (g)  
 To him no pax vobiscum give,  
     When placed beneath the sod.  
 The Persian curse suits one so vile,  
 May stranger dogs his grave defile, (h)  
     His children feel the rod.

And should, when years are passed away,  
 Some future barrow-diggers stray  
     Near his unhonoured grave.  
 May rats have perfected their toil,  
 Nor leave one bone beneath the soil,  
     His memory to save.

- But see, the Low is reached, with practised eye (i)  
 The knights attempt some vestige to descry,  
 Some trifling rise, some slight projecting stone,  
 Sure indication, known to them alone.  
 The hallow'd spot they view with calm delight,  
 Mark its proportions, inclination, height -  
 Compare its form with others tried before,  
 Nor dare the treasure rashly to explore. -

    But know it is not sordid wealth they ask, (k)  
 No such base motives urge them to the task.  
 They feel, as the funereal pile they scan,  
 "The proper study of mankind is man," (l)  
 Hope to collect, from flint, or urn, or celt,  
 How their fore-fathers erstwhile thought and felt.  
 A nobler object scarce can be devised, (m)  
 Than this - by Archaeologists so prized,  
 When standing pensive on the hallow'd sod (n)  
 They look from nature up to nature's God.  
 And, as their souls are raised from earth to sky,  
 Peer through the vista of futurity,  
 And sadly cheerful contemplate the day,  
 When they like him shall turn to kindred clay.



Or should some celt or dagger greet the sight,  
 Straightway their thoughts are on the heady fight.  
 The British Chieftain armed for war appears, (o)  
 The glorious patriot of far distant years;  
 As fancy pictures was the native child,  
 E'er Saxon feet the British soil defil'd.  
 Or e'en ere Caesar's eagle hither soar'd,  
 And bade the freeborn chieftain call him Lord. - (p)  
 Perchance too gentler thoughts may touch the heart,  
 As bead or urn ideas of home impart.  
 The busy housewife at her little fire,  
 The meal preparing for her children's sire;  
 The baby prattling on its mother's knee  
 In all th' unsullied mirth of infancy;  
 The joyous welcome, and the warm embrace,  
 Which greets the hero of the toilsome chace.  
 These and like thoughts, to other crafts unknown,  
 Exalt the barrow-digger 'bove the throne!

#### Notes to fyfte II

- (a) The approach of morn was never, perhaps, more appropriately heralded, than in this perfectly original stanza. Virgil celebrates Pan's pipe, - Byron the Sultan's, - and Dr. Parr the Virgin Clay, - but it remained for our Bard to introduce the Lark's pipe, in an entirely new character.
- (b) The purely archaeological spirit in which this whole introduction is conceived is worthy the golden ages of literature, - whilst the greatest objects receive their appropriate laud, the minutest are not overlooked - the opening lines are especially rich.
- (c) A MS. of this song having by some means got into the hands of the Director of the Society of ----- we understand he presented it a noble Marquis as his own - and intends to sing it whenever he and his tail can obtain permission to open a barrow at Winchester.
- (d) Admired disorder - the poet's eye in a fine frenzy rolling - doubting where to fix - or whether to immortalize the ancient or modern kist first - his brain balancing between the bone of ancient Briton and that of modern mutton. The food and the find alternately

turning the scale. - Anent brandy, Lord Byron says

"Brandy for heroes!" Burke could once exclaim -

"No doubt a liquid path to epic fame."

In a note upon which passage, it is said, - "It appears to have been Dr Johnson who thus gave honour to cogniac. - "He was persuaded," says Boswell, "to take one glass of claret. He shook his head, and said, 'Poor stuff! - No, sir, claret is the liquor for boys; port for men; but he who aspires to be a hero (smiling) must drink brandy.'"

(e) Nothing since John Gilpin's celebrated equestrian trip to Edmonton can be compared to this, - the idea of taking the parson in a shepherd's maund for a runaway damsel is unique - and worthy the pencil of George Cruickshank.

(f) This quotation from Byron is very apt, and in our opinion even more appropriate than in its original position, - it certainly harmonizes beautifully with the subsequent stanzas.

(g) See the priestly bearing, and beautiful adaptation of the benison by Wamba, the son of Witless, in *Ivanhoe*, and if not of the same family, applaud.

(h) "May your father's grave be defiled" - is the heaviest malediction known in the East - "the curse of Meroz."

(i) The poem here assumes a didactic form; - and many a useful hint may be gathered by the incipient lowe-excavator.

(k) The most absurd ideas are entertained by the natives as to the objects sought by antiquaries; - and rumours of immense wealth hidden beneath these sepulchral mounds are rife. On one occasion it was reported that an enormous brass cannon of curious workmanship had been pocketed, - on another that golden ornaments of the highest value, and coins enough to pay of a moiety of the national debt had been found. This has led many a treasure-seeker to waste his time and toil in an anticipatory excavation. And on one occasion we heard a Sow-wester, or Cornico-Devonian, as brother Jonathan would say, urging the benighted to dig, by extolling his own fortune, or somebody's else, in the discovery of a sword of gold, within a stone sarcophagus, - found, we suppose, some 30th of February, or on the Greek Calends, on Dartmoor!

(l) One of the most remarkable features of this most remarkable book is the admirable facility with which the most striking passages of the earlier poets are interwoven with the author's text. - They remind us of precious diamonds set in the purest gold.

(m) This passage is tame - and altogether unworthy the society in which it has intruded itself.

(n) How any individual who can write in this strain could be guilty of the last, we are at a loss to conceive. There are, however, spots in the sun! And so being thankful it is no worse - we trust the offence will not be repeated.

(o) In a poem of Taliessin, called the Appeasing of Lludd, the following graphic description of an early Briton occurs:-

"A numerous race, fierce they are said to have been,  
 Were thy original colonists, Britain, first of Isles,  
 Natives of a country in Asia, and the country of Gafis;  
 Said to have been a skilful people, but the district is unknown  
 Which was mother to these warlike adventurers on the sea,  
 Clad in their long dress, who could equal them?  
 Their skill is celebrated, they were the dread of Europe."

(p) The indignant language of the Ancient British Chieftain recorded by Tacitus here forcibly recurs to the mind. - When the Romans have made a desert, they call it peace."

## Fytte III

## ARGUMENT

Description of scenery - Dove dale - Reflections past and present -  
 Apology for the science - Analysis of the frontispiece - Delineation  
 of character - Characteristic remarks of the aborigines - Lighting  
 upon the cist.

"The sun was in the heavens and joy on earth,"  
 Of the two first we thought no more than nigger,  
 But to the last the scene outspread gave birth  
 Within the breast of every barrow-digger.

A lovelier spot dame nature never smil'd on,  
 A cockney poet would perchance have said.  
 Dale after dale, and mountain mountain pil'd on,  
 Where ages since the hunter monarch stray'd.

Nor would the trite remark have been delusive,  
 Though probably applied to many a scene,  
 For authors all a capital excuse have,  
 Who laud the Dove Dale as of vales the queen.

The wood-crown'd hill vocal with song of bird,  
 The Dove soft-stealing through the verdant mead, (a)  
 The gentle lowing of the distant herd,  
 Or, chance, the recognising neigh of steed;

The miner red as Edomite of yore, (b)  
 The plow-boy whistling o'er his heathful toil,  
 The schoolmaster with legendary lore,  
 Telling of ancient tillers of the soil.

These are the striking features from the Lowe  
 Where awe-struck gaze the relic-hunting knights,  
 These o'er the landscape light and shadow throw,  
 To artist's eye the source of pure delights.

But mark the fore-ground - early British grave (c)  
 By simple piety o'er lov'd ones piled,  
 Where sleep the hunter-king - the warrior brave -  
 The gentle mother - and the tender child.

What were they when on earth? where are they now?  
 These and a thousand such like questions rise,  
 As standing o'er them with a thoughtful brow,  
 Each views the other with enquiring eyes.

Perhaps a treasured relic still may shed  
 Some ray upon their history's darken'd page,  
 The urn, or dagger buried near the head, (d)  
 Or flint or spear proclaim at least the age.

The sword or umbo tell of ancient raid, (e)  
 The red deer's horn point out the hunter's cairn.  
 The trinket mark the kist of wife or maid,  
 Or little toy proclaim the grave of bairn.

Nor let the worldly or the thoughtless sneer  
 At such enquiries, little understood.  
 For haply rest beneath this early bier  
 Men in their generations wise and good.



Ancestral dust reposes 'neath the sod,  
 Lawgivers - warriors - priests - the ancient great.  
 These early pat-ri-ots were, under God,  
 The founders of Britannia's high estate.

The seed they sow'd is now a mighty tree,  
 We own the wisdom of their nascent laws,  
 To them award the germ of liberty,  
 As o'er their early history we pause.

But this philosophy inditing  
 We miss the object of our writing,  
 And well shall merit castigation  
 If we prolong the chaste flirtation.  
 Then let's once more invoke the muse,  
 Unwont such worship to refuse,  
 And beg her aid whilst we rehearse  
 The barrow-digger's craft in verse.  
 Tell of his varied preparations  
 For feeding and for excavations -  
 Of which the miscellaneous stock  
 Is sketch'd in frontispiece by Lock. (f)  
 Whose merit, if you chance to doubt,  
 Study the print and find it out.

The dog-cart first demands attention,  
 Mark well the style, the form, dimension,  
 The hold, that would delight a Dutchman,  
 Or e'en Lord Mayor, or any such man;  
 So well 'tis built for bread, and chine,  
 Ham, choicest limb of fatten'd swine  
 Wine, brandy, biscuit, knightly beer,  
 Well-known as Maltese' favourite cheer.

Tobacco which from east to west (g)  
 Soothes poor man's labour, monarch's rest.  
 And all the choice et cœteras,  
 Which challenge hungry mortals praise.  
 These the rewards that sweeten labor,  
 Unsought the festive pipe and Tabor,  
 For barrow-diggers work too hard  
 Such trifling adjuncts to regard,  
 As well the pick-axe, crow-bar, spade,  
 Which cheek by jowl are with them laid,  
 Disclose to the enquiring spirit,  
 Which studies antiquarian merit. -

But mark the leader's earnest toil,  
 His very soul is in the soil.  
 His eyes upon the barrow bent are  
 As if they'd pierce earth's very centre,  
 With pick uprais'd still see him pause,  
 Lest urn, or celt, or human jaws  
 Should suffer from a hasty shock, (h)  
 And wreck his hopes, like ship on rock. -

But who's he arm'd with shining trowel,  
 Who all their labours watches so well?  
 If fond of work he does not shew it. -  
 Why! that's the barrow-diggers' Poet!  
 And think not his supineness treason,  
 He's meditating rhyme and reason,  
 And means in lofty verse to sound  
 The praises of this ancient mound.

Beyond, for excavation ripe,  
 With spade in hand and shorten'd pipe,  
 An amateur of sterling worth  
 Watches each shovel-full of earth,

As heedfully as mouse does cat,  
 Intent to find the bones of rat,  
 For these afford a certain trail,  
 Which Lowe-explorers never fail. (i)

Near him behold the pioneer,  
 Now buoy'd by hope, now dash'd by fear,  
 As buried stags their antlers show,  
 Or rock withstands his sturdy blow. -  
 And would our time or space afford,  
 We'd tell of school-master abroad,  
 And David chuckling with delight  
 Whene'er he brought a flint to light. (k)

Besides old Nutt of dogs the colonel  
 Does not our special notice earn ill, -  
 For he delights at us to stare  
 As if, instead of skull, 'twas hare  
 We sought in antiquated Lowe;  
 And wonders not to hear "soho."  
 See how he guards the pickaxe, spade,  
 And hat and garment by him laid;  
 Careless of bottle fill'd with liquor  
 Fit for the mug of clerk or vicar, (l)  
 Which smiles upon him from the right,  
 To thirsty souls a pleasing sight. -

Such is our frontispiece which merits  
 Applause from all congenial spirits.  
 The only feature that we miss here  
 'S th' artist's self - the reason this here.  
 He can't, like Irish crocodile, (m)  
 Turn 's back upon himself and smile;  
 And as for weeping t'ant his fort,  
 He nothing does of that ere sort.

The work goes bravely on - all eyes (n)  
 Intent to solve the mysteries  
 Most anxious care display.  
 Whilst round the aborigines  
 Crowd, just as if th' industrious fleas  
 Had ta'en a holiday,

And visited this lovely spot.  
 Town house, - nay court and queen forgot,  
 And all th' admiring crowd,  
 Who throng the wondrous sight to see,  
 Napoleon, acted by a flea!  
 Still cheer'd by plaudits loud.

One lifts a bone with knowing wink  
 And says - 'Why now d'ye see I think (o)  
 This here's but a sheep's thigh.'  
 At arrow-head they jeering squint,  
 Exclaiming, 'Lauk, that's nout but flint,  
 Oh Crikey, what a guy!' (p)

But now a pause ensues - for hist!  
 Parker has lit upon a Kist,  
 And lit his pipe likewise. -  
 So here I'll terminate Fytte third, (q)  
 For at the end 'twould be absurd  
 To sing of such a prize.

### Notes to fyttē III

(a) Not the turtle but the stream, - for though the former is "a charming bird in a grove, and very pretty picking in a pie," - the river gives rise to brighter imaginings, totally distinct from the vulgar science of eating.

(b) The ironstone diggers are completely identified with the soil in which, or on which, they spend the best portion of their lives. - Each is a Rufus, - and one of a class as distingue as chimney-sweepers.

(c) The most simple and natural kind of sepulchral monument, and therefore most ancient and universal, consists in a mound of earth, or heap of stones raised over the remains of the deceased. Of such monuments, mention is made in the Book of Joshua, and in the poems of Homer, Virgil, and Horace; - and of such instances occur in every part of this kingdom. See Hoare's Ancient Wiltshire.

(d) The custom of depositing the arms, &c. of the deceased in the sepulchral mound was practised by many nations of antiquity, and is thus described by Tacitus. "No vain pomp attends their funerals, but a particular kind of wood is made use of in burning the bodies of illustrious persons. The funeral pile is neither strewed with garment nor fragrant spices. The arms of the deceased are committed to the flames, and sometimes his horse. A mound of turf constitutes the sepulchre."

We also find the following striking passage in the Bible, showing how universally the custom prevailed. "They shall not lie with the mighty, which are gone down to the grave with their weapons of war, and they have laid their swords under their heads."

(e) Umbo, the iron protuberance in the centre of the shield.

(f) This frontispiece has been the subject of general admiration, and a distinguished artist is now engaged on a large painting from it, for the next Exhibition of the Royal Academy.

(g) It is to be hoped no one will do Lord Byron the injustice to suppose this couplet was borrowed from him; and yet we have an obscure recollection of a somewhat similar idea in the Island; - which passage is a great favourite with the vendors of that Queen of Flowers.

(h) All individuals engaged in the noble science of barrow-digging would do well to imitate the caution here so poetically and artistically described. The most scrupulous care is, indeed, always necessary, it being in many instances impossible to discover any indication of the locality of the deposit till it is actually disclosed to view. The Derby Reporter makes the following illustrative remarks on this point, when speaking of the excavation of Stand Lowe by Mr. Bateman and the Rev. Stephen Isaacson. - "Not discovering the least vestige of bone, or even any difference in the colour of the soil, the gentlemen appeared to be less scrupulously careful than usual, for the hack was inadvertently struck into a necklace of glass beads, only one of which, however, was fortunately injured." The fact is all lovers of the amiable craft should adopt the motto of the Earl of Onslow. "Festina lente." On slow!



(i) The presence of rats' bones is a never-failing indication of a deposit, and the vast quantities which, in many instances, are met with in the Derbyshire and Staffordshire barrows, is truly remarkable. In opening a barrow on Gratton Hill, we read that "on the floor of the Kist were horses' teeth, the skull of a pole cat, and rats' bones innumerable," and on another occasion it is stated that "in the centre of a barrow (near Wetton) the skeleton of a female, with the knees drawn up, was completely imbedded in rats' bones, amongst which was the upper mandible of the beak of a bird of the hawk species." Probably the lady's favorite falcon!

(k) The individuals here alluded to form the staff of the Barrow-knight's corps. The pioneer's head is the prefix to Fytte I. Nutt is a noble hound, equally revered as Sir Walter Scott's; - and equally worthy the reverence.

(l) Mug the mouth, not the mouth's visitor.

(m) Peruse Lord Castlereagh's celebrated oration, if you know where to find it, - and the beauty of this allusion - and elegant simplicity of the entire passage will be at once apparent.

(n) Any one capable of appreciating poetry, cannot fail to admire the facility with which the metre is altered - to suit the tone of the narrative. Nothing like it can be found save in the tomes of the late, Tom Ingoldsby. Alas that we should be compelled to say late. A better man we know not, - one indeed that in the present time could ill be spared. - A union of racy wit and refined taste, - of becoming sobriety and hallowed mirth, were his characteristics. Peace be with him.

(o) The ignorance of the aborigines would be more striking - as well as their vernacular, - did we not find architectural lords, - and dilettanti blockheads turning up, what Burke would call their snub-lime noses at primaeval antiquities, - and confining archaeological pursuits to Henry the Seventh's Chapel, - or more within their calibre - to the front of King's College, Strand. Whilst the language they use in speaking of those who differ from them - is certainly the vulgar tongue.

(p) If the construction of railways tends to the improvement and civilization of the remoter parts of the country; - it undoubtedly, at the same time, introduces vices and vulgarisms from Cockney Land. Witness this specimen of the London vernacular, grafted on the Stafford crab.

(q) This critic defying abruptness is quite refreshing in an æra, when every writer, before publishing, seems to meditate upon - "What will Mrs. Grundy say?"

## Fytte IV

## ARGUMENT

Human life - Christmas holidays - College prizes - First love -  
 Contrast of these various pleasures with the barrow-diggers' delight  
 - The scratcher - Scientific details - Philosophical reflections -  
 The leader's rapture - Antagonist kist.

Was ever life so drear a scene,  
 So all unblest the past,  
 That not one fairy spot was seen, -  
 No day that fled too fast? (a)

Oh! turn to boyhood's joyous hours,  
 Or e'en the baby cot,  
 When all our paths were strew'd with flowers,  
 Our sorrows soon forgot.

Think of the first bright holidays,  
 When mother's sweetest smiles,  
 Foretold of coming jolly days,  
 Of quips and pleasant wiles.

The drum, the top, the soaring kite,  
 Which seem'd a thing of life - (b)  
 The bursts of uncontrol'd delight,  
 When Christmas games were rife.

Or higher glee, with which the prize,  
 By midnight study won,  
 Was held before a parent's eyes  
 'Mid blessings on their son.

Or medal, when to manhood grown,  
 For classic lore at college;  
 Priz'd far above a jewell'd crown, (c)  
 Fruit of the tree of knowledge.

Or watch the fair-one's earliest blush, (d)  
 As o'er the unconscious flowers  
 She bends with sympathising flush,  
 And owns love's nascent powers.

Then hides the bouquet next her heart,  
 And sighs, - Forget-me-not!  
 Thou, loveliest flower, canst joy impart,  
 When all else are forgot.

And much I doubt if bride's cadeau  
 Exert a greater power,  
 Though stored with pearls and diamonds too,  
 Than this one simple flower.

But infant's smile at earliest toy, -  
 Boy's laugh at Christmas pie, -  
 The prizeman's undissembled joy, -  
 The fair bride's ecstasy, -

Can scarce compete with that now felt,  
 By th' knights of enterprise,  
 As thoughts of dagger, flint, and celt,  
 In quick succession rise.

Stop! was the leader's earnest cry,  
 As bending low he fix'd his eye  
 On what appeared a kest.  
 Beware lest pickaxe, shovel, crow.  
 Inflict by chance destructive blow,  
 And make our toil unblest.

But hither bring my trusty scratcher,  
 'Mongst barrow tools there's none to match her,  
 And tread not heavily, because it (e)  
 May seriously affect deposit,  
 For Briton's skull so long in ground  
 Is seldom very perfect found;  
 And, what we scarcely deem a less ill,  
 You may destroy a potter's vessel,  
 Which form'd of unbaked clay, though thick,  
 Can scarce withstand the blow of pick.

The scratcher brought each point is well survey'd  
 To find which way the skeleton is laid.  
 For men of science always work by rule,  
 Proceeding upwards from the foot to skull.  
 And, as to view each several part's laid bare,  
 The neighbouring soil is proved with strictest care. (f)  
 For there deposited you may expect  
 The pebble, simple token of respect; (g)  
 Or rudest saw of flint, or arrow-head,  
 The tool or weapon of the ancient dead;  
 Hammers of stone, the prized Phœnician celt.  
 Jet ornaments for hunter's cloak or belt;  
 The brazen dagger, worn by mighty chief,  
 All lasting proofs of the survivor's grief,  
 Who feel a holy comfort as they shed  
 Their humble wealth around th' respected dead.

Nor are there wanting various proofs to shew  
 That men in heart were then the same as now: -  
 - The bead of glass, which erst affection gave -  
 Reposes in the infant's early grave;  
 The gem of price by stately matron worn -  
 The hunter's pride, the noble red deer's horn. -  
 The ornamented urn, so chaste though rude,  
 Bone pins, the triumph of their efforts crude.  
 The iron spear, and knife, of later date,  
 The umbo eloquent of warrior's fate.  
 These are the spoils primæval diggers love,  
 For these the largest tumuli they prove,  
 For these alone they labour with delight,  
 From morn till noon, from noon till dewy night -  
 A summer's day! - nor think their toil in vain  
 If but a single specimen they gain.  
 The Lowe to them is consecrated ground,  
 The celt and urn with history abound;  
 The brazen dagger, resting at the head,  
 Speaks like a hatchment of the mighty dead. (h)  
 They want no written legend, as they trace,  
 In these mementos of earth's youngest race;  
 A standing record of primæval man -  
 Of coming grandeur, - as it were, - the van.

But think not that one solitary Lowe  
 These congregated treasures e'er bestow.  
 No! mound on mound must fully be explored,  
 Where single relics only may be stored,  
 And days and years be spent, before "Te Deum"  
 You chant, - reposing in your rich museum.



But what's the find to day let's ask;  
 Will scratcher urn and flint unmask?  
 Or shall the kist display alone  
 A rich deposit of burnt bone?  
 Something, 'tis clear, of sterling worth,  
 This day's exertions will bring forth.  
 For sure the leader's glistening eye  
 Unusual treasures must descry, -  
 His trowel dropp'd in admiration,  
 Speaks more of pleasure than vexation.  
 But stag-horn plucked from barrow's womb,  
 Denoting hunter-monarch's tomb,  
 And rats'-bones in admired confusion  
 Some time since led to this conclusion.

Slowly his hand he stretches forth  
 As if he fears th' impending earth  
 Should desecrate some thing of worth  
     Just brought to light.  
 And carefully the entrance scanning,  
 Some new device he's clearly planning  
 Worthy a barrow-digging Canning, (i)  
     Or Smith or Wright.

And would you know the reason why,  
 Apply a Dollond to your eye,  
 And quickly you will there descry,  
     A perfect urn,  
 Fragments of more - a mass of bone -  
 Which has cremation undergone,  
 And best of all a celt of stone, (k)  
     Perchance a quern. (l)

Here pause we, sure the find 's too much  
 For undined barrow-diggers' touch.  
 And lo! another kist's in view -  
 And though the ware is somewhat new -  
 Yet is the noon-tide game of dinner  
 Much lov'd - for each comes off a winner.  
 So whilst we feed, Muse, don your manteau,  
 As thus we terminate this Canto.  
 Or, if it savours more of wit,  
 We'll say, - here ends another Fytte.

#### Notes to fyttē IV

(a) The man, or eke the woman, who upon reflection can reply in the affirmative is a pitiable specimen of humanity. But it is to be hoped that he or she may discern in the subsequent stanzas some suggested reminiscences

"Of a green spot that bloom'd in the desert of life."

In which case both Barrow-knight and Esquire will not have lost their labour.

(b) "She floats in ether like a thing of life,"

Anonymous imitation of Lord Byron.

"She walks the waters like a thing of life,  
 And seems to dare the elements to strife."

(c) To receive a chancellor's medal publicly in the Senate House at Cambridge, or the Theatre, at Oxford, amid the deafening plaudits of contemporaries, is a thing worth living for; - and every son of Alma Mater is earnestly exhorted to keep the object in perpetual view. If a man fail, "Magnis excidit ausis."

(d) What the bard intends in this passage is beyond our comprehension - being made of sterner stuff than to indite sonnets to a mistress' eyebrow, - or praise her pug dog in metre.

(e) The object of these remarks will be best understood by an extract from the Derbyshire Chronicle of June 27, referring to a contemplated opening of a stupendous barrow in the parish of Alstonefield. - which was rendered, to a certain extent, impracticable by the ill-mannered conduct of the natives who thronged the Lowe; and who are described as "the most barbarous specimen of humanity between this and New Zealand." - 'As treasure seekers,' before Mr. Bateman's arrival, "they had exhumed a skeleton, which was extended at full

length, a large spear, a small lance head, and a knife, all of iron, together with three Roman coins, - one of Constantine, one of Tetricus, and the other illegible; the spoilers having strenuously applied sand-paper in the hope of converting their brass into gold. A judicious tender of modern coin rescued these antiques from the uncouth aborigines." We subsequently read that "an attempt was made to cut through the floor of the barrow, but owing to the loose nature of the materials, and the crowd of ill-behaved people who thronged the edges of the cutting, and even sometimes fell into it - to the imminent danger of the diggers - the task was abandoned in disgust, after penetrating to the depth of six feet." The result was, the destruction of a highly ornamented urn - the abstraction or dispersion of bones and other precious relics - and a postponement of the undertaking, till "the march of civilization shall have penetrated these benighted regions."

(f) To prove is a technical term, its meaning to examine most minutely and scientifically every part of the ground till proof is obtained that nothing has been overlooked.

(g) In the language of Sir R. C. Hoare, "we speak from facts not theory;" indeed every article in this catalogue raisonnee, has been discovered in the Derbyshire Barrows, and specimens of the choicest description repose in the rich museum of T. Bateman, jun., Esq., at Youlgreave: - an hour spent in which will convey more practical knowledge to the Archaeologist of the habits and customs of our fathers, - than all the mediaeval and architectural treasures that ever encumbered a book-shelf.

(h) The various articles carefully deposited with the interment: namely, the arms and personal ornaments, together with horns of the stag - the bones and teeth of animals - the head or beak of birds - flints used either in war or for domestic purposes; - the simple pebble, as before noticed, gathered in its sparkling radiance from the distant brook, as a lovely offering from friend or relative, perhaps,

"In years a man, simplicity a child;"

all proceeded from a feeling identical with that, which places a hatchment over the door of the deceased, which erstwhile, at the expiration of a year, was translated to the church in which the body was buried. Undoubtedly a reference was made to the habit and character of the departed from the days of the first funeral. The sword and spear denote the warrior - the antler the hunter - and domestic tools the husbandman. The Heraldic Insignia of the young Creation, - and Mr. Lover's derivation of the term Pile, would serve for Adam in his garment of skins, who might not improperly therefore be said to have born the first coat. The passage referred to is as follows.

"The skin of a wild beast, deprived of the head and fore legs, and fastened round the neck by the hinder ones, would form a rude garment, such as the hunter would consider an honourable trophy of

his skill, and such as the soldier of an unpolished age would by no means despise; and it would resemble with tolerable exactness the pile of heraldry." To which we will only add, this Adam undoubtedly wore.

(i) A very happy method of completing

"A comfortable number for a rubber."

Canning, C. Roach Smith, T.Wright, and the Leader, - being unquestionably the four most distinguished characters in their several walks, in the nineteenth century.

(k) Perhaps it may be occasionally advisable to enlighten the unfortunates who are uninstructed in the lore of antiquity, even as to articles familiar as household words. Know, then, if heretofore ignorant, that Celts are instruments of stone or bronze, resembling somewhat a modern chisel, and used both as weapons of war and tools for domestic purposes. For further particulars, if your curiosity be excited, consult any or all of the following writers, - Borlase, Count Caylus, Fosbroke, Hearne, Sir R.C. Hoare, Mongez, Du Cange, Stukeley, or Whitaker.

(l) Quern, a hand mill made of two portable stones, the lower a cylinder, with a basin at top cut in it. An upper stone was fitted into it, and the corn was ground between them. In the upper stone was a hole to pour in corn, and a peg, by way of handle. The meal ran out by the sides on a cloth. Fosbroke.

## Fytte V

## ARGUMENT

A village funeral - Contrast with that of the Early Briton -  
 Reflections thereon - The dinner - Poet's praise of the aforesaid -  
 The apres - State of the weather - Lighting the weed - Solo and  
 chorus of the knights.

The village bell is ringing (a)  
 Both mournfully and slow,  
 In the grey square turret swinging  
 With a deep sound to and fro.  
 Heavily to the heart it goes  
 Speaking aloud of human woes.

Another soul's departed  
 From this terrestrial scene,  
 Whilst friends half broken-hearted  
 Follow slowly o'er the green. -  
 A father's sob - a mother's wail -  
 An infant's tear - and ends the tale.

Like sympathy demanding,  
 Two thousand years ago,  
 Perchance a group was standing  
 Upon this ancient Lowe.  
 And though no bell, no priest was there,  
 The Druid may have breath'd his prayer. (b)



Thus rapidly years pass away,  
 And relics here display'd  
 Are with the dead of yesterday  
 Contemporaries made.  
 Bidding the mourner lift his eye  
 From time unto eternity.

And warning us however deep,  
 And carking all our care;  
 Like them, we may with Rachel weep,  
 But not like her despair. -  
 The cross uplifted to the sky  
 Proclaims a happier destiny.

But still, as on these bones we gaze  
 In wonder mixed with awe,  
 And dream of men of other days,  
 We feel there is a law,  
 Develop'd by the wisest, best,  
 Which judges them by other test.

They may have liv'd within the pale  
 Of what their reason taught, (c)  
 And from traditionary tale  
 An inspiration caught,  
 And bent in holy piety  
 To nature's God - man's Deity.

'Tis almost sin to interrupt (d)  
 This train of holy pondering,  
 But tho' last eve the knights had supp'd  
 Six hours they had been wandering  
 Midst bones of rats, sword, dagger, celt,  
 And now they somewhat hungry felt.

The pioneer, for lack of cloth,  
 Put up with nature's garnishing,  
 Discharged his duty, nothing loth,  
 The various viands furnishing;  
 In order quite alli-te-ra-ti-ving  
 Beef - bread - and beer, - and brandy gi-ving. (e)

Since Jubal set to music the first sonnet,  
 Or Homer wrote in Greek Gray's Elegy, (f)  
 I'd almost stake my worn out coat upon it,  
 (The poet's coat is aye worn out d'ye see,)  
 That never, 'mongst the herd of rhyming sinners,  
 Was one who did not love to sing of dinners.

Nay more, I'll vouch that e'en the veriest prose-man  
 That ever penn'd a solitary tome;  
 And thinks, because he's been in print, he knows man,  
 And in such mysteries is quite at home, -  
 I'll vouch, I say, that for mere bread and cheese,  
 He'll strive to raise a true poetic sneeze.

In feeding and philosophy  
 There's room for meditation,  
 For each in its peculiar way  
 'S a pleasant recreation. -  
 Feeding to live 's philosophy divine,  
 Living to feed the attribute of swine.

Thus Socrates, a rather good authority, (g)  
 Wisely discoursed, if history be true,  
 And sages all, at least the great majority,  
 Have on this subject taken the same view.  
 And were an ancient Druid here, no doubt  
 In either case he'd strictly bear us out.

But then a question naturally arises,

What did they eat, - and when the witching hour?  
Were roast and boil'd considered the great prizes?

Or soups, or fish; or bread of wheaten flour?

And as we know they had no silver fork,

We wonder how the deuce they went to work.

Softly, fair reader, up I'll take my pen soon,

And prove to your most perfect satisfaction,

That pasty rich, the haunch of red deer venison, (h)

Was to these hunter-monarchs great attraction. -

If doubts arise, inspect this ancient mound,

A Nimrod's grave, - where antler'd spoils abound.

And tho' perchance these eldest sons of Tellus

Quaff'd not Champagne - or Burgundy - or Hock -

Nor dream'd of Port - or Sherry - or Bucellas -

Of generous drink they had a mighty stock,

Malt wine - which makes the Irish cry "Erin-go (i)

Bragh!" - was their nectar, known to us as Stingo.

Heard ye the din of dinner bray? (k)

Knife to fork and fork to knife,

Each eager in the friendly strife,

A rivalry display.

Pie of rabbits - tongue - and chine -

Leg of poultry - cheek of swine -

Pickled salmon - onion - mango -

Down the throat fast as they can go.

Brandy and beer

Bring up the rear!

And now ensues a lengthen'd pause - (l)

The banquet's ended - due applause

Bestow'd upon the cheer  
 'Midst loud, hear! hear! hear! hear!  
 When lo! a barrow-knight uprises,  
 And o'er his head a flasket poises,  
 His eye with pleasure beaming,  
 His brain with wisdom teeming. -  
 As with melodious voice he cries,  
 Brothers, before to work we rise,  
 Let Cogniac steal athwart the tongue  
 Palatial pleasures to prolong, (m)  
 A dignified libation! (n)  
 And meerschaum fragrant incense pour (o)  
 And song of triumph upward soar  
 In praise of our vocation.

This said he raised the precious balm, -  
 The juice of choicest graft,  
 And with a look benign and calm  
 The inspiring liquor quaff'd,  
 Compressed his lips, upturn'd his eye,  
 Denoting pious ecstasy.

Each silently the grace cup took,  
 As now in duty bound,  
 And gave his friend a knowing look,  
 In eloquence profound.  
 And then for further pleasure ripe  
 Each hastily took up his pipe. (p)

But soon their hopes were clouded,  
 When they view'd the low'ring scene,  
 By mists the sun was clouded,  
 With rain-drops deck'd the green.

The Lucifers no fire would yield,  
 The tinder too was damp,  
 And each, with sitting in the field,  
 Had got a fit of cramp.

When luckily a rustic came,  
 And with him brought a welcome flame,  
 From heaps of couch nigh burning. (q)  
 And other weeds were lighted,  
 And this new song indited,  
 Well worth the reader's learning.

#### SOLO, WITH CHORUS.

By the Knights and their Allies.

A jovial crew, as ever you knew,  
 Were the early British men,  
 With bow and spear, from year to year,  
 They traversed hill and glen;  
 And round the fire both son and sire  
 At eve on the haunch would feast.  
 And they sung and laugh'd, and their malt wine quaff'd, (r)  
 Till the sun peer'd from the east.

And barrow-knights are merry wights,  
 When the find first greets their eye,  
 For dagger or celt, or spear or belt,  
 Wake all their sympathy.  
 From morn till noon - or rising moon,  
 They'll delve in the ancient Lowe;  
 And sing and laugh, and the rich wine quaff, (s)  
 When at home their spoils they show.



## Notes to fyfte V

(a) It is impossible not to observe a striking similarity in this opening to a passage in Lord Byron's *Parasina*, and had we not known that the Barrow-knight eschews the modern school of plagiarism founded by Lord W. Lennox, we should certainly have had some misgivings, as it is we can only say, after the manner of Puff, - Two great men entertained the same happy idea, and like twin geniuses, and of identical tastes, clothed it in the same beaming language!

(b) The Druids presided over all religious ceremonies, and it is a remarkable fact, that no nation has hitherto been discovered, amongst whom a decided religious feeling does not prevail, when dust is committed to its kindred dust. At such moment "the fool, who hath said in his heart there is no God," acknowledges and laments his folly - the man who has violated the law, repents, and for a time at least, resolves to sin no more.

(c) "It cannot be doubted," writes an eminent divine, "that those to whom the everlasting Gospel has never been preached, will not be tried by a law of which they were ignorant, but by the universal law of nature written by the finger of God upon their hearts."

(d) It is, we are given to understand, far from improbable that the Bard will try a loftier strain ere long - adopting the rule or myth of Virgil:

Paulo majora canamus.

(e) It is something to find rhyme, when you are unable to find reason, but here we have the twain, - and if any one entertains an opinion that both or either of these are easy of acquirement, - let him consult the German commentators upon Lord Byron, before he ventures to utter it.

(f) If any hypercritic doubts the probability of this assumption, he is referred to the voluminous writings of the late Lord Flanders, author of the *The Deserted Village*, *Rasselas*, and other sterling works occasionally attributed to other writers.

(g) It is much to be regretted that Socrates did not turn his attention to barrow-digging; - as in that case we should undoubtedly have had transmitted to us in the *Athens Archaeological Journal*, authentic documents respecting the tumuli of Hector and Nimrod, the fibulae of Sardanapalus and Jupiter Ammon; - and probably the distaff of Hercules, - which are now among the valde desiderata, - things dreamt of, but not hoped for, of the young world.

(h) "Their chief liquors were beer and wine, the former the most common of the two; for they did not begin to cultivate the latter till very late." Fosbroke. And Mr. Warner, in one of his Welch tours, especially says "they drank beer."

(i) They were very fond of hunting. The professed sportsmen had every year a feast to Diana(?) and among other offerings each of them presented her with a purse, in which was a certain sum for every beast that they had taken during the year. On these occasions they devoured a great deal of meat, boiled, roasted, and broiled. For further information consult Fosbroke, who observes in another part of his Encyclopædia that "the South Britons had venison, oxen, sheep, and goats, their drink was chiefly ale or mead." And Higden, in confirmation of this, mentions the common use of beer among them.

(k) See Gray's Bard.

(l) A habit strongly recommended by the late Abernethy, - who following the sage advice of Dr. Galen, pronounced horizontal refreshment after dinner, at once salutary and consolatory, good for body and mind.

(m) His constant pipe which never yet burnt dim. Byron.

(n) This reminds us forcibly of the lamentable glee, beginning, -

"Mynheer Von Dunk,  
Though he never was drunk,  
Sipp'd his brandy and water gaily;"

and of his phlegmatic countryman's prose wish, "That his throat was a mile long, and every inch a palate.

(o) A libation in honour of barrow-digging. - Probably the sentiment was "Success to the Craft," after the manner of the ancients - who, according to Plutarch in his *Quæstiones convivales*, "poured out a little wine as a libation to render the Gods favourable." Plutarch, however, complains that on these occasions (in modern phraseology) they pushed the bottle too much; - this was not then considered a vice, as persons with weak heads used to wear amulets, as monkeys are supposed by African fabulists to eat cabbage, to prevent the unpleasant effects of a too capacious amphora.. But barrow-knights are proverbially temperate - and require no such precautions. The friends of juvenile men would, however, do well to bear in mind the natural antipathy between the cabbage and vine - which continues after one is boiled and the other bottled. If the cooked vegetable answers not the desired purpose - eat one raw - and we'll stake our meerschaum on its success.

(p) In the nineteenth century we have an inimitable advantage over the ancients, which has been thus pathetically recorded in a parody, not to be parodied, on "The King God bless him."

"The Romans, poor fellows, had nothing but wine,  
With which they could make their friends ripe  
Their pearls and their goblets are all very fine,  
But no substitutes for a pipe.

Then fly to the meerscham in dull mood or gay,  
 Whether time move on slower or faster;  
 In winter, in summer, by night or by day,  
 There's naught like a bowl of Kanaster."

(q) Couch, a most pernicious weed; - somewhat gramineous - but repudiated as food by a starved donkey - this by the farmer, is with much trouble and expense, scuffled out of the soil; and burnt, as it richly deserves, during the summer solstice.

(r) Giraldus Cambrensis observes of the early Britons, that "offering water to wash the feet was the form of invitation (after the fatigues of the day), and that the banquet was in the evening." And our chroniclers, discoursing on the manners and customs of the Anglo-Saxons, and English, mention the dining room, and up stairs; tables removed, drinking till evening; circulating the cup, &c. - adding that they kept it up the whole day on great occasions, and the feast was accompanied with songs and music. Another writer informs us that "upon feasts they rejected butcher's meat, and had conserves, wild fowl, venison, sweetmeats, and pasty, ale and beer (malt wine) being the chief drink."

(s) Nune est bibendum, nune pede libero  
 Pulsanda tellus.

Which Francis renders,

Now let the bowl with wine be crown'd  
 Now lighter dance the mazy round.

Wrangham parodies,

Now drain the bowl, dear comrades; now  
 Strike, strike the earth with bounding toe.

Isacides apud Ainsworth, spiritualizes

Now the time is arrived we may joyously tipple,  
 And he that won't polka must sure be a cripple.

## Fytte VI

## ARGUMENT

Meditations during the process of digestion - The meerschaum -  
 Stranger's notion of the craft - Duty of able craftsmen - Their care  
 of brethren of the noble order - The bard's myth - Caution neces-  
 sary for the safe keeping of the find - Returning - Morning and  
 evening - Arrival at "Home Sweet Home" - Grand finale.

The last faint echo of the song  
 Around us seem'd to flit,  
 Diffusing joy we'd fain prolong,  
 Would time and tide permit. (a)

In silence deep we paus'd awhile,  
 Entranc'd in solemn thought  
 Of ancient chief - of funeral pile -  
 Of deeds our fathers wrought.

The meerschaum fill'd with Indian weed,  
 Or chance the light cigar,  
 The barrow-digger's friend in need,  
 Their fragrance spread afar. (b)

And stranger feet which hither sped,  
 If steeped in classic lore,  
 Might think w' assembled o'er the dead  
 Our orisons to pour.

The song to them would seem a dirge -  
 The smoke of incense tell,  
 Which hallows all within the verge  
 Of ancient Thurible. (c)

And more than these, the sober air  
 Which well-dined men display,  
 When half asleep, devoid of care,  
 Upon the turf they lay;

And words at intervals escape,  
 Although what they portend  
 Is lost in sympathetic gape,  
 The listless idler's friend.

- In men of warm imagining  
 All these high feelings raise,  
 And make their spirits revel in  
 "The light of other days."

But though the long-sought prize is won,  
 And safely stow'd away,  
 One half the task remains undone,  
 And fast declines the day.

Up then and take another view,  
 More treasures may exist;  
 Interments of an earlier date  
 Oft lie beneath the Kist. (d)

And know, before our work is done,  
 And hour of closing is come;  
 We place the relics 'neath a stone,  
 And utter Pax Vobiscum,

Then carefully replace the soil  
 Nor for a moment stand, till  
 The Lowe, by scientific toil,  
 Is robed in its green mantle. (e)



And lest some future barrow-knight  
 A cutting here should make in,  
 And search in vain from morn till night  
 For what we've just now taken;

A leaden label we enclose  
 In pity to such late man,  
 Where one and all may read, who choose,  
 Inscribed the name. T. Bateman. (f)

This said or thought, 'tis all the same,  
 Once more the Lowe they go in - (g)  
 And leave their poet to his game  
 Of telling what their doing.

#### The Bard's Myth

Farewell to thee, Dove Dale!  
 Old Moot-Lowe, farewell!  
 Scenes befitting a love-tale,  
 Green mountain and fell.  
 The barrow, last home of  
 The warrior, and scauld. - (h)  
 Oh! what is become of  
 These mighty of auld?

The dagger or spear may  
 To science disclose  
 The spot, where some chief lay  
 In honour'd repose.

The necklace, once cherished,  
 Of fair maiden tell -  
 But their names e'en are perished,  
 Farewell, oh! farewell. (i)

The signal 's given for packing,  
 Deposit box brought near,  
 No care must now be lacking  
 Towards urn, or horn of deer;

And e'en the bronzed dagger  
 Should gently there be laid,  
 Though erst the foe might stagger  
 Beneath its temper'd blade;

And spear, and bone of hero,  
 Who led the battle's van;  
 Or, like a second Nero, (k)  
 Disgraced the form of man -

All, all have felt time's mighty wand,  
 And, brought again to light  
 Defaced, despoil'd, can scarce withstand  
 The touch, however slight. (l)

At length the well known phrase "All right,"  
 With just a faint "We're late to night,"  
 Set every one in motion -  
 His weather eye the leader cocks,  
 Then climbs alertly to the box  
 With Phaeton's devotion. (m)

Away we go, and what care we  
 For wordly gear, or revelrie.  
 Our sober joys, when gain'd the prize  
 Thy utmost power, dull care, defies.  
 Man never is but to be blest,  
 Is merely poets' idle jest;

For though, perchance, th' enquiring eye  
 Some trifling difference may descry  
 Between our morning's buoyant lay,  
 And tone subdued we now display.  
 'Tis not that we less joyous feel,  
 But, as the evening's shadows steal  
 Athwart our path - and voice of bird  
 Tuning its vesper song is heard,  
 And Zephyr gently from the west  
 Whispers a tale of coming rest;

Or dew-drop sparkling in the moon  
 When brush'd by home-bound peasant's shoon,  
 As 'neath her brightening rays  
 He hastes to reach his humble cot,  
 The labors of the day forgot,  
 In gratitude and praise. (n)

'Tis not, I say, that mirth is fled  
 But calmer feelings che-rish-ed.  
 The sun in his dazzling glory bright  
 Eclipses the rays of the Queen of Night;  
 But the gentle moon, oh! well I ween  
 Sheds as lovely a colouring over the scene.  
 And the landscape, however admired by day,  
 When the sun in the heavens maintains his sway,  
 Awakens a sweeter and holier feeling  
 As the moon thro' the deep azure firmament's stealing.  
 And thus with men, the boisterous shout  
 When the wine is in, and the wit is out,  
 Which may tell of a momentary glee,  
 'Mid scenes of unhallow'd revelry.  
 Will feebly compare with the genuine mirth  
 To which scenes and pursuits of Lowe-digging give birth.  
 And he's surely sand-blind, or at least knows the loss of eye,  
 Who can't in a barrow find mines of philosophy. (o)

But road as well as time is past,  
 And home the knights arrive at last,  
 And gleesomely the story tell  
 Of what adventures them befell.  
 Which all possessing native wits  
 Will find recorded in these Fyttes.

And now, good eve, or buenos noches,  
 As Spaniards say when night approaches.  
 But, ere we close this precious tome,  
 A lay in praise of "Home, sweet home."

### HOME, SWEET HOME.

A new Song to an old Melody.

'Mid barrows and tumuli  
     Though we may roam,  
 Or wherever you may lie,  
     There's no place like home.  
 The library teeming  
     With books rich and rare,  
 And light so soft gleaming  
     'S not met with elsewhere.  
     Home, home, &c. &c.

Or seek the museum (p)  
     For treasures of eld,  
 'Tis there you will see 'em  
     In due honour held.  
 The head of New Zealander,  
     Old British celt,  
 With axe of the Hielander,  
     Sword-knot and belt.  
     Home, home, &c. &c.

Or mummy of Pharaoh,  
 Or Nile alligator.  
 Or petrified hair, oh!  
 Or lava from crater.  
 The dagger of Saxon  
 And goblet of Rome -  
 Then turn not your backs on  
 The barrow-knight's home.  
  
 Home, home, sweet, sweet home,  
 There's no place on earth,  
 Like the barrow-knight's home! (q)

#### Notes to fytt VI

(a) The critique of the Edinburgh Reviewer on a passage in Lord Byron's *Beppo* strikes us as being singularly applicable to the poem before us; "The author frequently rises above the usual and appropriate pitch of his composition, and is betrayed into something too like enthusiasm and deep feeling for the light and fantastic strain of his poetry, - he betrays the secret of his own genius, and his affinity to a higher order of poets."

(b) Sublime tobacco! which from east to west  
 Cheers the tar's labour and the Turkman's rest;  
 Which on the Moslem Ottoman divides  
 His hours, and rivals opium and his brides;  
 Magnificent in Stamboul, but less grand,  
 Though not less lov'd, in Wapping or the Strand;  
 Divine in Hookahs, glorious in a pipe,  
 When tipp'd with amber, mellow, rich, and ripe;  
 Like other charmers, wooing the caress  
 More dazzlingly, when daring in full dress;  
 Yet thy true lovers more admire by far  
 Thy naked beauties - Give me a Cigar!

Lord Byron's Island.

On which Mr. Croker remarks, the taste for smoking has revived, but instead of the sober sedentary pipe, the ambulatory cigar is now chiefly used.

(c) Thurible, a censer, used says Ausonius, in the sacrifices. It was originally an elegantly formed vase, with two elevated handles, like the tea urn of that shape. Latterly they were manufactured of bronze, and suspended by four chains descending from an ornamental



canopy. A beautiful specimen of one exhibited by the Rev. S. Isaacson, is engraved in the first number of the Journal of the British Archaeological Association, page 47, published by H.J. Bohn, at the office of the Association, York Street, Covent Garden, now in the possession of T. Bateman, Esq. The latter form is now generally used for the burning of incense.

(d) This proved to be the case in a remarkable manner in a barrow called Tael's Lowe, near Wetton, in Staffordshire, opened by Mr. Bateman, the Rev. S. Isaacson, and Mr. F.W. Lock. For "having met with one deposit, at a depth of eighteen inches a second skeleton was found, and lower still an octagonal kist, in which was a simple deposit of burnt bones, and what is most unusual, and worthy of remark, this was erected over a skeleton, which lay in a large square kist cut in the rock - presenting the anomalous appearance of a kist within a kist." Derby Reporter. It was on the opening of this Lowe that the Legend was projected, and the Frontispiece designed.

(e) The manner in which the tumulus is restored to its pristine condition by The Knights is most praiseworthy, - after the first shower of rain it would be difficult to tell that the soil had been disturbed. And it is on this account that their scientific inspection is never refused, and very frequently requested.

(f) Mr. Bateman is following in the wake of Sir R. Colt Hoare, and *passibus æquis*. His museum, already rich in *primaeval* antiquities, promises to rival the most distinguished collections; whilst the natural courtesy and kindness of his disposition induces him to open his treasures to all who are able to appreciate them.

(g) The word Lowe, or Low, it may be as well to observe is identical with barrow, tumulus, and sepulchral mound; but is in more extensive use in the Midland Counties than elsewhere.

(h) Scald, or Scald, the ancient bard, or priest among the Northmen. For their character and office consult the Sagas, or Mallett's Northern Antiquities.

(i) As captious, not captivating scribes, may perchance, descry some similarity in this Myth, to that of another great bard, we recommend him to ruminate on the dictum of Coleridge, "Verily," says that great man, "there be amongst us a set of critics, who seem to hold, that every possible thought and image is traditional; who have no notion that there are such things as fountains in the world, small as well as great, and who would, therefore, charitably derive every rill they behold flowing, from a perforation made in another man's tank."

(k) A very respectable monarch, who having destroyed his mother, and set fire to his capital, amused himself with fiddling whilst the flames were dancing.

(l) Excellent instructions which only want to be well observed.

(m) Phaeton, first President of the Four-in-hand Club - unfortunately required a coroner's inquest - through devotion to driving. See Ovid, either original or translated.

(n) Little as the "gay, licentious, proud," may think, there is frequently more genuine, heartfelt piety, more acceptable prayer and praise, seen and heard under the cottage roof than in the castle or palace. The Cotter's Saturday Night of Burns is something beyond a fiction.

(o) The pathos of these lines, and the philosophy of the preceding, when combined with similar passages scattered throughout each Fytte, give a character and harmony to the entire poem, at once original and fascinating.

(p) This is "no figment of the bard." - A better arranged museum, it has not been my fortune to visit. - The Derbyshire primaeval collections are alone worth a pilgrimage. See note (f).

(q) The Esquire cannot terminate his labour of love, without transplanting an opinion of Jeffreys to his critique. That shrewd and intelligent genius declared that "it was no small merit in a man to have perpetrated a thousand respectable rhymes - there must be music in the soul of such a one, the germ of things great and good." And honest Anthony a Wood proclaims; "a painful work it is, I'll assure you, wherein what toyle hath been taken, as no man thinketh, so no man believeth but he that hath made the trial." Now "although," in the words of the former, in these Fyttes, "there is no pomp either of language or of sentiment, and though every thing is conceived and expressed with the utmost simplicity and directness, there is a spirit of pathos and poetry to which it would not be easy to find many parallels." Farewell, then, venerable Bard, - a benison on thee Sir Knight. - May your roof-trees ever flourish; - and your children be as "the polished corners of the Temple." And now

"Ne me crispini serinia lippi  
Compilasse putes, verbum non amplius addam."  
Horatius, not for the million.