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Mounds in Various Parts of England

William Greenwell

Frontmatter

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The discovery of material remains from the recent or the ancient past has always been a source of fascination, but the development of archaeology as an academic discipline which interpreted such finds is relatively recent. It was the work of Winckelmann at Pompeii in the 1760s which first revealed the potential of systematic excavation to scholars and the wider public. Pioneering figures of the nineteenth century such as Schliemann, Layard and Petrie transformed archaeology from a search for ancient artifacts, by means as crude as using gunpowder to break into a tomb, to a science which drew from a wide range of disciplines - ancient languages and literature, geology, chemistry, social history - to increase our understanding of human life and society in the remote past.

British Barrows

Although best known as an archaeologist, William Greenwell (1820–1918) was also ordained as a priest and served as librarian of Durham Cathedral. A keen angler into his later years, he is known too for his creation of ‘Greenwell’s glory’, a famous British trout fly. As an archaeologist, Greenwell excavated nearly 300 burial mounds, carrying out intensive fieldwork from 1862. First published in 1877, this work is a detailed account of some 230 Bronze Age barrows across England, largely in the East Riding of Yorkshire. Organised by parish, this work records these excavations, giving dimensions and descriptions of their form and finds. Accompanying the survey are contributions by the respected Oxford physician and physiologist George Rolleston (1829–81) describing the skulls found in the barrows. Featuring many illustrations of the finds, including the skulls, the book also contains an appendix discussing prehistoric flora and fauna.

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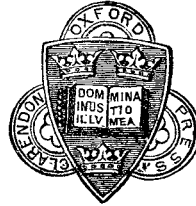
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BRITISH BARROWS
A RECORD
OF THE
EXAMINATION OF SEPULCHRAL MOUNDS
IN VARIOUS PARTS OF ENGLAND

BY
WILLIAM GREENWELL, M.A., F.S.A.

TOGETHER WITH
DESCRIPTION OF FIGURES OF SKULLS
GENERAL REMARKS ON PREHISTORIC CRANIA
AND AN APPENDIX

BY
GEORGE ROLLESTON, M.D., F.R.S.
*Linacre Professor of Anatomy and Physiology
and Fellow of Merton College, Oxford*

Oxford
AT THE CLARENDON PRESS
M.DCCC.LXXVII

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P R E F A C E.

THE work now offered to the public will be found to contain a record of the examination of above two hundred and thirty sepulchral mounds, belonging to a period before the occupation of Britain by the Romans. A considerable part of many years has been devoted to this examination; and, I trust I may say with confidence, the facts collected during this process have been carefully and minutely observed and accurately recorded.

Though numerous barrows have been opened throughout Britain, but few accounts have been given of what has thus, from time to time, been brought to light. Many have been destroyed by shepherds and others, from motives of a mere idle curiosity, or in the delusive hope of finding treasure; still more have been destroyed, under the influence of a curiosity almost as idle, by 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. Naturally in none of such cases has any record of these openings been preserved, and hence what otherwise might have grown into an almost invaluable collection of facts has been entirely lost to archæological science.

Notwithstanding this, however, some extensive series of barrow examinations have happily been undertaken and the results given to the public. Sir Richard Colt Hoare in his magnificent volumes 'Ancient Wilts' was the first systematically to explore and publish a most valuable amount of discoveries in that county and some adjoining districts. Mr. Bateman also in Derbyshire, supplemented by Mr. Carrington in Staffordshire and Mr. Ruddock in the North Riding of Yorkshire, prosecuted a large number of investigations

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in the barrows of those counties, a full account of which will be found in his 'Vestiges of the Antiquities of Derbyshire' and 'Ten Years' Diggings.' For Dorsetshire Mr. Warne has published, in his 'Celtic Tumuli of Dorset,' a record of many barrow-openings conducted by himself as well as by others in that county; and the same has been done for Cornwall by Mr. W. C. Borlase in 'Nenia Cornubiæ.' Besides these larger works, many notices of the examination of barrows will be found in various Archæological Journals, local as well as national. Nor would it be just to omit, though the places of sepulture there treated of belong to a period posterior to that with which my own researches have been connected, Douglas's 'Nenia Britannica,' and that most admirable account of his examination of Kentish cemeteries given by the Rev. Bryan Faussett in the 'Inventorium Sepulchrale;' a work which it is much to be regretted remained in manuscript for nearly a century after the death of its author.

The barrow-openings recorded in this book have principally been made in the East Riding of Yorkshire, a district which possesses in the Wolds a locality abundant in such remains, and where the greater part fortunately had been left uninjured, except in so far as the cultivation of the land during a comparatively short period had to some extent destroyed the surface of the mounds. In the same district a large series of barrows has been most carefully and exhaustively examined by Messrs. J. R. and R. Mortimer, of Driffold and Fimber, the results of whose labours will I hope before long be published.

Accounts of a few of the barrows more fully described in this work have already been given by me in the Journal of the Archæological Institute and in the Transactions of the Berwickshire Naturalists' Field Club, but it has been thought desirable to include these in order to render the series in each case more complete.

To this history of the opening of British barrows are appended two essays by George Rolleston, M.D., F.R.S., Linacre Professor of Anatomy and Physiology in the University of Oxford, under whose charge, in the New Museum of that body, are deposited the skulls obtained from the various sepulchral mounds herein described. One of these essays gives a minute 'Description of Figures of the Skulls,'

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the other 'General Remarks upon the Series of Prehistoric Crania.' It would be impertinent in me to offer any remark upon their importance: the reputation of the author and his well-known intimate acquaintance with the subject make it self-evident how greatly they add to the value of this book.

And here I cannot deny myself the pleasure of testifying how, during all the course of my diggings, I have met with the most cordial co-operation from the many landowners upon whose estates the various barrows were situated. It would be impossible to specify every name, but I am bound to mention the late Earl of Carlisle, Lord Londesborough, Sir Charles Legard, Bart., Sir Henry Boynton, Bart., Sir Tatton Sykes, Bart., Sir W. C. Trevelyan, Bart., P. F. Clennell, Esq., and Alfred Sartoris, Esq. To the occupiers also I cannot fail in making my acknowledgments for much civility and help in many ways; amongst these I would particularly name Mr. William Lovel, of Weaverthorpe, who took a warm and constant interest in the various barrow-openings in his neighbourhood.

I am indebted to John Evans, Esq., F.R.S., for the use of the following woodcuts,—Figs. 4, 10, 11, 14, 25, 26, 28, 29, 31, 37, 38, 42, 43, 47, 87, 93, 99, 100, 104, 105, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 113, 115, 116, 123, 124, 126, 145, 156, 157; to the Society of Antiquaries for Figs. 6, 19, 32, 41, 55, 65, 66, 67, 68, 112; to the Royal Archæological Institute for Figs. 24, 54, 56, 75, 76, 137, 138, 139, 143, 144, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 155; to J. B. Davis, M.D., F.R.S., for Figs. 1, 160, 161; to Mr. Llewellynn Jewitt, F.S.A., for Fig. 2.

I must also express my thanks to Mr. Evans, who, to their profit, has read the sheets as they were passing through the press; also to the Rev. J. C. Atkinson, himself a diligent and careful digger in the Cleveland barrows, for revising this work in the manuscript, and for much valuable counsel; also to my neighbour the Rev. Henry Barrett, to whose critical supervision the book in its literary aspect is largely indebted for whatever of merit, in that respect, it may be thought to possess.

For the drawings of many of the urns I am greatly obliged to the Rev. W. C. Lukis, F.S.A., to whom I am sure the labour was one of love.

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PREFACE.

I cannot take leave of a work in which is recorded the results of the labour of many years without an expression of gratitude for the happy hours and pleasurable associations that labour has begotten. Old friendships have ripened, and new ones have grown, over the graves of the ancient dead; nor can I look back to any part of my life with less of regret or greater satisfaction than that which has been passed in an endeavour to revive, in however faint a form it may be, the almost forgotten past.

WILLIAM GREENWELL.

DURHAM,

October, 1877.

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