

clearly been in use at the same time. The association of the bronze awl with a 'drinking cup' is also paralleled in one of the Rudstone barrows, and the subsequent disturbance of the mound in order to insert in it secondary burials, apparently of the same people as those over whom it was first erected, is a matter of no infrequent occurrence.

PARISH OF RYLSTON. *Ord. Map. XCII. N.W.*

The district of Craven in the West Riding of Yorkshire, in which the barrow now about to be described is situated, is one abounding in various remains of pre-historic times. Discoveries of stone and bronze weapons and implements have occurred from time to time in the immediate neighbourhood of the barrow, and other sepulchral mounds still exist, some of which yet remain unopened, but the greater number have been more or less destroyed by curiosity-hunters, without any note of their construction or contents having been preserved.

There are also abundant examples of those peculiar terraces which, formed on the slope of hill-sides, were at one time supposed to mark the ancient levels of water, but which are notwithstanding clearly of artificial origin. The most common explanation of them, one indeed which has obtained almost general acceptance, is that they are terraces made in the processes of cultivation. It is not very easy to understand why such elaborate works, calling for no slight expenditure of labour, should have been constructed to aid the growth of any crop; for though in some cases, where they occur upon a steep hill-side, they might be needed to prevent the washing away of the soil when it was broken up and therefore more subject to the action of water, in other cases they are found upon slopes lying at such an angle as obviously to preclude the necessity for such a provision. They have been compared to the vine-terraces in Rhine-land, and it has been supposed that soil was artificially collected upon them as it is there, though I have never myself seen any indications of such a method having been practised. They are met with spread over a very wide area. I have noticed them in the East Riding, in Westmoreland (where, near Kirby Stephen, they cover large tracts of ground), in Durham, and Northumberland. Indeed, in the county last named some of them are found, on the precipitous sides of the porphyritic hills on the banks of the river Breamish, at such an elevation as to make it difficult to believe that

any cereal crop could ever have been grown upon them. They have also been attributed to the way in which the separate portions of land in the common field of a village have been ploughed; by which process, at the side of each portion, a bank of greater or less size was gradually thrown up. Some of them, I have no doubt, are the result of such a mode of ploughing, but a large number are evidently due to some different practice, and indeed in many cases they have undoubtedly been cut out of the hill side.

CLXII. The barrow now under notice, which is situated at Scale House, near Rylston, had been dug into at the centre, by the tenant, about a year before I subjected it to examination; and to this disturbance is due in some measure the unsatisfactory condition in which the remains were found. It was 30 ft. in diameter, 5 ft. high, and was made of clay; having a shallow trench close to the base and completely encircling the mound. Immediately beneath the surface of the barrow, at the centre, there was a layer of flat stones, about 6 ft. in diameter, carefully arranged. Under these stones the clay was firmly compacted, and rested upon a thin stratum of dark-coloured earthy matter which was very fully charged with charcoal. Beneath this again was a layer of finer clay, or rather of clay which appeared to have undergone a process of tempering. Below this finer clay, and carefully embedded in it, was an oaken coffin laid upon clay, and to some extent supported by a few stones, the whole being placed in a slight hollow sunk below the surface of the ground. The coffin was formed of the trunk of an oak tree split in two and then hollowed out. It was $7\frac{1}{4}$ ft. long and 1 ft. 11 in. wide; the trunk had been cut off at each end and then partially rounded, but on the outside no attempt at squaring or other workmanship had interfered with the natural surface of the timber. The hollow within was 6 ft. 4 in. long and 1 ft. wide, roughly hewn out, and still showing the marks of the tool employed; the ends inside were finished off square. It was not possible to make out the precise nature of the tool which had been employed, but the appearances warranted the conclusion that it had been a narrow-edged metal implement. The coffin was very much broken, in consequence of the disturbance before mentioned; it was however still sufficiently entire to allow its arrangement to be seen. It was laid north and south, having the thicker end—where the head of the enclosed body had no doubt been placed—to the south. The body had entirely gone to decay, and nothing was observed

which might have formed a constituent part of it except an unctuous whitish substance, which chemical analysis has proved to be of animal origin¹. The corpse had been enveloped in a woollen fabric, enough of which remained to show that it had reached from head to foot [fig. 2]. It was very rotten, and partly on that account, and partly by reason of the infiltration of earth which had found its way into the coffin through the breakage occurring when the barrow was first opened, and which had become mixed up with the cloth, it was impossible to recover any but small pieces of it, or to prove whether the body had been laid in the grave in its ordinary dress or simply wrapped in a shroud. It is on the whole probable that in this case, as in those of some tree-burials discovered in Denmark, the person had been interred in the dress worn by him in daily life, though perhaps it may be alleged that the absence of anything like a button or other fastening is rather against that view. The material is now of a dark-brown colour, due most likely to the tannin in the oak of the coffin; whilst to the acid generated in the decaying wood and set free by the percolation of water is perhaps to be attributed the total disappearance of the bones. There was nothing found in the coffin besides the woollen stuff; nor, with the exception of pieces of charcoal and some burnt earth, was anything met with foreign to the ordinary material of the rest of the barrow.

In the absence of any associated articles in the coffin, or of potsherds or flints in the mound itself, it is difficult to assign a precise date or period to this remarkable burial. But if we take the general shape and construction of the barrow into consideration, as also the encircling ditch, the presence of charcoal and other indications of burning, I see no reason for hesitating to refer it to the people whose usual custom it was to place the body of the dead person in a stone cist or in a grave within the barrow; merely supposing that in this and in a few other instances they departed from their ordinary practice in favour of a wooden receptacle². And

¹ Near to Featherstone Castle, Northumberland, at a place called Wyden Eels, where several wooden coffins similar to this have been found in a wet situation, the bones had decayed entirely away, except in one instance, where however all the earthy part had disappeared, leaving the bones in the condition of a substance very much resembling old leather. The hollows within the bones were filled with the mineral Vivianite. Bones which have been met with in peat bogs have sometimes been found to be in the same condition, the change in them being due to the action of the carbonic acid generated in the peat.

² It may not be without use to bring together in a note other cases, in this country and in Denmark, where burials in tree-coffins of a time before the introduction of iron

when we compare this burial with some others found in this country, and with those which have occurred in Denmark, we can further have little doubt about attributing it to the time when bronze was in use for weapons and implements. The mode of interment in the hollowed trunk of a tree placed within a barrow is no doubt rare, although burials in cleft and hollowed trees placed in the ground without any superincumbent grave-mound are not so uncommon¹; many of these however are not to be referred to a very early period, and indeed probably belong to a time several centuries after the Christian era.

have occurred. In Yorkshire the most noteworthy is the well-known Gristhorpe burial, the remains from which (including a bronze knife) are preserved in the Scarborough Museum, and which are engraved, together with a plate of the skull and a full account of the discovery, in *Crania Britannica*, as well as in a monograph by Professor Williamson, F.R.S., of Owens College, Manchester. I am acquainted with three other cases in Yorkshire where an oak coffin has been found in a barrow. One was at Sunderlandwick, near Driffeld, where I believe nothing besides the skeleton was met with. A second was discovered on the wolds near Fimber, by Mr. J. R. Mortimer. It was under a mound which had been previously disturbed, and where, in a hollow sunk in the rock, a coffin made from a cleft and hollowed oak tree was met with, unfortunately much damaged by the former opening; with the remains of the coffin were fragments of bones and some portions of an urn. The third was in a barrow called 'Centre Hill,' at West Tanfield, near Ripon, where the Rev. W. C. Lukis in 1864 found the remains of a body lying N.E. and S.W., and placed within a wooden coffin, probably the trunk of a tree. It had been placed in a cavity 1½ ft. deep. With the body were associated a vessel of pottery and a flint implement. In the southern parts of England the same mode of interment was sometimes adopted; at Hove, near Brighton, a tree-coffin was found to contain a skeleton, with which were associated an axe-hammer of stone, a knife-dagger of bronze, a whetstone, and an amber cup. *Sussex Arch. Coll.*, vol. ix. p. 120. Sir R. Colt Hoare met with three instances in Wiltshire where a barrow contained a body placed in a hollowed tree-trunk; with each of these bronze articles were deposited. *Ancient Wilts*, vol. i. pp. 52, 122, 125. Mr. Lukis also found one in the same county at Collingbourne Ducis. In Dorsetshire, in a grave-mound called 'King Barrow' at Stowborough, which was opened in 1767, was discovered an oaken trunk hollowed, in which were the remains of a body wrapped in deer's-skins sewed together, and apparently passed several times round the corpse. At the south-east end of the coffin was a small wooden or probably shale vessel of very unusual character, which is figured in *Hutchins's Dorset*, vol. i. p. 25. When we pass beyond the limits of Britain we find, in Denmark, still more interesting burials to have been made in tree-coffins. The bodies there were found to have been placed in the grave with the different articles of clothing which had been worn during life, together with bronze swords and other implements of bronze and flint. The coffins and other things connected with interments of this kind in two barrows called 'Trenhøi' and 'Kongehøi' will be seen engraved in *Madsen's beautiful book*, 'Afbildninger af Danske Oldsager og Mindesmærker,' and some of them are reproduced in *Sir John Lubbock's Prehistoric Times* (3rd ed.), pp. 46, 47, 49. A discovery very similar to these last mentioned was made at Bolderup, near Haderslev, and will be found described in *Nordisk Tidsskrift for Oldkyndighed*, vol. iii.

¹ They have been discovered in Yorkshire, at Selby and near Beverley. In other parts of England they have repeatedly occurred.