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Parish of Great Witcombe, Two Romano-British Sites

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PARISH OF GREAT WITCOMBE, TWO ROMANO-BRITISH SITES

NAT: GRID REF: SO.901137

This site is indicated by a spread of Romano-British pottery and tile fragments covering an area of approximately half an acre; within the area are low mounds which appear to conform to a rectilinear pattern. A well-defined bank extends from the site in a north-westerly direction for a distance of 100 yards, where it aligns with a terraced way traceable to a point above the springs named Tile Well on the 6-inch. O.S. map. The ruins of a post-medieval cottage stand on, or near to, the track at the last-mentioned position. Adjacent to the site and track are terraces and linear ditches, which may possibly be associated with the site, the purpose of their construction being at present inexplicable.

Mr E. Greenfield tested the site on behalf of the Ministry of Works during the period of his 1961 excavation at the Witcombe Roman Villa. He found that the linear mounds consisted of rubble containing Romano-British pottery, and that no evidence of a masonry building or construction existed.

Samples of Romano-British pottery from this site, including one fragment of Samian ware, have been deposited at the Gloucester City Museum.

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An area in which 'Roman Tiles' have been found was reported to the writer by Mr Gay, game warden to the estate of Major Hicks-Beach, M.P. With the kind permission of Major Hicks-Beach, the area was visited in the company of Mr Gay, Mr Greenfield and their respective assistants.

Shortly after the find position was pointed out, pieces of broken tegulae were picked up; it was noted that black soil containing fragmentary tile and/or pottery appeared to spread from a small steeply scarped plateau approximately 30 feet above the initial find position.

Mr Greenfield subsequently tested the site on behalf of the Ministry of Works, in his initial cuttings finding layers of burned material. A later cutting proved to be in the centre of a possible lime burning kiln, or place where lime burning had taken place, of the Romano-British period.

NOTES

I wish to thank Mr Gay for his co-operation, and I am indebted to Mr E. Greenfield for communicating to me his findings in the last cutting.

Mr G. B. Wits in his Archaeological Handbook of Gloucestershire recorded an ancient trackway, known as the Sarn Way, which passes within a few yards of these sites.

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