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Tumulus near Bown Hill Long Barrow

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TUMULUS NEAR BOWN HILL LONG BARROW

In 1870 the late Mr G. F. Playne lectured to the Cotteswold Naturalists' Field Club on 'The Early Occupation of the Cotteswold Hills by Man',¹ and in his published list of tumuli, Bown Hill is numbered 8, where he writes 'Circular 60 feet in diameter, ploughed down'.

Witts² in 1883 writes under Round Barrows, No. 1 Bownhill—'it was 60 feet in diameter, but has now been ploughed down'.

It is also listed by Mrs O'Neil and Mr L. V. Grinsell³ as No. 1 Bown Hill, SO 82240185. They say it is 30 paces in diameter, and 2 feet in height, and that it was visited by Mrs O'Neil on the 13th of May 1940 when on arable, the cover slab of stone cist ploughed out 1940, E.M.C. excavated and found a piece of human skull. After their visit to the site on the 13th of May 1940 Mr and Mrs O'Neil called on me, but I was away from home, so they left a note saying they had found a large stone protruding through the soil in the middle of the barrow and that it appeared to them that it was the capstone of a cist. The field was being harrowed preparatory to planting and the ploughman had told them the stone would have to be moved in a few days time. They asked me to see what could be salvaged.

On my return home I visited the barrow on the 19th of May and obtained permission from the foreman to investigate, the owner, Mr A. G. Lister being on active service. I found that the stone noted by Mrs O'Neil had already been moved, and that it measured 5 feet in length (PLATE XII).

On the 21st May I took two men and removed the first layer near the centre of the barrow which was composed of disturbed material about 1 foot in depth. This revealed a flat stone which was almost as large but thicker than the one already removed (PLATE XIII). Both were irregular in shape and did not appear to be dressed. There were two further large stones, and beneath them smaller stones resting on natural rock. The small amount of construction which remained was carefully built of stone, some pieces measuring 3 feet 6 inches by 2 feet 6 inches.

¹ *C.N.F.C.*, v, p. 378.

² *Arch. Handbook of Glos.*, p. 95.

³ *Trans. BGAS*, LXXIX (1960), Pt. 1, p. 137.



PLATE XII Protruding stone removed by farmer



PLATE XIII Stone immediately below the surface

facing p. 214

NOTES

In 1940 it was seventy years since Playne recorded that the barrow was ploughed down and it is possible that it had been rifled by that time. Continual ploughing would account for the fact only its lowest courses then remained.

My permission to investigate covered only the 21st of May as the field was already being planted. The only finds were four fragments of bone and one of human skull. It cannot be definitely stated that the large stone found in 1940 formed any part of a cist, but if not, they most certainly were the foundations of an impressive barrow.

E. M. CLIFFORD.