

DISCOVERY OF TWO STONE COFFINS.

PARTICULARS OF STONE COFFIN UNCOVERED NOVEMBER, 1917, IN A FIELD AT PRISTON, NEAR BATH.

SITUATION.—In a field known as "Great Cross Barn Close," lying between the road from Bath to Priston (via Odd Down), and a road known as Mill Lane.

Field is part of Hill Farm, in the occupation of Mr. Chas. Lippiatt. The owner and lord of the manor of Priston is Captain William Vaughan-Jenkins. Position in which coffin was found is 167 yards north of the main road. It was brought to light in the course of cutting a drain across the field.

Top of coffin about 2 feet below surface. Rested on clay subsoil. Direction of length was north to south. Head to the north. From some cause or other the coffin had tilted sideways towards the east.

DESCRIPTION.—Coffin of roughly hewn stone, apparently hewn with a pick. Rounded at head and very slightly at shoulders, then tapering to square foot. Cover in two pieces, the longer (head) length hollowed to form lid fitting over head and sides of coffin. Lower (foot) length was not hollowed but roughly shaped.

DIMENSIONS.—Outside length of coffin, 6 feet. Inside length is 5 feet 7 inches. Inside width at shoulders 16½ inches. Width at foot, 9½ inches. Outside depth (without cover) 10½ inches. Inside depth 7½ inches. Thickness of sides 2½ inches. The longer piece of the cover measures 4 feet 2 inches, and the shorter piece 2 feet 4 inches. Thickness of cover is 4 inches. A slight depression for the heels is formed in the bottom of the coffin.

CONTENTS.—The coffin contained a complete skeleton. Lippiatt affirms that when the cover was first removed the skull was not in its proper place in relation to the rest of the frame, but was lying face downward on the chest. He says the skeleton occupied the full length of the coffin and that the shoulders were well up into the head of the coffin.

The skull was small but thick in substance. Teeth were perfect, not much worn and very white. I measured one of the lower leg bones at 13 inches.

REMARKS.—The place had been overrun by people on Saturday and Sunday, some of whom had broken the coffin, smashed the skull and most of the bones, and carried away parts of the latter. Lippiatt has part of the lower jaw with four teeth.

Dr. Bullied has visited the site and I believe saw the skeleton before it had been disturbed. I am given to understand that in his opinion the skeleton is that of a female about 35 years of age.

ORNAMENTS.—Dr. Bullied removed two bronze bracelets from the arms. These are of five strands of bronze wire twisted cable fashion. No trace of clasps. The inside dimensions are 2¾ inches by 2 inches. Diameter of cable, ⅝ inch. These bracelets are in the care of Mr. Lippiatt awaiting the disposal by the Lord of the Manor.

I am having the humus inside the coffin washed and the earth surrounding it sifted to ascertain if anything has been overlooked.

I enclose a tracing from the Ordnance Map, showing the exact position in which the coffin was found.

The armlets have been photographed by my son, K. W. Calvert, who has handed them over for reproduction.

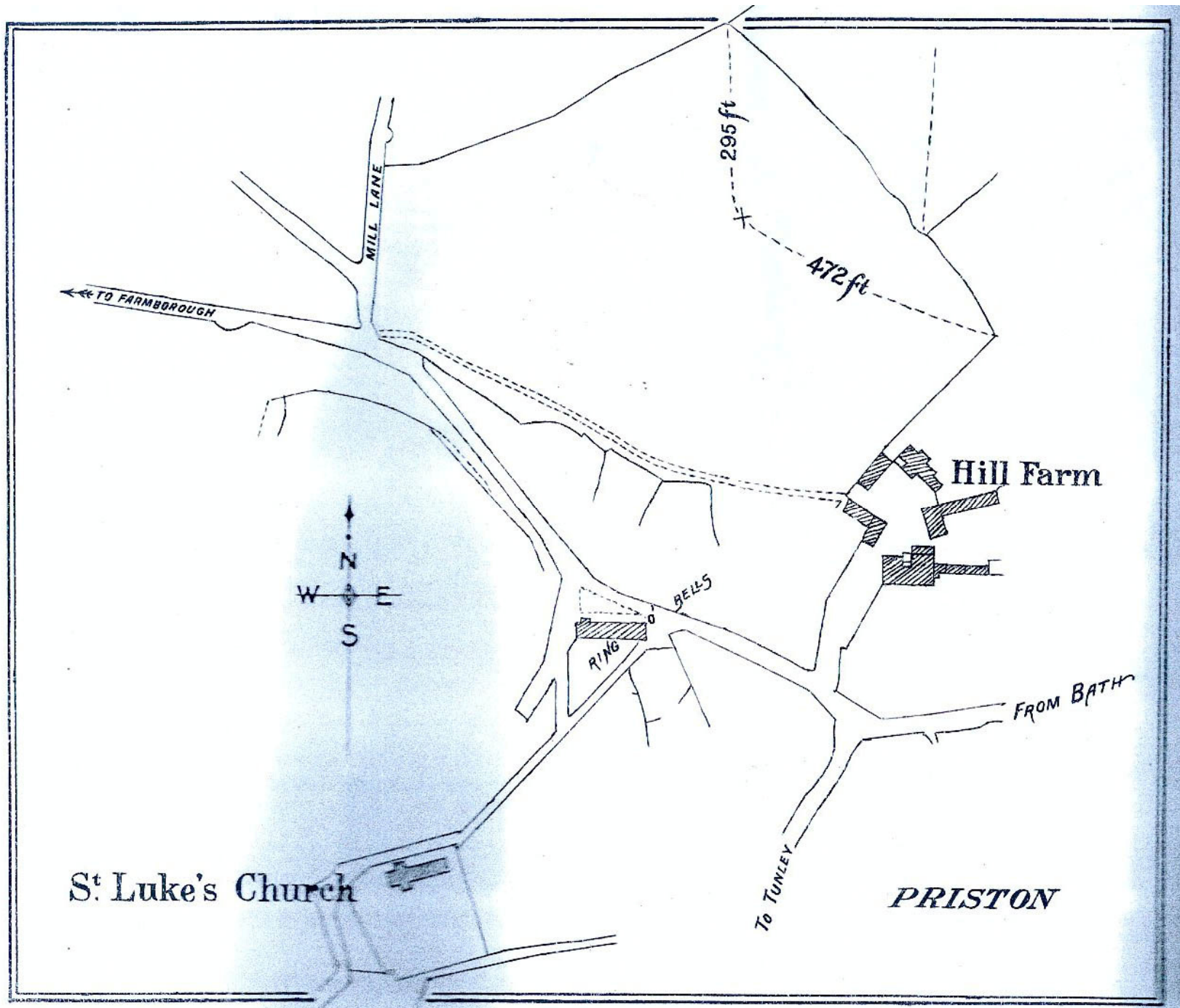
CHAS. J. CALVERT.

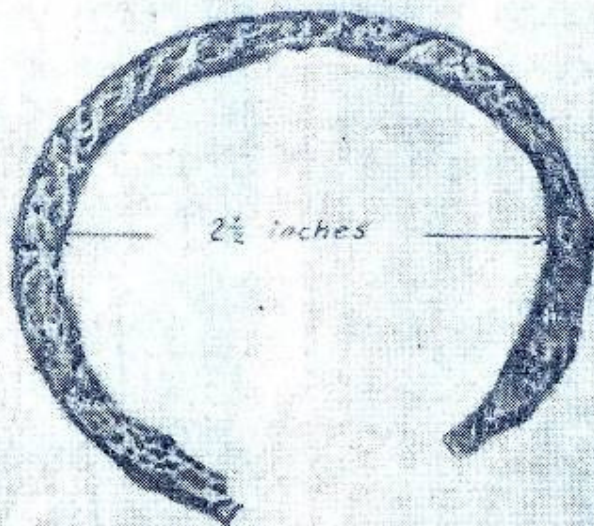
6, TERRACE WALK, BATH;
December 4th, 1917.

REPORT ON THE DISCOVERY OF A ROMAN COFFIN AND REMAINS, MIDFORD, 1917.

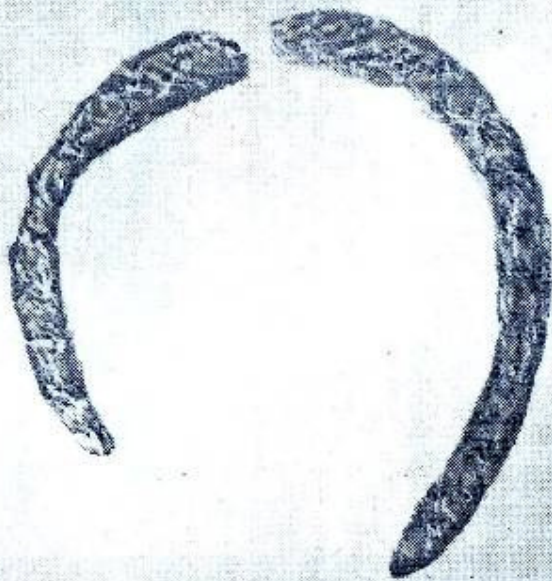
On December 5th I received a letter from Supt. Jennings, of the County Police Office, Weston, Bath, informing me that Mr. Fletcher, of Midford Hill Farm, had that day unearthed in one of his fields, a stone coffin containing a skull, and two leg bones of an adult person. On December 9th I went over to Midford and called on Mr. Fletcher, who accompanied me to where the coffin lay in situ. By the compass its position lay N.E. and S.W., the head to the N.E. The situation of the coffin was almost in the centre of a ploughed field on the brow of a hill, overlooking the valleys of Midford and Wellow, and east of the main road leading to Hinton Charterhouse.

When ploughing the ground the blade struck the cover stone and the ploughman was sent for a pickaxe to remove the obstruction, and in doing to unfortunately broke it into





*PAIR OF BRONZE BRACELETS REMOVED FROM
STONE COFFIN FOUND AT PRISTON, 1917.*



*H. W. CALVERT
PHOTO.*