

CHAPTER XV.

THE MOUND MOOT.

*The Mound-Moot an earlier form—'Cruc, Pennocruciu-, Cenn Cruaich'—Etymology of 'Gorsedd'—'Côr, χορὸς, corro, curia'—The Chair as a symbol of dignity—Mound-Moots possibly mistaken for cenotaphs—'Handley Down, no. 24'—Other Examples—'Cruc' as an element in modern place-names—Middle-English 'creke, a grave'—Confusion of 'cruc,' 'creke,' and 'civic'—'Cruc' etymologically the same as 'Circus'—'Circus' develops to *cirk (kirk) and 'civic'—Cornish Rounds—Summary of the pre-Christian argument.*

What was the form of the older moot before the Brythons introduced the stone circle? Stone circle, Latin *circus*, Danish *ting* and Achean κύκλος, being all modelled upon actual barrows, we should expect to find the same feature in any earlier moot. The barrows of the earlier peoples we know were the 'bowl' or the 'bell,' and analogy would suggest that their moots were of similar appearance.

The late Sir John Rhys, after mentioning¹ that one of

¹ *Lectures on the Origin and Growth of Religion*, pp. 202-204; *Welsh People*, p. 7.

the titles of the Celtic Zeus was 'Chief of the Mound' (Irish *Cenn*¹ *Cruaich*, Old Welsh *Penn Cruc*²), saw the word *cruc* in the place-name Pennocrucium, mentioned in the *Itinerarium Antonini* (route II) as a station on the Watling street. This place is now Penkridge, 6 miles south of Stafford, but in documents of the eleventh and thirteenth centuries³ it is called Pencric. It lies within what were the *finēs* of the Brythonic Cornavii, whose capital was possibly at Viroconium (Wroxeter).⁴

Cruaich is the genitive case of *cruach*, which means a 'corn-rick, stack, a symmetrically-shaped hill, a heap.'⁵ *Cruachan* is a diminutive of the same word. Both words occur frequently in Gaelic place-names, and are applied indifferently to natural and to artificial hills. Thus *Cruc Mhic Dara* is 'a round humpy islet' in the bay of Galway; *Cruachan Aichle* (now Croagh Patrick) is a conical mountain in Mayo, girt by a dry-stone rampart and famous for its close association with St. Patrick; and the great *rath* which overlooks the ancient cemetery of the kings of Connaught in Roscommon was *Rath Cruachan* (*hodie* Rathcroghan).⁶ The Welsh forms *cruc*, *crug*, have precisely similar meanings and uses; in common speech *crug* means 'a heap or stack (of hay, straw, etc.)' or 'a barrow,' *gwyddgrug* is a 'grave-hill,' *morgrug* an 'ant-hill.' In place-names it denotes an isolated conical barrow-like hill: *Cruc Mawr*, 'the great *cruc*,' was the name of the knoll beside the road from Aberaeron to Cardigan, now called Banc y Warren⁷; and it is probably the initial element in such names as Criccieth and Crickhowel (*Crug-Hywel*, Howel's *Cruc*).⁸ The old name of Old Radnor was Pen

¹ Or *Crom*.

² Modern Welsh *crug*, 'a barrow.'

³ *Cart. Sax. nos.* 1041, 1317. It is *Pencric* in Aethilheard's charter (*Cart. Sax.* no. 147), which exists only in a fifteenth-century copy.

⁴ Lloyd, *Hist. Wales*, i, 73.

⁵ Kuno Meyer, *Contributions to Irish Lexicography* (1906).

⁶ The ordinary modern Irish term for a round barrow, which is written *cnoc*, is commonly pronounced *croc*: cf. *Folk-lore*, xxix, 233, where *Cnoc-na-muice* is given as an alternative to *Crook-na-muck*, 'Hill of the Pig.' In Oronsay *crob* is the customary term for a mound, e.g. *Croch Sligach* (shelly mound) and *Croch Riach* (grey

mound); R. Munro, *Prehistoric Britain*, p. 120.

⁷ Nennius (*Hist. Brit.* 74) calls it *Mons Cruc Mare*, and says that upon its summit was a *sepulchrum* with magic properties akin to those of the Bed of Procrustes. He adds that any tired traveller who made three turns (the *deisul*) about it, would never be tired again. Girald. Cambrensis (*Iter Cambriae*, ii, 3) also mentions this tumulus.

⁸ The *Cruc Occident* of Nennius (*Hist. Brit.* 27) was perhaps Mont-Saint-Michel in Normandy (*Cruc Occident* in *Vita S. Cadoci*, 42), 'qui propter eminentiam tumulus, seu, ut loquuntur, tumba vocabatur' (*Rouen Breviary*, 16 Oct.), the Latin *tumba*

Crug or *Pen Cruc*, the *Cruker* of Giraldus Cambrensis, 'because it stands on a rocky eminence.'

It is easy to see how the term might be applied equally to a hill, a hay-rick, and a barrow, for the common feature of all these is the regular circular plan and the conical outline. Ninety-nine out of a hundred Welsh barrows are of this type, and to this day the Celt, insular or continental, almost invariably builds his small crops of corn and hay into circular ricks, knowing nothing of the rectangular 'stacks' of English farming.

In Ireland the same word is applied also to simple ringworks or *raths*. Thus Croaghan, Mullaghorn Hill, co. Tyrone, is an earthen ring-fort faced with stone; Rathcroghan, Roscommon, is a typical triple-walled *dun*, but the adjacent Cruachan is a mere ring-barrow; so is the Cruachan of the Luighne at Ballyara, Connaught.¹ Yet more conclusive is the case of the monument which once stood at Ballymagauran: it was a *cruc*, for its 'chief idol' was *Cenn* (Crom) *Cruaich*, but it was itself a circle of twelve² stones. So the term *cruc* applied also to stone circles,³ and it seems that the circular plan was quite as essential as the conical elevation. In other words, the radical signification of *cruc* is something circular.⁴

Sir John Rhys pointed out that *Pen-yr-Orsedd*, still a very common place-name in Wales, signifies 'Top⁵ of the *Gorsedd*,' and concluded that *cruc* in such names as *Pennocrucium* denoted a mound which served the purposes of a *gorsedd*, that is, of a moot. The word *gorsedd*, 'while etymologically meaning any high station or high position, and used in Welsh literature of the middle ages in the sense of a mound or tumulus, came to be the word for a throne or judgment-seat.' It is the word constantly used in the

merely translating the Celtic *cruc*. The Cornish forms of the word are *kryk* or *crechen* (Borlase, *Corn.-Eng. Vocabulary*), *creek*, *creeg*, *crig* and *crug*; the Breton is seen in *Cruguel* and *Krukendo* (*Crucuno*).

¹ Information of the late T. J. Westropp.

² 'Four times three stone idols,' says the original Irish verse.

³ For some emphatic remarks upon the vagueness of the Irish use of such terms as *rath*, *dun*, *sid*, *cruach*, etc. see the late T. J. Westropp in *Proc. R.I.A.* xxxiv (1917), sect. C, no. 3, pp. 57-59.

⁴ *Kirk* was the Celtic name of the divinity of the rushing wind of the Rhone valley, the mistral ('master wind'), called to this day *Cers* by the people of the Midi; Duruy, *Hist. Rome*, Eng. trans. (1884), iii, 105. The Romans adopted it under the form *Cercius*, 'the north-west wind.' These names are related to *cruc* as cyclone to *κύκλος*, tornado to *tornus*, vortex to *verto*.

⁵ i.e. a prominent position near a *gorsedd*. *Pen* in such expressions is often more nearly rendered by 'near' or 'next to': cf. *Pen-y-lan*, *Pen-y-bont*.

Welsh Bible for the 'throne' of the Almighty, as is *gorseddfanc* (i.e. *banc*, 'bench') for the 'judgment-seat.' Seemingly in the earlier period it always connoted some sort of hill, artificial or otherwise: thus in the *Mabinogion* the oft-mentioned Gorsedd yn Arberth ('*Gorsedd* of the woodlands') is clearly envisaged as a hill,¹ possibly the very hill upon which stand the ruins of the castle of Narberth, representing a some-time royal seat of the kings of Dyfed. But in the *Triads* the term is applied to the stone circle of Boscawen-Ūn, and in the Welsh Bible again it is used to render the 'theatre' of Ephesus.² Yet neither Boscawen-Ūn, nor any Greek theatre whatever, could possibly be thought of as a mound.

The second element of the word *gorsedd* is identical with Latin *sedes*, 'seat'; the first element is doubtful. Sir John Rhys identified it with the common Welsh prefix *gor* (= *super*), but many other writers, and amongst them Silvan Evans and Professor Skeat, have referred it to *côr* (Irish *cora*, Cornish *coer*) meaning 'a circle, an inclosure in circular shape, choir of a church, band of singers,' and finally 'an ecclesiastical edifice' as in Bangor (anciently Banchor,³ literally 'High choir'), Côr Illtyd, Côr Seiriol, Côr Enlli, and Côr Emrys or Côr Ambri, now Amesbury (for Ambresbury⁴) near Stonehenge. In all these cases the reference is presumably to the fact that the earliest Christian settlements of these islands were unquestionably circular in plan. Stonehenge itself is called indifferently Côr (or Gwaith) Emrys, 'Ambrosius' Choir (or Work), and Côr Gawr, 'the Giant's Choir,' and the latter name is applied also to the traditional stone circle of Mons Killaraus (p. 156). The English word 'choir' long retained the suggestion of a body of persons standing round in a circle, and the notion of circularity, says Silvan Evans, 'is inherent in all words of which *côr* is the first element.'⁵

¹ 'From the top of the *gorsedd* they looked and listened,' *Mabinog.* p. 54; 'the highest part of the *gorsedd*,' *ibid.* p. 60.

² *Acts*, xix, 29, etc. As *ibetrum* was convertible with *circus* (above, ch. vi), the three terms *θεατρὸν*, *circus*, and *gorsedd* had come to be synonymous.

³ *cp.* the Scottish Banchorry (p. 143). The syllable forms the prefix in the name of Corwen near Llangollen, and in an inscription (c. 1300) upon a sepulchral effigy in

the church this name is written Corvaen (i.e. Côr-maen, 'Choir of the Stone'), possibly referring to the great menhir still to be seen in the churchyard. The church, which claims to be dedicated to SS. Mael and Sulien, the latter an Armorican saint of sixth-century date, is a place of very great antiquity and unusual sanctity.

⁴ *A.-S. Chronicle*, 995.

⁵ *Welsh-Eng. Dict.* s.v. *CORGI*. *Corgi*, 'a small or worthless dog, a cur,' exhibits

Others pronounce any connexion of *gorsedd* with *côr* to be 'absolutely impossible'; but on the other hand the North-Welsh *corlan*, 'sheepfold,' is normally *gorlan* in South-Welsh and in Cornish—*gorlan*, 'a sheepfold, a churchyard,'¹—and in Celtic lands churchyards were invariably circular, sheepfolds usually so. In Irish *cora*, *coer*, *cor*, may signify 'a round hill,'² and so too in Manx.³ How these words are related, if they are related at all, to the Greek χορός is not clear, but Hesychius says that χορός properly means the same as κύκλος and στέφανος.⁴ Primarily a 'place for dancing,'⁵ the word came to be particularly associated with the circular floor (ὀρχήστρα) of the Greek theatre. It survives to-day in the χορός of a Greek church, the central and often markedly circular space between the chancel (βῆμα) and the nave, around which at certain seasons the singers move in procession. Its central point was sometimes selected as the burial-place of persons of exceptional distinction, as when Constantine was buried at the central point of his circular church of the Twelve Apostles in Constantinople.⁶ The circular arena being apparently unknown in ancient Crete,⁷ the question arises whether the circular χορός, like the ἱερὸς κύκλος, was not introduced into Greece by the Celts.

the derogatory prefix *cor* (unaccented), meaning 'dwarf'; cf. *cordref*, 'hamlet.' It has no connexion with O.W. *cor*, 'sheep,' for which see the next note.

¹ Polwhele's *Cornish-English Vocabulary* (in *Hist. Cornwall*, 1816). Others would derive *corlan* from an obsolete Welsh *cor*, 'sheep,' comparing Irish *caor*, Gaelic *caora*, 'sheep,' and Irish *caorlann*, 'sheepfold'; but Silvan Evans denies that any such word was ever used in Wales. 'Corlan' is not necessarily a pen for sheep, but is applicable to any circular enclosure; and the old sheepfolds were usually of that [circular] form' (*Welsh-Eng. Dict.* loc. cit. citing R. Williams, *Lex. Cornu-Britannicum*, and Th. Richards' *Tthesaurus*).

² Joyce, *Place-Names of Ireland*. The word appears in the name of Lough Gur, said to be expressive of its circular shape (*Journal Cork Hist. and Arch. Soc.* xxv, p. 69) and possibly in *cuirr*: *Hitagar dul icruaich cuirr*, 'I fear to go to the round Rick (of Croagh Patrick),' as Whitley Stokes doubtfully renders it (*Three Middle Irish Homilies*, pp. 56-7).

³ A. W. Moore, *Manx Place-Names*.

⁴ Liddell and Scott, *Lexicon*. The word κύκλος is constantly used of any circular enclosure, and in Dio Cassius (72, 19) it signifies an amphitheatre. From *Odys.* viii, 260, it appears that the use of the ἱερὸς κύκλος as a dancing-floor was quite customary, and from *Odys.* vi, 6, 5, that χορός might denote the ἱερὸς κύκλος itself. It becomes doubtful therefore whether the familiar 'Cyclic Chorus' was so called because it was a round dance, rather than because it was originally danced in the ἱερὸς κύκλος; doubtful also whether the name of 'Dance' (German *Tanz*, Cornish *Dawns*), as applied to stone circles, is not a translation of *côr*.

⁵ *Odys.* viii, 260; xii, 4.

⁶ So with the same builder's original church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, and with the two churches which he built in Rome to enshrine the bodies of his daughters Constantia and Helena, and of the greater Helena his empress.

⁷ Angelo Mosso, *Palaces of Crete* (1907), p. 31c.

In Spain, where there was a large Celtic element, traces of the same word appear in *corro*, which means 'a circle or ring formed by people who meet to talk or to see a show,' 'a circular space,' and also 'a sort of dance.' The word in this sense is said to be certainly not a derivative of the Graeco-Latin *chorus*, although *corro* in the sense of 'a race' is as certainly derived from the Latin *currere*, Spanish *correr*. Conversely the dictionary gives as the Spanish equivalent of 'circle,' *corro* and *corillo* and *cercos*¹; so that here again one finds *corro* related to *cercos* as *chorus* to *circus*, *χορός* to *κρίκος*, *côr* to *cruc*. Similarly in Portuguese *corro* signifies 'a place in which to bait bulls, a bull-ring,' but also 'a club, society.'² From this again come *corral*, 'a circular enclosure for cattle,' and the Cape-Dutch *kraal*, the circular aggregation of huts which is a Kaffir village.

Reasons have been given (ch. vi) for suspecting a connexion between *χορός* and *curia*, and again between *curia* and *circus*; and the uses of the word *côr* make it pretty certain that this word is itself related to *curia*. The transition of *côr* from the sense of 'a circular place of meeting' to that of 'a place of Christian worship,' is precisely parallel with that of *curia* from the sense of 'a circular moot' or *circus* to that of 'a church.'³

It does not appear that the word *côr* is at the present day applied to any stone circle or other circular work of antiquity in Wales, but that it was at one time so used is suggested by various facts. The earliest Christian holy places in the west were certainly circular, and this is what *côr* implies. It was used of the holy places of certain of the greater saints, and in the form Bangor (for Banchor) it attached to several ancient religious foundations of special dignity, like Bangor Iscoed. In Scotland in its plural form *corau* it is probably the second element in the name of Banchory, which occurs twice, associated in each case with remarkable stone circles and with noteworthy

¹ Neuman and Baratti, *English-Spanish Dictionary*: 'El cerco formado por un número de personas reunidas formando círculo.'

² Michaelis, *English-Portuguese Dictionary*.

³ As constantly in the fourteenth century. Thus a grant made by Hugo de Boclande, circa 1300, mentions 'four acres of land lying inter curiam persone de Inkpenne et la Penne' (A. R. Ingpen, *An Ancient Family*, p. 144).

saints.¹ The name occurs also in Ireland² and in Cornwall.³

In the modern bardic *gorsedd* (fig. 34) there is no suggestion of any mound, but circularity of plan is an essential. In other words there has happened exactly the same to *gorsedd*

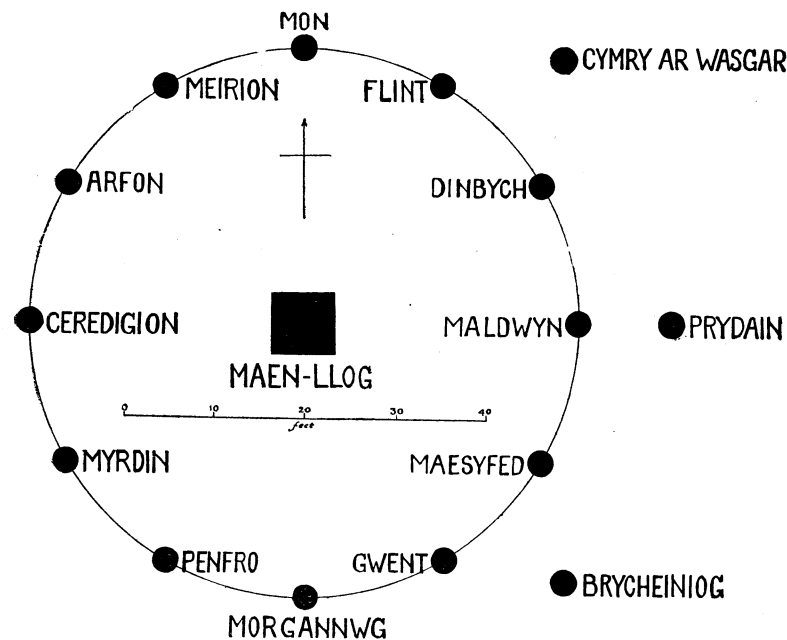


FIG. 34. PLAN OF MODERN GORSIEDD CIRCLE, ABERYSTWYTH.

Erected for the National Eisteddfod of 1914. In the centre is the Altar-stone. The other stones are inscribed in 'Bardic' letters (see *Arch. Camb.* 1846, p. 473) with the names of the donors. Commencing with the north point the twelve stones of the circle represent the counties of Anglesey, Flint, Denbigh, Montgomery, Radnor, Monmouth, Pembroke, Carmarthen, Cardigan, Carnarvon and Merioneth. The three outliers represent the Welsh Abroad (NE.), England (E.), and Breconshire (SE.). The stones stand from 6 to 8 ft. above the ground and are partially tooled.

¹ Above, p. 143. A *circus*-like earth-work in Mochrum, Wigtownshire, is known as Corwall. 'The relics of a stone circle' subsist at Nether Corskie in Echt (Bp. Browne, *Antiqs. of Dunbart.*, p. 52). Coir-stone Wood, Druminnor, Aberdeenshire, surrounds a stone circle; another (now destroyed) in Banffshire was known as Core-stanes (*Proc. S.A.S.* xl, 205); a third stood on a site called Corrie Down (*ibid.*);

and yet a fourth stands at a spot called Corrie in Farr, Caithness.

² e.g. in co. Down, 12 miles NE. of Belfast, where was a famous monastery founded by St. Comghall in 552. In this case the name has been explained as *Beann Chair*, 'White Church.'

³ In Bangors, a hamlet in Poundstock near Bude.

as to *cruc* : each was originally a circular *mound* of a specific purpose, and each presently came to be a circular *superficies* of the same specific purpose ; and the similarity of *gor* to *côr* would readily give rise to some subconscious false etymology. The question of derivation is after all of no particular moment, for, whatever the prefix, the *gorsedd* was of necessity the central *focus* of a number of people gathered about it. If a speaker addresses an audience, his hearers naturally gather about him in a circle,¹ whether the speaker be raised on a platform or not ; and in the latter case the speaker does not stand in the centre of the circle with some of his audience at his back, but himself becomes one of the circle, like him who occupied the dais to preside in the moot-circles of Aberdeenshire.

There is evidence enough that a circular mound was the first, as it was the most natural, form of moot. When Homer's Zeus holds council amongst the great gods, he occupies the highest pinnacle of Olympus 'apart from the rest.'² When Vergil's Aeneas proclaims the funeral games in honour of the dead Anchises, he addresses his audience from a mound³ ; and when he presides at the games he takes his seat upon something expressly built for the purpose in the *circus*.⁴ When Caesar met Ariovistus in conference, the *rendezvous* was a tumulus.⁵ Irish writings constantly allude to 'hills of ceremony,' upon which the native chieftains were inaugurated. Spenser noticed their use as late as 1590,⁶ and in the *Cattle-Raid of Cooley* the Ultonian fighting-men parade past a mound which has been raised to provide a seat for king Conchobar.⁷ On the occasion of an Irish *aenach* the chieftain and notables took their seats on or near the mound (barrow) which marked the scene of the gathering.⁸ When administering the law the Brehon 'sitteth doune upon a banke.'⁹ At the present time 'I was not on the *cnoc*' is a common Irish expression meaning 'I was not present at the

¹ cf. Addison, *Spectator*, no. 1 (1st Mr. ch., 1711), 'Rounds of politicians . . . little circular audiences.'

² *Iliad*, i, 16.

³ *Aeneid*, v, 43. It is clear from vv. 75-6 that this mound was not the barrow of Anchises.

⁴ *Aeneid*, v, 288-290.

⁵ *Bell. Gall.* i, 43, 1.

⁶ 'There is a great use amongst the Irish to make greates assemblies together upon a rath or hill' (*State of Ireland*, Globe edn. p. 642).

⁷ Borlase, *Dolmens of Ireland*, p. 1051, citing from the *Tain Bo Cuailgne*.

⁸ O'Curry, *Manners and Customs*, i, p. cclv.

⁹ Campion, *Hist. of Ireland* (1571), p. 26 ; Walker, *Irish Bards* (1786).

function.'¹ The Gaulish Mercurius took his titles from the hills whereon he was worshipped.² So in Wales the higher mountain-summits are especially the seats of the mighty : Cader Arthur, a peak of the Brecknock Beacons (The Van), is king Arthur's chair or throne.³ St. Cadoc preaches from a mound,⁴ St. David from a high hill⁵ ; and when the latter elects to preach from the level ground at Llanddewibrefi, the soil 'rose as a high mountain under his feet.'⁶ The ancient Welsh court of law normally assembled upon a mound.⁷ In Scotland the list of 'law-hills' is extremely long : typical examples are the mote-hills of Ellon and Errol, and that known as Dundonald in Knapdale.⁸ The communal court of Whitsome in Berwickshire met at a mound called the Birle Knowe.⁹

The same association of ideas is to be found in the Teutonic lands.¹⁰ It is equally as prominent in the Scandinavian regions : the Norse *haugr* (*hog*, *hogue*, *howe*), like the *ting*, was at once the moot of its community and the seat of the presiding chieftain. The gods of Norse mythology 'sit upon the high seat in Valhalla' with Odin. In the *Heimskringla Saga* to sit upon a *howe* is spoken of as 'the manner of kings.'¹¹ For a king to take any other than the highest seat was to abdicate his throne. When

¹ 'Alluding to the ancient custom of holding ceremonies of importance in elevated positions.' So Macdonald, *Gaelic Dictionary* (1902), where *cnoc* is interpreted 'hill, knoll, eminence . . . council, court.' In the Outer Hebrides the communal meeting-place was known as *Cnoc-na-Comhairle*, 'Council-hill' (Gomme, *Village Community*, p. 144).

² A small Gallo-Roman bronze found in the ruins of the temple (*ante* A.D. 250) on the summit of the Puy-de-Dôme, bears the contemporary legend MERCURIO DUMIATI.

³ So Cader Idris, Cader Fronwen. Whatever its ultimate derivation, *cader* was here felt to mean 'chair.' According to Silvan Evans, *cader* or *cadair* is the Brythonic form of the Gaelic *catbair*, and both answer to the Greek *καθέδρα*. McClure would refer *cader* to Latin *castrum*. It probably represents two distinct words which have become confused. There is further involved a third element, which appears in such names as St. Catherine's Hill (twice in Hants.) and Catherton (Salop and the Border). These appear to embody a

Celtic god-name, which has been assimilated to the St. Catherine of Christian hagiology, doubtless on purpose, the saint's legendary wheel supplanting the Celtic *roth-fail* in pagan high-places.

⁴ *Life of St. Cadoc*, c. 24.

⁵ *Life of St. David*, § 49.

⁶ *ibid.* § 52.

⁷ See further below, ch. xix.

⁸ See a long list in Gomme, *Primitive Folk-moots*, pp. 164 sqq. He mentions the holding of courts at the cairn on the hill of Conan, parish of St. Vigeans, Forfarshire, in 1254, 1375, and 1409 ; and quotes (from *Proc. S. A. Scot.*) a reference to 'the king sitting, as *us is*, in the royal seat upon the *mound* of Scone.'

⁹ Gomme, *Village Community*, p. 206. Birle (mediaeval *birlag*, *birlawe*, the modern 'by-law') reappears as the Bierlow of Yorkshire place-names, and the confusion of the original *log* (O.N. 'law') with *blaw* (O.E. 'hill') reflects the intimate association of the two.

¹⁰ As e.g. in the numerous Malbergs (p. 295).

¹¹ *Story of Harald Hairfair*, c. 8.

the hound of Eystein the Evil was made king over the men of Thrandheim, 'a high seat was dight for him, and he sat on a howe as kings do.'¹ In the *Saga of Harald Hairfair* the expression 'high seat' is to all intents convertible with *ting*.² In Norman England the *Mons placiti* (*placitorum*), 'Hill of pleas,' was to be met with on every hand. To be seated at all was a sign of authority,³ and the higher the seat, the higher the dignity; and in semi-barbaric times the simplest means of providing a 'high seat' was an artificial mound.

If it be correct to think that those who built the stone circles had so far advanced as occasionally to differentiate the purely ritual from the administrative moot, marking the former by the addition of an external fosse, as at Avebury, Arbor Low, and Stonehenge, it is not unreasonable to surmise that some at least of their contemporaries may have made a like advance, and may occasionally have distinguished a purely ritual mound in the same fashion. There are fossed mounds which, otherwise inexplicable, may consistently be interpreted as counterparts of the great fossed circles; and if they are relatively few in number, this is precisely what one would expect.

Pitt-Rivers thoroughly examined such a fossed mound ('Handley Down, no. 24') near Woodcuts.⁴ Perfectly circular, with a diameter of 23 feet, it was but two to three feet high. He dug it entirely over, but found nothing in it whatever beyond three pits which had been sunk in the original surface-level before the mound was thrown up. He speaks of these as so many 'graves,' but in none of them was there found any determinable trace of an interment. Each had been filled in with the chalk which had been dug out in making it, and the solitary find was the digit of a small ox.⁵ The mound had a shallow penannular fosse

¹ *Story of Haakon the Good*, c. 11.

² Above, p. 128.

³ 'The importance of being seated when acting officially runs through the whole of Roman ceremonial etiquette, subordination being expressed when the people stood before the seated magistrate, equality when the senate sat in his presence' (Smith's *Dict. Class. Antiq.* third ed. ii, '619 b). Exactly the same was the case in the Homeric *agea*.

⁴ *Excavations*, iv, pp. 149-157.

⁵ Apparently a customary sacrifice to the dead in Achean Greece (*Odys.* xi, 30), and therefore an appropriate victim to consecrate the spot where were worshipped the communal ancestors. So it was also in Rome. Bones of the ox were found in the consecration-deposit of the temple at Wroxeter; cf. Roach Smith, *Antiquities of Richborough*, p. 165, who found 'many bones of a small sort of ox in the foundations' of the amphitheatre there.

with the opening towards the south-west. Only a happy accident revealed the fact that round this 'cenotaph,' within a radius of 24 feet therefrom, had been buried no less than 52 urns each containing a cremated interment.¹ Why was this? The mound itself was proved not to be sepulchral, yet obviously it was a place of sanctity; for whether the surrounding burials be explained as those of persons who sought to be buried within the shadow of the mound, or as those of victims sacrificed at the spot, the mound itself must equally have been a *locus sacer*. It lay within a little distance of a British settlement. By all analogy it can have been nothing else than a ritual *cruc*.

As the Achean, Latin, and Celtic circle-moots were severally developed from later forms of the sepulchral ring, so presumably was the earlier mound-moot developed from the primitive round barrow; and as the circle-moot required to be hallowed by its consecration-grave, so also would the other.² The seats of kings would gather to themselves in their turn something of that divinity which 'doth hedge a king,' and would develop each into a recognised *focus religionis*.

Does this explain the occurrence of so many mounds, generally of considerable size, but of small elevation, which have been proved by excavation to be artificial, yet contain no discoverable interment, or none which can be regarded as original? Colt Hoare mentions them,³ and in reference to the particular case of Hatfield barrow at Marden, Wiltshire, says that he 'could not satisfy himself that it was sepulchral,' expressing the opinion that it was 'a druidical place of assembly.'⁴ Greenwell found several in the north of England.⁵ Indeed all the more active barrow-hunters have met with them and wondered over their purpose.⁶

A mound in the parish of Weaverthorpe (Yorks. E.R.) was 80 feet in diameter and 3½ ft. in height. It was raised over an oval fosse (70 × 60 feet), 3 feet wide and 3½ feet

¹ They lay mostly adjacent to the entrance-way, and each had been interred separately.

² As the Norse *baugr* was likewise the burial-place of the chieftain's ancestors, kindred, or wife.

³ *Ancient Wilts*, ii, p. 89.

⁴ *ibid.* pp. 5-7.

⁵ *British Barrows*, pp. 27-8.

⁶ Several examples of such *tumuli inanes* are recorded in Warne's *Celtic Tumuli of Dorset*.

deep. No trace of any interment was discovered. The soil in the centre, for the depth of a foot above the natural surface, was exceedingly hard, as if puddled by trampling. The locality abounds in all the evidences of a dense population, barrows and other earthworks, flint implements, etc. The excavator pronounced it to be 'the most perplexing barrow I have ever met with.'¹

A mound in the parish of Rudstone (Yorks. E.R.), again one of a large number of anhistoric earthworks, was of almost the same diameter (78 ft.), but as much as 6½ ft. high. Like the last, it was built over a fosse (4 ft. wide), and as in the other case, the soil about the centre seemed to have been puddled. The work had been thrown up over two smaller and earlier mounds (diam. 27 ft. and 17 ft.), neither of which was sepulchral. It contained the remains of at least thirteen interments, of which Dr. Greenwell pronounced all to be secondary or intrusive. Excavated in the natural chalk beneath it was a pit 6 feet in diameter and 5 feet deep, 'filled in with chalk rubble, and containing nothing beyond the filling-in, except two flint chippings and a quantity of charcoal.'²

A mound in Goodmanham parish (Yorks. E.R.) was 100 feet in diameter, but 4½ feet only in height. It was built of 'very tenacious clayey earth.' It yielded a food-vessel, placed eccentrically at a distance of 11 feet SE. by S. from the centre, with no trace of human remains.³

Yet a fourth 'cenotaph' was in the parish of Kilburn (Yorks. N.R.), amongst a large group of sepulchral barrows. It was 56 feet in diameter and 5 feet in height, and was curiously built of small stones enclosing a mound (diam. 29 ft.) made of alternating layers of white and yellow sand. Again there was no trace of any interment, but amongst the few finds was a small slab of sandstone bearing a cup-mark upon each face.⁴

¹ *British Barrows*, pp. 192, 202-3.

² *British Barrows*, pp. 233, 247-251. Something similar to this was found at Gib's Hill, the 15-foot-high circular mound lying 1,000 feet west of the stone circle of Arbor Low. The mound was built over 'four smaller mounds of indurated clay intermixed with wood and charcoal,' and near the summit was a cremated burial 'with a small food-vase' (*V.C.H. Derby-*

shire, i, 182-3). The position of this interment, so high up in the mound, suggests that the mound was not originally reared to be a sepulchral barrow.

³ *British Barrows*, p. 301. The position of the food-vessel is noteworthy, as there is evidence that the consecration-grave frequently occupied this position.

⁴ *ibid.* pp. 430-1.

It will be noticed that not one of these examples is recorded to have shown an external fosse.

No people can be imagined to have built mounds of such a kind, whether the diameter were 56 feet or 100 feet, for no particular purpose; still less to have built them with such studied method as is shewn by the peculiarities of these instances. Greenwell was satisfied that none of the four was designed for a sepulchral barrow. Their purpose therefore remains an enigma unless they were 'hills of ceremony,' that is, moots. For this purpose their flattened form would well fit them.¹ The puddling noticed in some of them the excavator thought might be due to the mounds' having been built in wet weather, but it might equally well be the result of long use of the mounds as places of meeting. The food-vessel found at Goodmanham and the pit observed at Rudstone—much like the so-called graves of 'barrow no. 24' on Handley Down (p. 350)—may represent the consecration-graves, and the Rudstone mound would seem itself to have been a reconstruction, upon a larger scale, of two earlier non-sepulchral *crucs* embedded within it. The interments in the Rudstone mound, certainly not original, were probably made at a period when the true purpose of the mound was forgotten. Human nature being still the same, it is certain that what had sufficed an earlier age for its moot, would not always satisfy a later age; that one by one many of these earlier moots would be reconstructed or wholly abandoned; and that, once abandoned, they would be put to purposes useful perhaps, but wholly different from those originally intended.

A barrow (diam. 60 feet) lying 600 yards south of Old Sarum produced no interment which could be regarded as primary, although there were found some fourteen secondary burials, all inhumated, some of which were believed to be of Romano-British date. All but one of the bodies were extended, the exception being crouched in a sitting posture. This was found 'at the SE. corner of the barrow.' With the bodies were scraps of bronze and of iron, and a fragment of rude pottery of herring-bone pattern. Central or so to say principal burial there was

¹ Mention has been made above (p. 128) Upsala, one of which is still known as the of the flat-topped unfossed mounds of Old Tingshogen, 'moothill.'

none, but just east of the centre 'the solid chalk had been cut out to form a shallow cist. This however did not contain a skeleton or burnt bones, but only some detached ox-teeth and two or three fragments of the bones of the same animal.'¹

The mound had unquestionably been *used* as a barrow; that it was *made* for a barrow is difficult to believe, for there was no central or principal interment. The peculiar pit with its contents is suggestive of some sort of consecration deposit. The mound had been deliberately constructed, it had the plan of the customary *locus consecratus*, and apparently it had its consecration-grave. This also may have been a *cruc*.

The list of such cases might be extended almost indefinitely. The most cautious allowance being made for cases where there is any doubt, or any possibility that the original central burial was overlooked, there remain scores of such 'cenotaphs.' It will be noticed that none of the cases cited shows an external fosse, a peculiar characteristic of sepulchral mounds. On the other hand many of them show marked elaboration of construction, and many show what, in default of any better explanation, may be regarded as a foundation deposit.

To argue from the analogy of the Achean *ἱερὸς κύκλος*, the Greek *prytaneum*, the Roman *circus*, and the Irish *aenach*, the original moot of the Indo-European community was the actual grave of some great leader. As society evolved, the ritual which required a veritable grave was modified so far that a merely symbolical burial sufficed. This appears to have been the evolution in Greece and in Italy; it appears to have been the evolution also in Celtic Christianity; and it may well have been the same in Celtic paganism. That the older barbaric procedure survived in certain cases is likely enough, as for example in the consecration of any spot of very special sanctity or dignity; but there is no need to imagine its surviving in the case of every *cruc* in every small community. There were unquestionably very wide variations in the culture of the various peoples of the British isles in pagan times, as there are to this day, and there is no warrant for taking

the worst practices of the most degraded tribes as typical of all. It is this loose thinking, which would for example transfer to the Celts at large the hideous barbarities by Strabo¹ attributed *on hearsay* to the Cimbri of Germany, that has brought so much discredit upon British Celtism. The typical British Celt of the times of Caesar and Tacitus was not a savage by any means, though some British tribes, possibly even some Brythonic tribes of Britain, were undoubtedly savages.

It is certain that a discarded *cruc* frequently came to be used by other peoples as a place of sepulture. It is reasonably certain that the sepulchral mounds of one people came in the same way to be used as the moots of other peoples.² A generation which tears up the lettered grave-stones of its own forefathers to use them as paving cannot well find fault with those who converted into a doorstep the ogam-stone of the princess Avitoria (ch. xix) nor can we reasonably doubt that the undistinguishable grave-mounds of the prehistoric time would occasionally suffer the like utilitarian abuse. Barrows long and round have been utilised as gun-platforms and mill-balls; they have been eviscerated to accommodate reservoirs or to make shelters for shepherds; they have served to carry churches and gibbets indifferently; they have been converted into Norman *mottes* or taken to serve as boundary-marks; and quite a large number of them have done duty at one period or another as the moot-hills of Saxon hundreds or of English manorial courts, lucky to escape a worse fate. What English and Saxons did, some far earlier population might also do, in that remote period when successive Celtic tribes were entering these islands.

It is remarkable that where is found the circle-moot, there is frequently found also in the immediate vicinity a mound, and this apparently not originally sepulchral. Thus the relation of Gib's Hill to Arbor Low is parallel with that of Silbury Hill to Avebury. So again with the mound adjoining the Bull Ring, Chapel-en-le-Frith. These, it is true, are all cases of the deeply fossed ring-works which, it is suggested, are religious rather than administrative moots; but the unfossed circle of Wet Withens

¹ *Trans. Salisbury Field Club* (1890-3), i, 51.

² Strabo, § 294

² This was certainly the case upon a wholesale scale in Saxon England.

in Derbyshire has likewise its adjacent mound only forty yards away, there is a mound close beside the ringwork at Castlestead (p. 196), another close to the *circus* on Chettle Down, and other examples could be accumulated. It is conceivable that some of these mounds were the original moots of the communities which subsequently built the adjacent circles, not remodelling the older works, but constructing new ones as near thereto as might be convenient. In some cases perhaps both moots continued in use,¹ the newer circle being presumably used for debate, games, and other matters, while the mound was retained for other purposes for which it was peculiarly suitable, especially for the promulgation of law.² Such a differentiation was but a matter of common sense: the circle was just as suitable for certain purposes as the mound was unsuitable, and *vice versa*.

There are upon the map of England, Wales, and Scotland, a number of place-names which indisputably preserve the Celtic word *cruc*. The pronunciation of the word was *creek*, just as the modern Welsh *crug* is so pronounced as to rhyme with *league*. In south Britain *cruc* normally becomes *creech*, but the occurrence of Creke for Creech, Somerset, in *Index Villaris* so late as 1680, shows that the palatalisation was not complete 250 years ago even in Somerset.³

In such names as Creech, Crick, Crickley, Crich, Crichie, Crichel, the word is obvious. It is not so obvious, though demonstrably present, in forms so different as Cricket, Croichlow, Crutch, Kirkley, and even Woodcray.⁴ Clearly it is a Protean element, and it is no matter for surprise to find it in Creighton, Crook, Cruckberrow, and even in Crouch and Crutch.

Penkridge, Staffordshire, lies on the little stream now called the Penk, a tributary of the Trent. No one has seriously questioned its identity with the Roman Penno-

¹ As in Rome the *Circus Maximus* subsisted side by side with the *Forum* and *Curia*, and as in Athens the *Pnyx* and the *Dionysiac* theatre were in simultaneous use.

² And for the execution of the law, i.e. as a place of execution, because of its greater conspicuity. Hence the multitude of 'Gallow(s) hills.' See above, ch. vii, on

the Icelandic Lawhill and Hangman's hill.

³ Prof. Allen Mawer reminds me that the same hesitation is to be seen in the present-day names in *-wick* and *-wicz* (both coming from O.E. *wic*) irrespective of dialect.

⁴ *Introd. to Survey of Eng. Place-Names* (1924), p. 25; *Chief Elements of Eng. Place-Names* (1924), p. 16.

crucium (*Itin. Anton.* ii) since Camden first suggested it.¹ The Saxon form of the name was *Pencric*, and the modern form is due to aetiology: the second syllable, its meaning forgotten, has been misconstrued and miswritten *-ridge*, the initial *c* being tacked on to the preceding syllable, which was then taken to be the name of the stream, the *Penk*.

As *Pen-yr-Orsedd* is a common name in modern Wales, its equivalent may very well have been common in Celtic England; and both *Pentridge* and *Pentrich* may represent each another *Pennocrucium*.²

Pentridge is in Dorsetshire, four miles north-east of *Cranborne*. Johnston cites the form *Pencric* from an unnamed charter of 958. The downs in the locality are so thickly strewn with barrows that they have been spoken of as 'the barrow-centre of *Cranborne Chase*,'³ and the *Ackling Ditch*, the Roman road from *Old Sarum* to *Badbury Rings*, passes $\frac{1}{4}$ mile to the west of the village. It was clearly an important centre of population in early times, and as such it must have possessed its own *cruc*.

Pentrich is near *Belper* in Derbyshire, beside the Roman road from *Derby* to *Templeborough*. In *D.B.* it appears as *Pentric*. Three miles to the west is *Crich*, now pronounced with the *i* long, as in *strike*. Written *Crich* in 1680,⁴ it was *Creach* in *Camden's* work, *Cruch* circa 1300, and in *D.B.* *Crice*, *Crick*, and *Cric*. If *Pentrich* represents 'the place near the *cruc*,' *Crich* apparently represents the *cruc* itself. Even in the eighteenth century the spot was 'pre-eminent for Roman discoveries,' not less than four considerable finds having then been recorded.⁵

The place-name *Creech* is frequent in Dorset and in Somerset. A mile outside *Taunton*, on the south bank of the river *Tone* in the parish of *West Monkton*, is *Creech Barrow*, a conical and isolated hill of 100 feet, referred to in a charter of 682⁶ as 'the hill which in the

¹ Stukeley demurred on the ground that *Penkridge* is not upon the actual line of the Roman *Watling Street*.

² So Johnston, *Place-Names*, p. 399. The confusion of *c* and *t* is a commonplace. *Pennocrucium* itself appears in some manuscripts as *Pennocrutium*.

³ Heywood Sumner, *Earlworks of Cranborne Chase*, p. 48.

⁴ *Index Villaris*.

⁵ *Archaeologia*, x, 31. That the term *cruc* should occasionally come to be the name of a community is parallel with the similar use of Latin *forum*, Irish *aenach*, English *market*, and even *church*.

⁶ *Cart. Sax.* no. 62.

British tongue is called *Cruc-Tan*, but by us (Saxons) *Crycbeorh*.¹ *Cruc-Tan* means 'the *Cruc* on the *Tone*,'¹ *Cryc-beorh* means 'Cryc-hill,' and *cryc* is the Saxon transcript of the Celtic *cruc*. *Cryc-beorh* had in *D.B.* become *Crice*, and it is now *Creech*.² The map marks a Roman road on the western flank of the hill.

Here is documentary evidence that the Saxons adopted the Celtic word *cruc* and wrote it *cryc*.

North and South Creech (*D.B.* *Chirche Criz*; 1280 *Crech*, *Crych*) lie at the foot of the conical and isolated hill of Creech barrow in Church Knowle, near Corfe, Dorset; and the name of Creech barrow is identical with *Cryc-beorh* of the charter of 682. A field in the adjacent parish of Combe Kayne bears the odd name of Young Creech: it contained two barrows, 'apparently' sepulchral.³ At West Hatch, Somerset, is Little Creech farm. Creech hill occurs one mile west of Cranborne, and again two miles south-east of Evercreech in Somerset. The last-named means *Eofers' cryc*. In the vicinity of Evercreech converged a number of Roman roads, the Fosse road, the Badbury-Uphill road, and a third coming from Glastonbury. The names *Crich* and *Criche* (*Taxatio*, 1291) both belonging to Dorset, cannot be identified.⁴ Near Frome is Critch hill, and near Poole in Dorset is Creekmore.⁵ Critchlow, again identical in meaning with *Cryc-beorh*, is a personal name in Somerset (Bath, etc.). And in Lancashire is Croichlow.

Crick is a parish in Northants. beside the Watling street. *D.B.* and *Taxatio* write it *Crek*, *Creke*, *Creyk*; Camden has *Creke*, and Bridges in 1791 has *Creek*. It is the name also⁶ of a hamlet and chapelry in the parish of Matherne St. Pierre, two miles south of Chepstow and the same distance east of the Roman *Caerwent*, Mon. On the Blackdown hills near Buckland St. Mary, Devon, is Crickleaze, near Northay barrow and the Roman villa at

¹ The local pronunciation of the modern Taunton is still Tahnton.

² There is a parish of Creech St. Michael two miles to the east (written *Cyricestun* in 882 by confusion with the assertive saint-name of St. Cyric). The intermediate form *Creke* (or *Creek*) occurs as late as 1680 (*Index Villaris*).

³ Hutchins, *Dorsetshire* (1861), i, p. 364.

⁴ Some of the forms *Cruk*, *Cruch*, *Cruche*, occurring in *Taxatio*, 1291, may refer to the extinct manor of *Cruca* near Bridgwater.

⁵ Or *Creakmoor*. It has yielded an-historic remains (Evans, *Ancient Stone Implements*, 2nd ed. p. 122).

⁶ Written *Trikke* in *Valor. Eccles.*

Whitestaunton. Crickfield (*Taxatio*, *Crikfield*) in Glamorgan-shire has its doublet in Critchfield, near Bosham, Sussex, a house under the foundations whereof was found a cinerary urn.¹ Cricket Malherbie (*D.B.* *Cruchet*; 1284 *Cruk*) and Cricket St. Thomas (*D.B.* *Cruche*; 1431 *Cryket*), two parishes of Somerset lying on or near the Fosse Way, are explained by the form *Gruchet*, i.e. *Cruchet*,² which reappears in Crickett, one of the twenty-four townships of the parish of Ellesmere, and also in Crickheath, four miles south of Oswestry, both in Salop. So also Cricket Hill in Hants. and Cricket Farm in Nunney, Somerset; Cricketway and Cricket's Cross in Dorset. Pennicricket (lane) in Oldbury, Worc., is apparently related to Penkridge and its congeners as is Cricket to Creech.³ Crewkerne has a different origin,⁴ but it is possible that *cruc* reappears in the 'conical knoll' of Crook Hill which overhangs it. Crayke, in the Forest of Galtres between York and Thirsk, was *Creac* in 1607,⁵ and Craike hill is a mound near Fimber, E.R.⁶

In Norfolk are North and South Creak (*D.B.* *Kreic*). Both lie on the old road known as the Padder's (or Peddar's) Way, and South Creak, where is a large earthwork of Roman form, has been known as the scene of Roman finds since the time of Sir Thomas Browne.⁷ Johnston cites⁸ a *Crichetot* (*Crichetoft*? or *Crichetoot*?) from the

¹ *Suss. Arch. Coll.* xxxvi, p. 244. In Cricklade (905 *Creccagelade*, 'Crecca's road') appears a personal name, seen also in Crickenby, one mile south of Dewsbury.

² Representing a diminutive (probably Norman French; cf. Ham and Hampnett) of *cruc*, *cryc*.

³ Duignan, *Place-Names of Worcestershire*.

⁴ In the tenth century *Crucern*; *D.B.* *Crucha*; 1285 *Crukes*; 1277 *Cruk*; 1315 *Cruke*, *Crukerne*. See *Trans. Som. N.H. and Arch. Soc.* xxxvii, pp. 12, 73; *Notes and Queries*, 12th ser. ii, 470, iii, 16. In Camden (Gough's ed. 1772) i, 179, it is *Crookhorn*, a form which recurs in Hants. on the Roman road from Bedhampton to Purbrook, and in Climping, Sussex.

⁵ Tenth century *Creic* (*Cart. Sax.* no. 1255); *D.B.* *Creic*; 1197 *Crech*; 1236 *Creek*, *Crek*. Roman remains are abundant at Easingwold, a mile or two away.

⁶ J. R. Mortimer in *Reliquary* ix. John-

ston cites also a *Crakehill* in Topcliffe, Yorks.

⁷ *Hydriotaphia*, i. But the particular urns of which the finding inspired the writing of that masterpiece, are now declared to have been Saxon.

⁸ *Place-Names of Eng. and Wales*: cf. *Criquetot* in Normandy. There is in Normandy a considerable group of place-names containing the element *crique* or *creque*; e.g. *La Crique*, *Criquebeuf*, *Yvecrique*. Many of these Longnon (*Noms de lieu de la France*, pp. 282-3) would refer to *Kirke*, 'church,' and in some cases the older spellings bear out this derivation. On the other hand *Fabricius* (*Dansker Minder i Normandiet*, pp. 291-2) denies it. A Scandinavian original might be suggested by the fact that such names are practically confined to Normandy, but the fact that most of them belong to the old lands of the Bellovacii and the heart of Gallia Belgica may point to a Celtic original.

Norfolk Pipe Rolls (1167-8). In Cornwall the word becomes *creek*, as in Trencreek¹ near Grampound, and Polcreek. In Herefordshire also, four miles south of Ross, is Pencreek.²

Cruc is undoubtedly the first element in Cruckbarrow,³ the name of a hill in Worcestershire, as also in Crukton, a township of Pontesbury, Salop. There is a Crooker⁴



FIG. 35. STONE SEAT NOW IN DUNNABRIDGE POUND.

Said to have been originally the President's Chair of the Stannaries Court on Crockern Tor.

hill in Boxgrove, Sussex, and near to Crickham (Creekhams) and Christon (1298 Cricheston) in Somerset is the 'strangely formed pyramidal eminence' of Crook's Peak. Such various forms lend colour to the belief that the same word is present in the name of the Crook of Lune, a

¹ Tref-an-cruc, Trencreeg, 'town of the barrow' (Polwhele, *Hist. Cornwall*, i, 136). Dr. Borlase recognised the identity of *kryk* with the Irish *cruach*, and Richard Carew (*Survey of Cornwall*, p. 34) renders Crueg braaz by 'the great borough,' i.e. 'great hill.' Cricklas is Cruc-glas, 'green hillock.'

² Penn Creic in *Lib. Landav.* later Pencreig.

³ Cruckberew, Crokeborow, in 1275 (Johnston). There is another Cruck-

barrow hill in Kent. Johnston would explain the name as referring to the crock-like form of the hill; but was not a crock (pot) so called because of its circular form? In the dialect of Warminster a pitcher is to this day called a 'critch.'

⁴ Now written Crocker on the maps. The names Crock and Crocker not seldom have reference to the sites of ancient potteries; e.g. Crock Hill in Hants. (Heywood Sumner, *Earlworks of the New Forest*, p. 33).

prominent hill near Sedbergh, in Crike, an isolated peak (1,596 feet) south-west of Ennerdale Water, and possibly in some of the many Crooks and Crookas¹ of the northern counties. The associations of Crockern (Croken)² Tor, two miles north-east of Princetown, as the customary scene of the court of the Devon Stannaries, make it possible that this name also is related to *cruc*, if only by assimilation. In Salop are several Cronk Hills, recalling the Manx *cronk*, 'a hill,' itself a nasalised form of the Gaelic *croc* or *cnoc*. The map shows many Crouch hills and Crutch hills, and while the usual interpretation of the names as Cross hill (O.E. *cruc*, 'a cross') is now looked upon as dubious, Prof. Ekwall would recognise the word *cruc* in, for example, the name of Crutch in Worcestershire.³

The charter above quoted concerning Creech barrow in West Monkton has been taken as conclusive proof that *cruc* in that instance meant 'hill.' Such an inference is by no means above question. In the first place the word *beorh* cannot be taken as necessarily implying the presence of anything which would to-day be called a hill: much more often in place-names it signifies merely an artificial grave-hill, a barrow. In the second place, though tautology is confessedly of frequent occurrence in place-names, it is the exception, not the rule; whereas, as Prof. Allen Mawer points out,⁴ the element *cruc*, if compounded at all, is usually compounded with *beorh* or one of its equivalents (*law*, *how*, *hyll*). It is doubtful whether there can be found another case in which one and the same non-Saxon term has been treated in the same uniform fashion in a score of cases ranging from one end of England to the other. Such uniformity suggests rather that *cruc* stood for something very definite for which the Saxon

¹ Inevitably confused with other names derived from the O.N. personal name *Krokr*; e.g. Crookhurst (Cumb.), Crook (Westm.), and perhaps Crosthwaite. See Sedgefield, *Place-Names of Cumb. and Westmorland*. Others again appear to belong to *crook* in the sense of a 'bend' in a road or a river.

² Crockerentorre in 1725 (Pearce, *Laws and Customs of the Stannaries*). Isaac Taylor wished to connect the name with the Welsh *gragan*, 'to talk.' There long remained here a monolithic stone seat (fig. 35)

curiously analogous to the *θῶκος* of the Aberdeenshire circles. See Rowe, *Perambulation of Dartmoor*. It has been removed apparently from its original site and embodied in the 'pound' at Dunnabridge, where it serves as a seat for the person in authority on the occasion of the periodical round-up of the Dartmoor ponies.

³ *Introd. to Survey of Eng. Place-Names*, p. 25.

⁴ *Chief Elements in English Place-Names* (Eng. Place-Names Society, vol. i, pt. 2) p. 16.

tribes had as yet no Saxon name, and that, when used as a prefix, it had the adjectival force usual in such compound forms in the Saxon tongue.

An alternative explanation would take *cruc* to mean 'rock.' But the *cruc*-names are largely found in chalk areas where, save for a sarsen here and there, there is no rock whatever; and though the rendering 'hill' suits admirably the peculiar case of Creech barrow, it is quite as remarkably unsuited to many of the spots to which the *cruc*-name attaches, to Crichel for example.

What then did *cruc* (*cryc*) mean? Sir John Rhys held it to denote a *locus consecratus* of the Britons, marked by some sort of mound. He identified it with the Welsh *crug*, 'barrow,' and this again with *crug* (Old Welsh *cruc*) in the sense of 'rock.' Now although Welsh may have had a word *cruc* or *crug* in this sense, parallel with the commoner term *cerrig*, it is quite possible that with *cruc* in that sense the word seen in Pennocrucium has nothing whatever to do. Rhys made much of the point that it signified a 'place of assembly'; and supposing that it might mean indifferently a 'rock,' a 'hill,' and also a 'place of assembly,' it is permissible to think that it was this last-named sense which the Saxon was at fault how to express when he borrowed the term and wrote it *cryc*. If it denoted a 'place of meeting' amongst the Britons, it meant, as has been sufficiently demonstrated, a circular place of some sort, mound or ringwork or stone circle or *circus*. Three Scottish instances prove unquestionably that such was the meaning.

In Aberdeenshire the name of Crichie is especially frequent, and once at least it attaches to a sepulchral stone circle (p. 56). In this instance the name, though uniformly pronounced as now, was as uniformly written Cruchie.¹ The moot-circle of Tullynessle (p. 158), a typical example of the 'Aberdeenshire' type, bore the specific name of Crookmore, i.e. *Cruc Mawr*, 'the great *Cruc*.' The third example is Crichtoun, on the borders of Edinburghshire and Haddingtonshire, where to this day are the considerable remains of the *cruc* which gave to the place its name, a circular earthwork (300 × 200 ft.) crowning a small knap.

The bank, which is broad, rises but 3 ft. above the arena, and there is no visible external fosse.¹ The name Crichtoun was written Krekton in 1250, Creighcton in 1367, and, wrote Johnston in 1903, 'the Scots still sound the *ch* as a guttural.'²

In view of the facts, so far as they can be ascertained, it appears reasonable to conclude that *cruc*, in some at least of the place-names where it occurs, meant 'moot,' and that *cruc-beorh* and similar compounds meant neither more nor less than 'moot-hill.'

Meaning radically something circular, and specifically either a barrow or a moot, *cruc* must be allied to the Greek κρηκος (Doric κρηκος),³ Latin *circus*, Teutonic *brinc*, English *ring*, Russian *kroog*. It must be related also to the Anglo-Saxon *breac* 'heap of corn' and *brycg* 'rick.'⁴ The initial consonant of the root is preserved in the Old Norse *kringla*, 'circle,'⁵ and in the modern Low Dutch *krink*, 'ring.'

Cruc, *cryc*, has had a persistent tendency to interchange with *ciric* and 'church.' Thus the place (in Cröscombe, Shepton Mallet) which in 702 was written Crich-hulle,⁶ is now Church Hill; while conversely Long Crichel, Dorset, which was Critchill and Crichil in *Index Villaris*, was Cirichyll in 933,⁷ and More Crichel was written Kerechel and Kerchulle in 1285. Particularly interesting is the case of Kirkley in Northumberland: in 1175 this was still Crikelawe, the precise northern equivalent of the southern *Cryc-beorh*, but exactly a century later it appears as Kirkelawe; then the earlier form reappears and persists until 1638, when Kirkley finally makes good.⁸ The intermediate forms—Grekelawe, 1255; Crekellawe, 1267; Crekelagh, 1298; Creklawe, 1311—throw light

¹ For these details I have to thank Dr. Cecil Curwen.

² *Place-Names of Scotland*. He would refer the word to the Gaelic *criebh*, 'boundary.' It appears to be identical with the name Creich, which 'abounds in Pictland and Dalriada' (Archibald Scott, *Pictish Nation*, p. 407), and is seen also in Creighton near Uttoxeter, Staffs. (written Creyghthon in *I.P.M.* ed. ii). Creich in Fifeshire had a notable stone circle (*Proc. S.A.S.* vii, p. 402).

³ Polybius (e.g. *Hist.* xxx, 13; 2) transliterates the Latin word *circus* as κρηκος.

⁴ Jewitt (*Grave-Mounds*, p. 4) mentions a Derbyshire barrow called Rick Low.

⁵ As in *Heimskringla*, 'the round world, universe.'

⁶ *Cart. Sax.* i, 65.

⁷ *ibid.*

⁸ Mawer, *Place-Names of Northumberland and Durham* (1920). The name of Kirklaw hill is common in Scotland, e.g. in Skirling, Peebles.

¹ So W. Marshall Simpson, who was born in the vicinity, tells me.

upon the rare word *creke* occurring in the Middle-English verse—

When my cors is cast in creke,
And depe dolven under stones,
Ihesu, merciable and meke,
Lese not that thou boughtest ones.¹

Clearly *creke* represents *cryc* in the sense of a grave-mound, a barrow or cairn, and Kirkley is one of many places taking their name from a barrow-like hill. Here too possibly is the explanation of the name of 'The Creck Bottom,'² a small valley adjoining the church of Rottingdean in Sussex: apparently it took its name from the churchyard, which was anciently circular and is still greatly mounded up. A large mound beside the old Saltway on the Wolds (577 O.D.) three miles ssw. of Northleach, Gloucestershire, still bears the name of Crickley barrow; and Crickley hill probably derives its name from the group of barrows on the summit. In 1307 it was written Crekeleye, later Cruklea.³

There appears to be an odd survival of the word in the name of a megalith in the parish of Madron, Cornwall, a large *circular* block of granite (diam. 4 ft.) pierced by a hole (21 ins. by 18 ins.) approximately central, and planted edgewise in the ground like a target. Known to science as the Mên-an-tol, to the *indigenae* it was, and still is, known only as the 'Crick stone,' and in explanation of the name one is gravely told that an infant, if passed through the hole, is safe from the affliction called crick in the neck or in the back. This sufficiently transparent piece of aetiology leaves unexplained the name, which appears to be the same word *cruc* again in its radical sense—the 'Circle Stone.' Actual examination has proved that, wholly

unlike the run of megaliths, it is very nearly circular, being set to no great depth in the soil.¹

It is remarkable that, of the place-names preserving the word *cruc*, so many are directly associated with Roman or Romano-British remains, or close beside Roman roads. Few of them being within the purely military areas of Roman Britain, it appears permissible to believe that they represent so many native settlements each with its own *cruc*.

It is equally remarkable that so large a proportion of them belong to the thoroughly Romanised areas of Dorset, Somerset and Devon. This is the region allocated to the Durotriges, a Goidelic tribe subsequently Brythonised by the intruding Belgae²; and after the departure of the Romans it was not so much overrun as enveloped by the invading Saxons.³ Its Romano-British population was not evicted, but gradually absorbed by the new-comers, which at once explains how so much of the native nomenclature could survive.⁴ If few or no *cruc*-names are traceable in the adjoining county of Wiltshire, this is at once explained by the fact that across Wiltshire and onwards to the Severn the Saxons drove in a solid wedge, ousting the Romano-British population in a far more effective fashion.⁵ Curiously enough the hybrid name of Crycbeorh (Creech barrow) marks the exact spot at which, on the banks of the Tone, the wave of Saxon conquest paused, and Saxon and Celt settled down to live peaceably side by side. Beyond the Severn the *cruc*-names reappear. Across the midlands they are traceable in a continuous line through Crick in Northants, by Pentrich and Crick

¹ There is a good deal about the superstitious ritual of holed stones, Cornish and others, in Borlase's *Age of the Saints*. The name of 'Crick stone' has been extended in recent times to a number of other stones, or groups of stones, which have no resemblance to the Mên-an-tol beyond perhaps a hole through them. See *V.C.H. Cornwall; Reports Royal Inst. Cornwall*, xvii, 270; and for the Mên-an-tol in particular, *Antiquary*, li (1915), 387. 'Stones with holes in them,' from the West of England, figured among the mascots collected for the Imperial War Exhibition (*Evening News*, 14 Jan. 1918).

² Ridgeway, *Early Age of Greece*, i, 503.

³ Albany Major, *Early Wars of Wessex*.

⁴ It is in Dorsetshire that Romano-British villages and their *circi* are most numerous. King Alfred could still speak of the south-west counties (Wilts. and Som.) as 'lands of the *Wealbcynne* (Welsh)', and king Ine's laws provided for the security of British landowners in that quarter.

⁵ Not until a century after the traditional date of the first coming of Hengist and Horsa (449) did the Saxons effect the storm of Old Sarum (552, *O.E. Chronicle*), but their onward sweep to Deorham and the river Severn was a matter of but 25 more years (577).

¹ *Wheatley MS.* (E.E.T.S. original series 155), p. 20.

² On a map dated 1714. The name is now lost. The unusual presence of the definite article is paralleled by the frequent 'le Kirk,' 'le Plaistow.' The persistence of the final *k* is illustrated by 'link' (instead of 'linch, lynchet') which the tithe maps shew to have been general in Sussex until 1840.

³ cf. Johnston, *Place-Names*, s.v. Crickhowell. One of these barrows is of the long type, and the hill has been fortified. The

barrows provide reason enough for the name without seeking any reference to a 'moot,' although the site of a now unrecognisable circle lies not a mile away in the field called 'Stall Ground'—there was a cattle-stall in it until recent times—on Black Hedge farm in Leckhampton. The few remaining stones are said not to be in their original positions. They bear the local name of 'Roman Stones,' and a Roman road passes a short distance to the east. Johnston cites another Crickley from Cornwall.

to the Derbyshire highlands, the territories of the Brythonic Ordovices, where the stone circles have been seen to be so methodically distributed. Is it merely a coincidence that such names should occur so markedly in the areas in which we find also the monumental evidence for the existence of the *cruc* itself?

Cruc was a Celtic word, and the Roman, when he arrived, Latinised it in such names as Pennocrucium. There were many *crucs* in Celtic Britain, just as there were many *gorseddau* in Celtic Wales; and as Wales has many places called Pen-yr-Orsedd, so Britain had many called Pennocrucium. The great majority of the native *crucs* would be the primitive mound-moots, but there would be also a number of the Cimbric circle-moots, which would be called by the same name because they fulfilled the same purpose, and because they too were circular, which was the radical signification of the name. Sometimes the older mound would be remodelled. Sometimes the circle-moot would be built beside the older mound.¹

Then came the Roman with his *circus*-moot, and little by little the older fashion would give way to the new. In many places mound-moot and circle-moot would remain unchanged, but in many other cases these would be remodelled on the lines of the *circus*, or a new *circus*-moot would be built beside the older thing. In the native speech this also would be a *cruc*, but as the natives came slowly to speak a debased Latin idiom, the new word *circus* would supplant the Celtic word, and would come to be used generically of all forms of moot, whether mound, circle, or *circus*. Even the Roman was careless of final inflexions, and the Celt was impatient of them, so that *circus* would assume a form very like **circ* (*kirk*), exemplified in the Welsh *cyrch* and the Cornish *cerch*, just as the kindred word *circulus* passed into Welsh as *cyrchell*, and into Manx as *kiarkyl*. The fact that *cyrch* had the sense of 'moot'

¹ Above, p. 355. Such mounds are commonly written down as barrows, but perhaps without proof, and their frequent occurrence actually within the walls of the settlement (as at Chettle) is strongly against any such purpose unless they belong to a period when the site was deserted. It is possible that they are the moots of an earlier age. Continuity would seem to

have been as stubborn here as elsewhere. Heywood Sumner (*Earthworks of Cranborne Chase*, p. 74) notices the presence of long barrows close beside no less than eight of these settlements in the Chase, a fact which raises a doubt whether that type of barrow be really as old as it is supposed to be in every case.

(p. 275) is conclusive proof that the Romano-British *circus* was primarily a moot and that the Romano-British name for such a place of meeting was not *amphitheatrum*, but *circus*.

This was the word which the Saxon found in general use when he in turn arrived upon the scene. It stood for something with which he met on every hand, at the gates of every Romano-British town and village. He could not but notice it. In the long years of his struggle with the Britons his envoys must constantly have taken part in debates in the moot of this or that community, and in after years the thing remained always with him, stubbornly holding its ground when fire and time had laid in ruins every Roman house and every native hut which once had neighboured it. He asked its name, and was told *cruc* or *circ*; and he forthwith adopted both terms.¹ The former reappears in his speech as the Middle-English *creke*, 'grave'; the latter was destined to pass by many intermediate stages (*cyrch*, *cyrlic*, *cyrice*, etc.) into the modern word 'church.'

That *cruc*, *creke*, *circus*, and *circ* were in origin the same was wholly forgotten, and the fact is in no way surprising. Who would to-day be conscious of any tautology in saying that he was going to Chirk to church? How many of those who are familiar with Eccles and Ecclesfield are aware that the names bespeak a church? or if aware of it, are in any way conscious of it when they speak those place-names? In the middle of the nineteenth century the town of Church in Lancashire was commonly known as Church Kirk,² and no one thought it odd. How closely *cruc* and *circ* resembled each other is illustrated by the Scottish name of Halkirk in Caithness: this was written Hakirk in 1222, Haukyrc in 1274; yet so late as 1504 it appears as Haikrik.³

¹ Wright, *Vocabularies* (1882) i, p. 36, gives "*Theatrum*, Wafungstede; *amphitheatrum*, Syneweald Wafungstede," both from *Aelfric's Vocabulary* (tenth century), adding the note: 'Literally a place for sights, explaining the word according to its Greek derivation [*θεατρον*, *θεαμα*].' This, and the translation of *amphitheatrum* (syneweald wafungstede, a circular place for sights) shew that our A.-S. forefathers were

not acquainted with the use of theatres and amphitheatres, and had no words in their own language to express them.' The word *syneweald* (= *perpetuo vallo munimur*) survives in the name of Synald's attaching to parts of the Longmynd in Salop, where are the remains of circular barrows (*Note on Church Stretton*, iii, 43).

² Walcott, *Sacred Archaeology*, p. 155.

³ Mackinlay, p. 124. Similarly in France

The Celts had felt no difficulty in adopting the Latin term *circus* because it so nearly resembled their own word *cruc*. The Saxons adopted it because they had no alternative. The Aryan moot-habit they of course had ; to a fixed *place* of meeting, and that of a fixed traditional plan, they had not yet attained, being for the most part still in the condition of the Germans of 'Tacitus' time, with whom the moot was a matter rather of time than of place, devoid of any structural formalism. If by exception some of them had begun to envisage a definite *place* of meeting and a definite *type* of moot, this was, as mostly it seems to have been to the end of the Saxons' career, at best no more than a mound.¹ It was certainly nothing at all like the elaborate stone circles of the Belgic Celts, or even the less complex earth-circles and *circi* of Britain.

It has been suggested above that the native Celtic fashion in moots lingered longest in remote Strathclyde and Cornwall, and that this explains the presence there of so many great circles in so high a state of preservation. This view is supported, as regards Cornwall, by the so-called 'Rounds' or 'Roundagos.' Most of these are thought to have been constructed between the years 1200 and 1600 for the particular purposes of miracle-plays²; but others were certainly built as late as the seventeenth century, and it is possible that the 'round' is the final development in the long evolution of the *cruc*. On the hill above Trewen (Truen, Trewern) near Newbridge, 3 miles west of Penzance, is a suggestive example, an unfossed ring-work (diam. 125 feet) in the centre of which, 'immediately beneath the turf,' was uncovered (1845) 'a circular pavement of broad unhewn granite slabs . . . about 10 ft. in diameter.'³ Of what use such a structure could be in a miracle-play or any modern function is not apparent. On

the other hand its likeness to one or other sort of *βοθρῶς*, as for example those found in the circles in Crosby Ravensworth (p. 221) and at Pwll Mountain (p. 241), is at any rate remarkable.

The deep external fosses of the famous 'rounds' of St. Just and Perran, if contemporary, place those works in another class¹; but both illustrate the stubborn persistence of the same Celtic tradition in this part of England. They were apparently defensive ringworks remodelled in later days, and possibly for the requirements of the miracle-plays²; but there is reason to think that the Celts of Cornwall never altogether abandoned the national habit of building such works. Richard Carew is witness³ that they were still doing so in 1602, and a yet later instance is that of Gwennap Pit (plate iv), three miles from Redruth, built in 1803 in commemoration of John Wesley's preaching. It had twelve tiers of turfed seats, and could contain 2,000 persons.⁴

If Alfred denounced the *anfitheatra* of Britain as so many centres of devil-worship, this was because he took his cue from the language of the Latin patristics; for when at the *fiat* of Constantine Christianity supplanted paganism, the new faith must have stepped direct, officially at any rate, into each communal moot, whether that was mound or circle or *circus*. Indeed there was nothing else it could step into, for the *pagani* had neither temples nor structural churches. The moot served in lieu thereof.

No statute of the Church in Britain ordered the destruction of moots of whatever form: the *tumuli paganorum* are repeatedly denounced, but against the *circus* and the stone circle there is said no word, nor is there evidence of any systematic attempt to destroy them.

the name of St. Cyric appears indifferently as Saint-Cirq and Saint-Cricq, to say nothing of other forms.

¹ This view is borne out by the repeated composition of *cruc* with O.E. words denoting 'grave-hills,' as noticed above (p. 361).

² Their Cornish name is *plane an guarion*, 'places of play or games.' There is a village of Planguary near Redruth, though there is no 'round' there now. The name

recalls the English Plaistow (ch. xxvi), and the form of the 'rounds' recalls that of the Greek theatre.

³ Murray's *Handbook of Cornwall* (1893), p. 156. R. Edmonds, *Land's End District* (1862), p. 39. The two entrances are s.e. and s.w. Two pillar-stones, respectively 5 and 6 ft. in height, may be the remains of a peristalith, though W. C. Borlase believed them to mark a grave (*Naenia Cornubiae*, p. 23).

¹ For details see ch. xx.

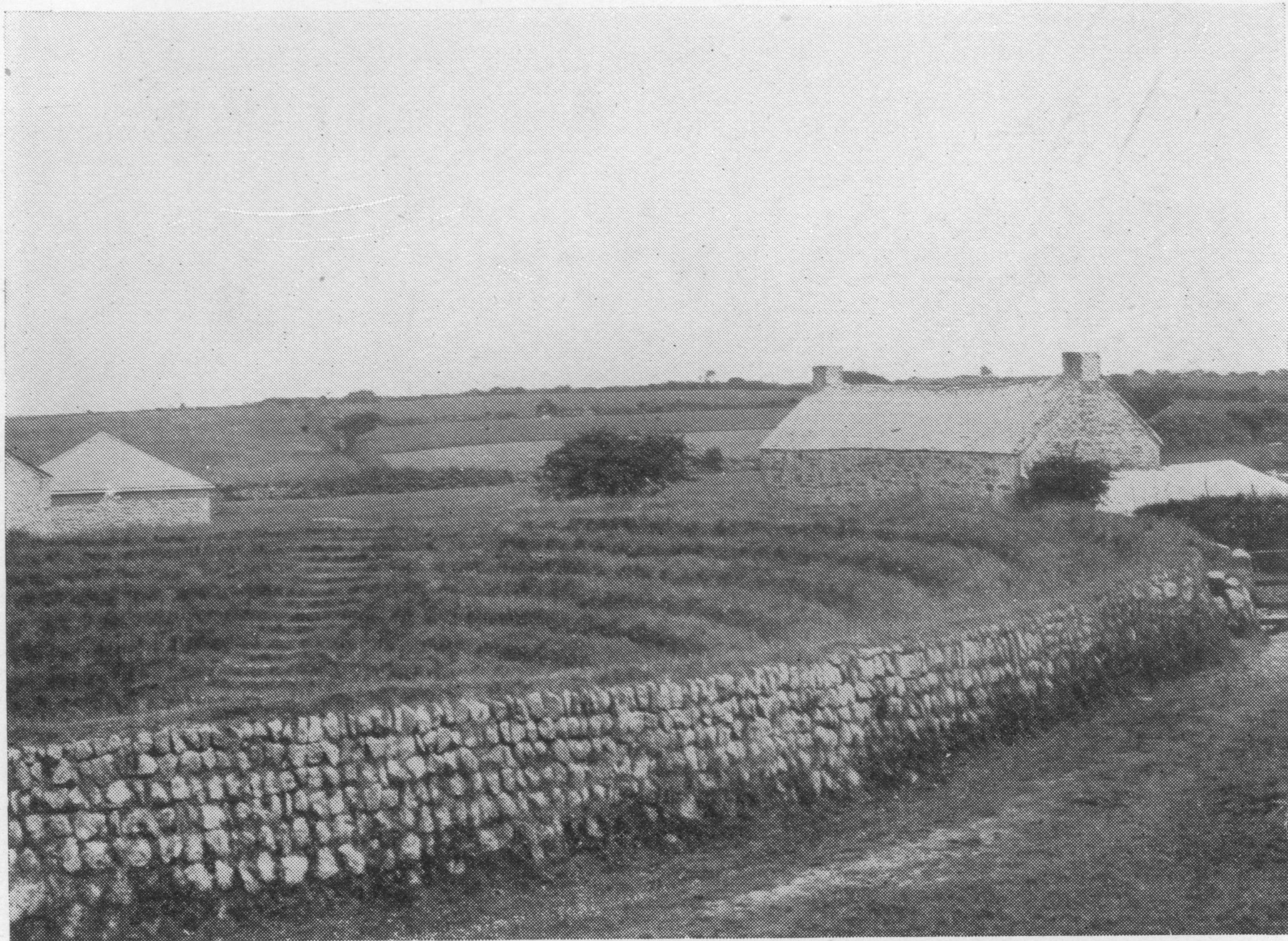
² i.e. any time between 1200 and the eighteenth century. Dr. Borlase cites (*Nat. Hist. Cornwall*, p. 208) Bp. Nicholson as asserting, under date of 14th Nov., 1700, that such plays 'were acted within the memory of some not long deceased.'

³ *Survey of Cornwall* (1602); for representing the guarly-miracle or miracle-play 'they raise an earthen amphitheatre

in some open field, having the diameter of his enclosed plain some forty or fifty foot' (ed. 1811, p. 192). The small size of the arena is noteworthy. It is a little less than that of the mean amongst circle-moots, larger than that of some of the Aberdeenshire circles.

⁴ It is said to have been formed out of a disused mine-shaft, which accounts for there being no surrounding vallum.

In Ireland it was otherwise, because in Ireland there had been no interlude of Constantinian Christianity between stark paganism and the mission of St. Patrick. In that country therefore the saint makes active war upon Cruc Mag Slecht.



[Cecil Curwen, phot.]

NO. I. GWENNAP PIT NEAR REDRUTH.



[Cecil Curwen, phot.]

NO. 2. THE SAME, SHOWING CHAIRMAN'S SEAT.