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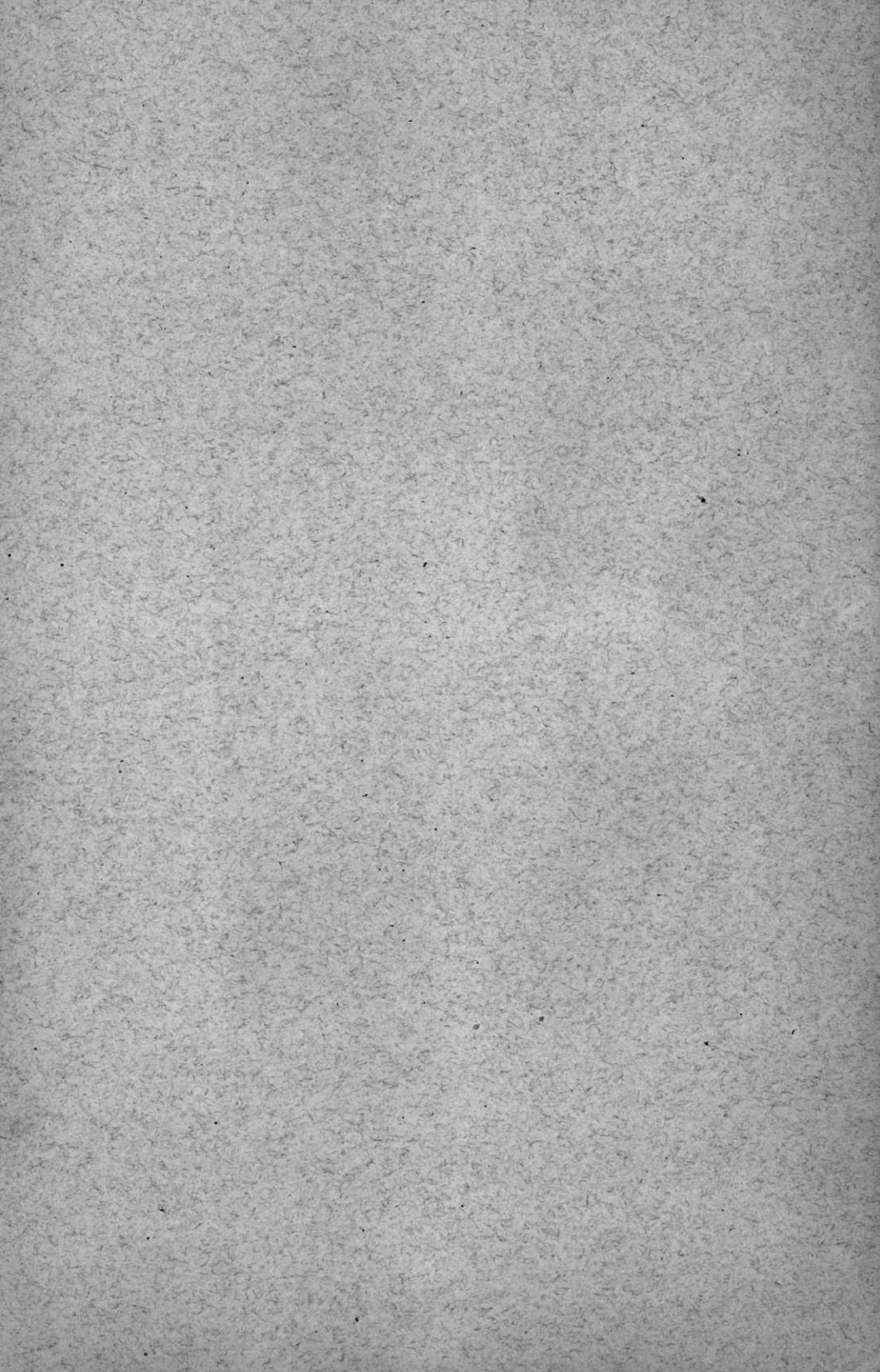
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Discoveries at Glozel, Allier

By SALOMON REINACH, Hon. F.S.A.

THE small village of Glozel, commune of Ferrières, is situated about twenty miles south-east of Vichy. No car nor carriage can go farther; you must walk almost a mile, first along a narrow lane, then down a steep hill, till you reach the right bank of a rivulet called Le Vareille, which flows into the Souchon, a tributary of the river Allier. Above the wooded bank of the Vareille, at the foot of the hill, extends a little plateau which was thickly wooded till thirty years ago, when the trees and bushes were cut down. In 1924 the Fradin family, owners of the land, decided to sow there some vegetables, and young Émile Fradin, then a boy of 18, began to dig up the soil. Soon he discovered a brick bearing some regularly distributed cup-marks which aroused his curiosity (he is intelligent, though completely devoid of learning). Fradin showed that brick to a schoolmistress, who was much interested and mentioned it to a schoolmaster; people began to talk about the discovery of ancient remains. Meanwhile, Fradin pursued his work and found an oval building, the soil of which was paved with bricks, one bearing an inscription. The inner walls of that small structure were entirely vitrified by fire. It may have been a (medieval?) kiln, but that is now difficult to decide, because the visitors almost destroyed the walls before they had been examined by a competent person. As no bones were discovered, it cannot be considered as a tomb.

The Archaeological Society of Moulins (Allier), which had been appealed to, refused to vote a subsidy for the study of what was then thought to be nothing but a depot of coarse Roman pottery. But a doctor living in Vichy, M. Morlet, having examined the



site, at once recognized that there was nothing Roman about it. He leased the plot of land for nine years and, together with young Fradin, began to dig trenches near the oval structure.

The archaeological layer is not deep, only about 12 inches beneath the ground. The objects are buried in a thick stratum of yellow and very compact clay, which can only be explored with the point of a knife. Above the clay, in the mould, were found numerous and sometimes large fragments of sandstone, with traces of glazing on the inner side, but their date and use cannot for the moment be specified. They may be in some way connected with the kiln mentioned above, and also with small fragments and drops of glass which the excavations have brought to light, outside the clay, as I was told. None was found in my presence, and I leave that subject to further investigation.

The objects extracted *in great numbers* from the clay are generally unbroken; those in terra-cotta, more or less fired, are extremely difficult to extract, because they fall to pieces when roughly handled. That is the reason why Dr. Morlet never employed workmen, but relied solely on himself and Fradin. A very curious point, which I confirmed with my own eyes, is that the articles in bone, stone, or clay are not accumulated nor mixed up in disorder, but often set up in rows, horizontally or vertically. It is as if a sacred deposit near the rivulet had been respected by several generations, left *in situ*, and gradually covered up by thin layers of earth.

The discoveries may be classified as follows: (1) a few polished axes and some small worked flints; no flint is to be found in the neighbourhood; (2) many pebbles decorated with outlines of animals or short inscriptions (figs. 1 and 2), sometimes with both; (3) pebbles either carefully perforated or bearing regular cup-marks; (4) flat rings of polished hard stone, too small to have been used as bracelets, too large for finger-rings, some of them with inscriptions (fig. 3); (5) harpoons and needles made of the antlers of stags, of Magdalenian (*not* of Azylian) types, but carelessly carved: one of the harpoons bears an inscription; (6) many clay vases of rude workmanship, some of them with so-called solar symbols incised, others with the clumsy indications of human eyes and a nose, but *not* of a mouth; (7) fifty or more clay tablets incised with alphabetiform signs, of which about 90 varieties occur, many being similar to Phoenician or Iberian characters,¹ many more quite new (fig. 4); one of the tablets (12 lines) bears over 120 signs; (8) a dozen clay statuettes representing a human

¹ The modern B form is conspicuously absent, but we find the T of the old *sampi* type and the lunar *sigma*, also the *swastika* used as a letter.

figure with exaggerated sexual characteristics, the head of which recalls the Trojan so-called owl-vases, and also the Neolithic idols found in France (Marne, Aveyron, Tarn, Hérault) and at Folkton Wold in Yorkshire (fig. 5). There is *never* any indication of the mouth. I am not yet persuaded, in spite of appearances, that *lingam* and *yoni* are reunited on the same figures, but I am not prepared to deny it. One of these extraordinary statuettes was brought to light before my eyes.



FIG. 1. A pebble with incised characters ($\frac{1}{2}$).

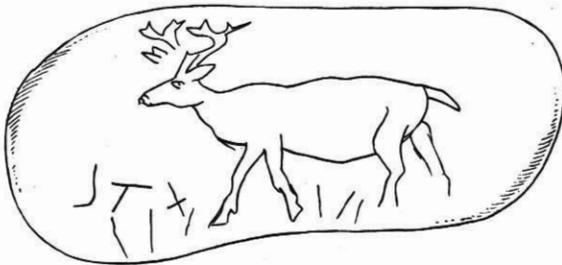


FIG. 2. A pebble with the outline of a stag (?) and an inscription ($\frac{1}{2}$).

Not a particle of metal, not a particle of Celtic or Roman pottery, has been unearthed from the trenches; indeed, I searched the whole plateau for a fragment of Roman ware, and found none. That, together with the evident survival of Magdalenian art and the presence of polished stones, points unmistakably to the later Stone Age. The animals incised on the pebbles—a stag (probably *not* a reindeer), bulls, a bear, an otter (?), etc.—are those of the same period, not of an earlier one (fig. 2).

Dr. Morlet's first article appeared in the *Mercure de France* (April 1926), a magazine which has since published a good deal about the Glozel excavations, in particular an article by M. Arnold van Gennep, who went to Glozel and found characteristic objects with his own knife.¹ Dr. Morlet's memoir concerning the inscriptions was received with scepticism. Most competent people

¹ See the bibliography and further information in the *Mercure*, 1 October 1926, pp. 193 ff.

thought that the whole matter was a hoax; others remained silent; M. Camille Jullian asserted that only *some* of the tablets were genuine, but *Late Roman*, not Neolithic. At the beginning of September I decided upon going to Glozel myself, studied both

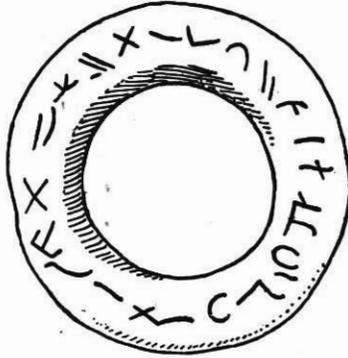


FIG. 3. A flat ring in hard stone with an inscription incised ($\frac{1}{2}$).



FIG. 4. An inscription incised on clay ($\frac{1}{2}$).

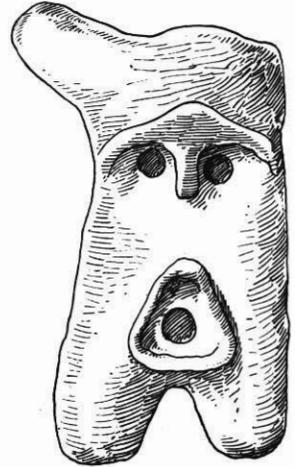


FIG. 5. An idol in clay ($\frac{1}{2}$).

Dr. Morlet's and Fradin's collections, and witnessed the excavations on two consecutive days. On my return, I immediately declared to the Academy that all the finds (as partly photographed in three brochures issued by Dr. Morlet in Vichy, 18 Rue de l'Établissement thermal) were undoubtedly genuine and Neolithic. My colleagues of the Institute, MM. Espérandieu and Depéret, the latter a well-known geologist, hastened to Glozel, took part

in the excavations, and were soon as convinced as I am.¹ Our opinion was shared by a Portuguese archaeologist, M. Leite de Vasconcellos, then staying at Vichy. In fact, I think that any expression of scepticism is now out of date, and need not even be discussed.

Both M. Leite and myself remembered the discovery made in north-west Portugal, in 1894, by two monks, and published in 1903 by M. Ricardo Severo (*Portugalia*, vol. i). Those discoveries, very closely akin to Glozel—indeed, the inscriptions and outlines of animals are quite in the same style—were, and still are, considered as suspicious (see the article 'Alvao' in Ebert's *Reallexikon*). But the authenticity of the Alvao inscriptions and carvings was admitted by Wilke and Lichtenberg (1912, 1914), who developed the theory first put forward by the Portuguese scholar Estacio da Veiga (1891), then more definitely by Piette (1896), to the effect that our mode of writing had been invented in the western part of the Mediterranean, and that the Phoenicians had only *selected* their alphabet from much earlier scripts, originating from the Late Palaeolithic Age. What seemed amateurish extravagance is now very nearly proven. Two important consequences must follow, which I will condense in a few words: (1) the date of the Late Palaeolithic (Magdalenian) must be brought down many centuries, now that between 3500 and 3000, in a clearly Neolithic stratum, we find survivals of Magdalenian art, decadent, but incontrovertible; (2) the destruction of western Neolithic civilization, so complete that Spain and Gaul had to relearn writing from the Greeks, implies that Northern tribes, known to history as Iberians, Ligurians, and Celts, not only invaded western Europe, but completely suppressed the different priestcrafts to which a higher civilization, including alphabetiform writing, was confined. If the Eastern countries, especially Greece and Asia Minor, though also invaded by Northern savages, kept up something of the western European civilization, it was thanks to the proximity and influence of Egypt, Babylonia, and Phoenicia.

So the old saying *ex Oriente lux* remains true for the period after 1500 B.C., but not for earlier times. When I published my memoir entitled *Le mirage oriental* (1893), I was substantially right, and even far more so than I could then realize. The bearing of the *bona fide* discoveries made in Glozel (and still continuing as I write) on our knowledge of earliest history must henceforth appeal to every scholar and invite him to remodel his views.

October 1926.

¹ Good *résumés* of the proceedings in the Academy on that subject may be found in the September and October Sunday numbers of the *Journal des Débats*, also in the Saturday numbers of the *Figaro*.



The Megalithic Monuments of Southern Finistère

By C. DARYLL FORDE

THE country west and south of Quimper in the department of Finistère contains a notable concentration of megalithic monuments. They are of various types and some are quite distinct from the better-known monuments of the region round the Gulf of Morbihan in Southern Brittany. The map (pl. 1) shows the distribution of the monuments. It is based largely on a survey of the area undertaken in the summer of 1924. I wish to express my thanks to M. Georges Monot of Pont-l'Abbé for his invaluable assistance and guidance in a country in which good roads are few, and the monuments very difficult to locate. The bulk of the work of excavation, in this area, was undertaken by the late P. du Chatellier towards the end of the last century. Many of the monuments were ravaged before he began operations, and even those found more or less intact were rarely preserved after excavation, so that to-day a large proportion are in a very ruined condition. The reports of excavations are to be found in various Breton periodicals and in the French archaeological journals, especially in the volumes of *Matériaux pour l'histoire de l'homme*. Du Chatellier also gives a summarized account of his work in *Les Époques préhistoriques et gauloises dans le Finistère*, second edition, Rennes 1907, which covers the whole of the department. The appendix at the end of this paper, which gives a summarized inventory of the monuments of the region, cites references where possible to the reports of excavations.

Passage Dolmens and Covered Galleries.

Passage dolmens¹ and covered galleries of the usual type occur in the area. There are several variations in construction but all have a uniform type of burial.

(1) Simple passage dolmens with a large square chamber led up to by a covered gallery, which are so typical of Southern

¹ The passage dolmen (dolmen-à-galerie) is essentially the same in construction as the 'passage-grave' of the British long barrows; but in this area, and in Brittany generally, the tumulus is usually circular, while the furniture is much richer than in the similar tombs of Britain.

