

pass up or down the west coast of Britain, and have been overlooked hitherto for want of a sufficiency of skilled observers on the spot at the right time of year. This is particularly true of the Ortolan Bunting, the absence of which from our annual list would now be notable, and would seem likely also to apply to the Woodchat Shrike, Firecrest, Icterine Warbler, Woodlark, Red-Breasted Flycatcher, and even, dare one suggest, to the Red-Headed Bunting.

For those to whom the collection of rarity records is an end, it seems probable that Lundy is unlikely now to offer more than two or three such annual tit-bits, and the number of blank years may well soon begin to exceed those of fruitfulness. To the student of migration however these recurrent records have the greatest interest coupled alas with frustration at the total inadequacy of ringing as a method of tracing the movements of these small passerines.

PREHISTORIC SETTLEMENT — GANNETS' COMBE, LUNDY

BY KEITH S. GARDNER

The subject of this short paper is the prehistoric settlement above Gannets' Combe, Lundy. In its present condition it is composed of four granite-built huts and the foundations of field walls, although it is possible that at one time there were more huts to the north and that the rest of the North End was enclosed.

The two southernmost huts are the best preserved and are both of the same type, each being built into the enclosure wall or each with its doorway facing down the combe, i.e. away from the prevailing wind. Each is circular in plan with an internal diameter of about 9—10 feet, and each has a larger rectangular outhouse butting against it which was probably a storehouse or animal stall.

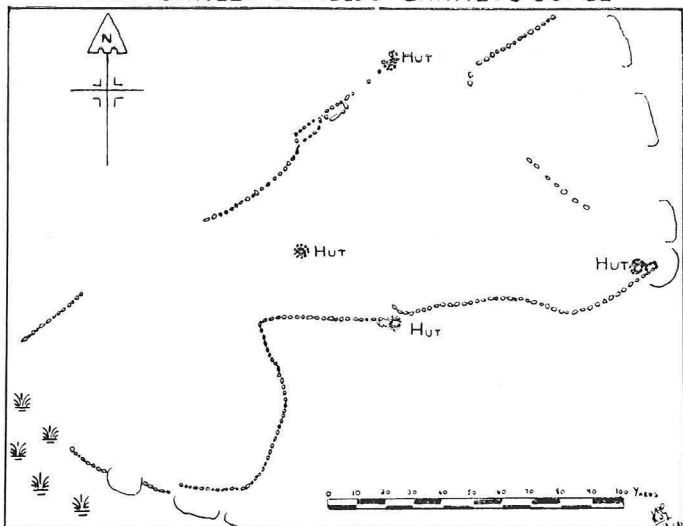
The walls are of simple construction—an inner wall of upright granite slabs backed with a bank of piled up earth or stones, two upright columns of granite forming the doorposts. It is probable that a conical roof of brushwood and turf, or perhaps reeds, rested on this foundation with its base embedded in the bank ; no upright supporting posts would be necessary in a hut of this size.

The field walls as they are to-day are probably only the foundation of some more formidable barrier, of wood or brushwood.

In the absence of any datable artifacts one has to rely solely on comparative site typology to form an opinion regarding its age. The nearest region with any settlement of this type is Dartmoor, and it is to Dartmoor that we shall have to turn to learn about these huts and their occupants.

Mr Raleigh Radford has shown (*Proceedings Prehistoric Society*, Vol. XVIII, Pt I, 1952), that the early settlement on the moor can be divided into three different classes as described below.

HUT CIRCLES & FIELDS-GANNET'S COMBE



LUNDY



ONE OF THE HUTS

Photo: K. S. Gardner

(a) POUNDS

A group of huts scattered over an area which is enclosed by a large thick wall. The owners appear to have been of the more prosperous class, to judge from their belongings and from their huts which were about 20 feet inside diameter.

(b) VILLAGES

These are settlements of perhaps fifty or more huts, unenclosed but often with linking walls and enclosures attached.

(c) SMALL SETTLEMENTS

These are similar to villages but with only half a dozen or so huts, and are probably representative of the poorer class of farmer or perhaps breakaway groups from the main clan.

Pottery from the site at Whiten Ridge on the moor suggests a Middle Bronze Age date for this type of settlement, and it would not be unreasonable to place the Gannets' Combe site in this period and category. The construction of the Lundy huts is also consistent with this type of farm.

Having, correctly or otherwise, assumed a Middle Bronze Age date, perhaps it may be as well briefly to summarize the type of life which the occupants would have led.

About 1900 B.C. a new race entered this country from the Continent, bringing with them cultures which were in many ways superior to those of the Neolithic inhabitants. They buried their dead leaders in round barrows, used finer pottery, constructed such monuments as Stonehenge and eventually established themselves as a ruling caste, absorbing the earlier occupants. Some of the 'natives' however, continued to work as apparently separate communities—the Graig Llwydd axe industry still flourished for example.

The most important skill which these newcomers brought with them was the use of metals, primarily Bronze. Smiths travelled the country trading their wares with the rich and later on ornamental articles of Irish gold came into the market.

The basic economy however was agriculture and as far as we can judge it was mainly pastoral, there being little evidence of corn growing in the west.

On Lundy then, 3,500 years ago, Bronze Age farmers would face the same problems as are faced to-day, possibly trading with the mainland once or twice a year for articles essential to their economy, but being in the main, self sufficient islanders.