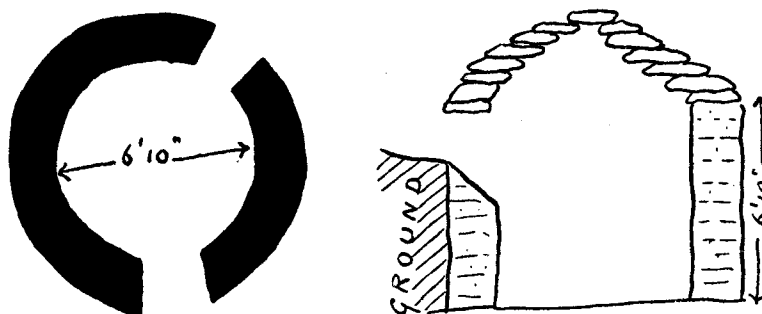


ANTIQUITY

CORBELLING

Corbelled arches, vaults and domes are of interest to prehistorians because (to give only one instance) they occur in the primitive prehistoric structures of Western Europe. The corbelled vault, in a rudimentary form, occurs in the Long Barrows of Gloucestershire and in those of Sardinia. It occurs also in tombs of the second millennium at Ur in Mesopotamia (see *Ant. Jour.*, vi, plate 60). The corbelled dome is also found in the Gloucestershire Long Barrows—one over a burial-chamber at Belas Knap was to be seen until quite recently—and in the megalithic burial-chambers of Western Europe generally. A humbler example is to be seen on Dartmoor, near Postbridge. Here is a perfect specimen of a bee-hive hut with corbelled roof. But apparently the practice of building in this fashion was carried on



in historic times. Dr Eric Gardner, F.S.A., reports the existence of one at Nattadon Farm, Chagford. "It is very old, and is called a winnowing hut, now used as a chicken-house. There is only one other on the moor, but its roof has been mended, and externally at any rate consists of concrete. Ours is perfect; the roof is of beehive construction, just like the one at Postbridge. It is made of blocks of granite and a poor sort of mortar which is hardly more than tenacious mud. There is a narrow doorway, and a window at the back facing south-west, and when the wind blows you can hardly stand in it. In old days the corn was sprinkled on the floor of the hut during a gale, and in falling was winnowed. The hut is built against a slope, so that the door opens on to a patch of green by the roadside; but the bank behind is cut away, so that the field there is level with the window; this creates more draught. It is evidently a survival of a very old method of winnowing, and seems to be the only

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one left about here, except the one near by which has had a new roof put on—at least it is new outside.”

In Majorca similar huts are built to-day by the peasants. Near the bay of San Vicente a tabular limestone is worked and the construction of a hut is no difficult matter. The slabs of stone lend themselves easily to corbelling and this method is adopted for making the roof. Longer slabs form lintels above doors and windows.

RHODESIA

It is satisfactory to hear that the Rhodesian Public Works Department is showing an interest in the great ruins of which Zimbabwe is the most famous. Mr J. F. Schofield, a professional architect, has examined and reported on the two series of buildings known as the ‘ Elliptical Temple ’ and the ‘ Acropolis.’ This account, which is carefully and critically written, is published in a series of articles in the *Rhodesia Herald*, beginning 22 January 1926. Being a trained and impartial man Mr Schofield arrives at the only possible conclusions as to date and origin, which are the same that I propounded twenty years ago. That is to say, the ruins are not earlier than the late Middle Ages and are to be ascribed to Bantu peoples. Fresh evidence, all tending the same way, has lately been adduced by Mr Douslin and the Rev. S. S. Dornan.

Mr Schofield’s articles should be read by all who do not feel that the main issues have been finally settled, as well as those who have accepted the general scientific verdict but are interested in the details. It may be hoped that his records mark the opening of a new period in the study of southern Rhodesian antiquities. These are most important and valuable for the history of civilization ; and South Africans ought to regard them as part of the history of their country, in the same way that the Americans have for many years devoted themselves to the study of the Indians before and after Columbus.

In the *Journal of the African Society* Captain E. A. Norton writes a too brief article on ruins in the neighbourhood of Inyanga. These seem to be part of the same system, and perhaps part of the same site which I attempted to describe in my account of the ‘ Niekerk Ruins ’—the second and third chapters of my book *Mediaeval Rhodesia*, which Captain Norton appears not to have read. There are endless terraces (built no doubt mainly for cultivation and not for defence as I had at first thought), and quite elaborate dwellings ; also some forts and a well defined road. These ruins lie in a remote and little-visited area, but