

November 1929

OLIVER'S MOUND

Most people are more or less interested in the past history of the place where they live. Through the chequered history of our land, people have had to solve the problem of living, and it is a fascinating speculation to try and picture to oneself what these former generations were like, and just how they set about making their homes and bringing up their children. Even a little village like Shrawley must have some interesting history, if only one could trace it.

The memories of the old folk can take us back a long way, but to get still further one must dig either in the scattered records or in the soil itself – that book which is so difficult to read but contains an account of man's doings from the earliest prehistoric times down to our own.

With a view to trying to throw a little light upon the past, we commenced digging in 1928 upon Oliver's Mound in Shrawley Wood, by the kind permission of Sir George Vernon. Our efforts have been rewarded by the finding of a portion of the ruins of a castle. One carved stone bearing a design similar to that on our parish font gives a clue to the date of the building – somewhere about the end of the 13th century. Traces of iron smelting show that the castle courtyard was used after the building was a ruin, to produce a local iron supply in the 17th century. Pottery, which can be dated by the glaze and markings upon it, and bones, were also turned up, showing that people lived and cooked their food upon this spot in the 14th century. One small piece of bronze hints at a still earlier occupation, before even the light of Christianity had shone upon our land.

S.W.M.