

A STUDY OF THE
BRONZE AGE POTTERY
OF
GREAT BRITAIN & IRELAND
AND ITS ASSOCIATED GRAVE-GOODS

BY THE
HON. JOHN ABERCROMBY
LL.D., F.S.A.Scot.

WITH 1611 ILLUSTRATIONS OF POTTERY, 155 EXAMPLES OF GRAVE-
GOODS, AND 10 PLATES SHOWING ORNAMENTATION

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John Abercromby

Excerpt

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HENRY FROWDE, M.A.

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PREFACE

THE time has arrived when an attempt should be made to arrange the chief types of British and Hibernian pottery in chronological order. Dr. Thurnam in his well-known monograph, published forty years ago, described very accurately all the typical forms of British pottery then known. But he had not the material at his disposal to place these in their relative order of time. Indeed by a regrettable slip he gave it as his opinion that cinerary urns were earlier than beakers or drinking cups. From a merely descriptive point of view all that he wrote about our Bronze Age pottery still holds good and requires but little change.

To prevent confusion with true neolithic pottery, I have adopted the terminology of Dr. O. Montelius and treated the pottery, here dealt with, as belonging to the Bronze Age. What might be termed a 'Transition' or a 'Copper' period is therefore classed as Period I of the Bronze Age.

A valuable adjunct to the study of the different classes and types of pottery is gained by subdividing Great Britain and Ireland into various zones or areas and studying each separately. By this means it is possible to watch the changes that took place in a particular type as it moved gradually from south to north.

One result of the study is to show the influence exerted by Hibernia at a very early time on the food-vessel class of ceramic in the northern half of England, and the probability that the most elaborate type of this class is derived from a Hibernian prototype. Another result is that the 'overhanging rim' type of cinerary urn may, with great probability, be derived from a food-vessel form. Further, that north of the Thames Valley and in Hibernia there is no visible break in the sequence of ceramic types from the beginning to the end of the Bronze Age. South of the Thames foreign types appear in Period IV, but there is no evidence to show that these new comers ever

advanced northwards, and their influence on the history of the country appears to have been *nil*.

Finally, an attempt has been made to accommodate Dr. O. Montelius's Chronology of the Bronze Age in Britain to one that seems more in accord with the evidence derived from a study of British ceramic.

In previous papers I have expressed my thanks to many Curators of Museums at home and abroad for allowing me to obtain photographs of some of the specimens preserved in their Museums. For many new illustrations, made for these volumes, I have more especially to tender my best thanks to Mr. R. Mortimer for very generously allowing me to have photographs taken of a very large part of his collection at Driffield.¹ They have been of the utmost use, indeed, indispensable. I am greatly indebted to the Rev. Ed. H. Goddard and Mr. Howard Cunnington, Curators of the Devizes Museum, for photographs of bronze daggers and other objects, some of which have not been published before; to Captain J. Acland, Curator of the Dorchester Museum, for bronze blades and other objects now published for the first time; to Mr. St. George Gray, Curator of the Taunton Museum, for many photographs; to Mr. Arthur Wright, Curator of the Colchester Museum, for photographs and other communications; to Mr. C. Bradshaw, Assistant Curator of the Sheffield Museum, for many photographs. I am not less indebted to M. du Chatellier¹ of Kernuz for allowing me to photograph urns in his large collection; to M. Champion of the Museum of St. Germain for photographs of urns from the collection of M. Piette; to Dr. Sophus Müller of Copenhagen, and Herr C. Rothmann of the Kiel Museum, for permission of getting photographs taken of several examples of Continental pottery.

Finally, I am under a great obligation to Dr. Robert Munro, M.A., M.D., LL.D., for reading the MSS. and proofs besides suggesting alterations.

EDINBURGH,

April 20, 1911.

¹ Since the above was in type I have learnt with the greatest regret of the death of Mr. R. Mortimer and of M. du Chatellier.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- Anderson = Dr. J. Anderson, *Scotland in Pagan Times; Bronze and Stone Ages.*
- Ar. Arch. = *Archaeologia.*
- Arch. Cambr. = *Archaeologia Cambrensis.*
- A. W. = Sir Richard Hoare, *Ancient Wilts*, vol. i.
- B. = Barrow.
- B. A. H. = *Boletín de la real Academia de la Historia.*
- B. B. = Canon W. Greenwell, *British Barrows.*
- Bateman (1) = J. Bateman, *Vestiges of the Antiquities of Derbyshire.*
- Bateman (2) = Bateman, *Ten Years' Diggings.*
- Bruce = Bruce, *Catalogue of Antiquities in Alnwick Castle.*
- Cat. Dev. = *Catalogue of the Devizes Museum.*
- Colini = Colini, *Il sepolchreto di Remedello sotto.*
- C. T. = Warne, *Celtic Tumuli of Dorset.*
- D. = Diameter.
- Diggings, s.v. Bateman.
- Du Chatellier = *La Poterie aux époques préhist. et gauloise en Armorique.*
- E. R. = East Riding of Yorkshire.
- Evans A. S. I. = Sir John Evans, *Ancient Stone Implements of Great Britain.*
- Evans A. B. I. = Sir John Evans, *Ancient Bronze Implements of Great Britain.*
- H. = height.
- J. A. I. = *Journal of the Anthropological Institute.*
- J. B. A. A. = *Journal of the British Archaeological Association.*
- Jewitt = Ll. Jewitt, *Ceramic Art in Great Britain*, vol. i.
- J. R. H. A. A. I. = *Journ. Royal Historical and Archaeol. Assoc. Ireland.*
- Matér.* = *Matériaux pour l'histoire primitive de l'homme.*
- Montelius = O. Montelius, *Chronologie d. ältesten Bronzezeit in Nord-Deutschland.*
- Mortimer = R. Mortimer, *Forty Years' Researches in British and Saxon Burial mounds of East Yorkshire.*
- Much = Dr. M. Much, *Die Kupferzeit in Europa* (1893).
- N. C. = Borlase, *Naenia Cornubiae.*
- N. O. = Dr. W. Pleyte, *Nederlandsche Oudheden.*
- N. R. = North Riding of Yorkshire.
- Paris = P. Paris, *Essai sur l'art et l'industrie de l'Espagne primitive.*
- P. A. I. = *Proceedings Archaeological Institute.*
- P. R. = Pitt Rivers, *Excavations in Cranborne Chase.*
- P. R. I. A. = *Proceedings Royal Irish Academy.*
- P. Soc. Ant. } = *Proceedings Society of Antiquaries of*
P. S. A. L. } = *London.*
- P. S. A. S. = *Proceedings Society of Antiquaries of Scotland.*
- Rev. Ar. = *Revue Archéologique.*
- S. A. C. = *Sussex Archaeological Collections.*
- Ten Years } s.v. Bateman.
Vestiges }
- Vic. Hist. = *Victoria Histories of Counties.*
- W. A. M. = *Wilts Archaeological Magazine.*
- Wosinsky = Wosinsky, *Inkrustirte Keramik d. Stein- u. Bronzezeit.*
- W. Z. G. = *Westdeutsche Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Kunst.*
- Z. E. } = *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie.*
Z. f. E. }

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

BEAKER TYPES OF THE CONTINENT

PLATES I TO III.

IN Great Britain the researches of craniologists have demonstrated that the appearance of bronze and of the beaker types of ceramic coincides with the advent of a new race characterized by a brachycephalic skull distinctly different from the dolichocephalic head of the earlier neolithic inhabitants. Before attempting to arrange our British beakers chronologically, it is therefore necessary to direct our attention to the Continent, whence came the invaders, in order to learn something of the pottery which most resembles what is found in this country.

What Dr. A. Goetze and P. Reinecke regard as the oldest class of neolithic pottery in Central and Northern Europe is known to German archaeologists as 'Cord-ceramic', from the specimens being usually, though not invariably, decorated by impressions made with a cord upon the moist clay. This kind of ware occurs in Northern and Central Europe north of the Danube; to the west it scarcely passes the Rhine. Although this class of pottery has several forms, such as the amphora and the cord-beaker (*Schnurbecher*), it is only necessary to mention the latter. Originally this type of vessel was composed of two parts, consisting of a globular body out of which rose a cylindrical or conical neck, such as we see in figs. 1*, 2*, both from Thuringia. But in course of time the well-marked separation between the body and the neck became obliterated and smoothed over, so that forms arose such as figs. 3*-6*, also from Thuringia. The five following specimens from Holstein and Holland, figs. 7*-11*, and the three from Jutland, figs. 12*-14*, all seem to be derived from a form like fig. 1*, and are also known as curvilinear beakers (*geschweifte Becher*), a term first applied to them by Tischler. Other examples from Denmark and Rügen are figured by O. Montelius.¹

It will be noticed that in the typical cord-beaker the ornament does not cover the whole vessel, and in many well-made examples the neck alone is decorated. When the ornament of the cord-beaker is arranged in alternate plain and decorated zones or bands, figs. 5*, 6*, Dr. Goetze supposes the maker of the beaker has been influenced by seeing examples of the bell- or zone-beaker, in which the ornamentation is always so arranged. On this account he considers these two classes of ceramic to be partly contemporary. In an example from Hebenkies, Wiesbaden, with an angular shoulder as in fig. 38*, but more slender than the latter, the whole surface of the vessel is decorated, but it is evidently a latish specimen, as the ill-formed amphora, which accompanied it, shows.²

¹ *Chronologie d. alt. Bronzezeit in N.-Deutschland*, figs. 241, 242, 245, 289, 291.

² Schumacher, *Alterth. uns. heid. Vorzeit*, V. Band, Tafel xlix, Fig. 852.

Vessels of the cord-ceramic have been found with faceted stone hammers, with small, nearly rectangular, stone celts of rectangular section, and once only with metal in the shape of a small finger-ring of bronze, poor in tin. With few exceptions the mode of interment was by inhumation, the body being laid in a pit-grave and then covered by a low tumulus.¹ The examples from Holstein and Jutland, figs. 7*–14*, were found singly in graves under tumuli, sometimes with a stone axe, and belong to the last part of the Neolithic Period.²

Dr. Goetze has further published the account of a recently explored neolithic tumulus near Poserna, Weissenfels, in Thuringia. It contained a cord-beaker like fig. 13*, a flat stone celt, a flint saw, a spiral cylinder of flat copper or bronze wire with a diameter of three-quarters of an inch, and making three and a half turns, also a small spiral ear-ring, making a turn and a half, of the same metal. In another tumulus near the last there was found a late amphora and a cord-beaker in form not very unlike fig. 11 from Somerset, though the former is rather more angular at the greatest diameter. (*Præhist. Zeitschrift*, i. 191–5 (1909).)

THE BELL- OR ZONE-BEAKER.

This type of vessel from its form is often called a bell-beaker, but from its scheme of ornament Goetze terms it a zone-beaker. For purposes of decoration the cord technique was no longer used, and for it was substituted that made by an instrument such as a cogged wheel or a notched and curved slip of wood, which when pressed upon the wet clay, left small square depressions at short intervals. These small holes were often filled with a white substance, which greatly enhanced the appearance of the vessel by making the design stand out in white against the darker ground of the surface. Yet the ornament, as was also the case with the cord-beaker, was sometimes incised with a pointed instrument.

The bell-beaker has a wide range, though very different from that of the cord-ceramic. Examples are known from Spain, Portugal, the south and north-west of France, Sardinia, Sicily, N. Italy, the Middle and Lower Rhine, Holland, Great Britain, the Upper Danube, the neighbourhood of Buda-Pest, Moravia, Bohemia, Thuringia, and Saxony. Specimens have also been found, though rather rarely, in Prussia, Pomerania, Mecklenburg, and Hanover.³ Perhaps Holstein should be included, as figs. 45*–47* seem to belong to the type, especially the latter, which is ornamented with the 'square notch' technique.

Where this type of ceramic first came to light and where was the focus from which it spread over a large part of Europe are not known for certain. Dr. O. Montelius has no doubt that it is of Eastern origin. For the form he cites several curvilinear vessels from Troy, and with regard to the form and scheme of ornament he supposes that the alternate plain and ornamented zones which characterize the type are imitations of the alternately painted and plain zones seen on Egyptian pottery of the twelfth dynasty. But if we accept the recent dating of the Egyptian dynasties, the period of the twelfth dynasty from 2000–1800 B.C. falls rather too late. In Sicily, the south-east of Spain, and the south of France we find specimens such as figs. 15*–18*, all very similar in form, with the greatest diameter placed low down and

¹ Goetze, *Z. E.* (1900), pp. 260–3; P. Reinecke, *Westdeutsche Zeitschr. f. Geschichte u. Kunst*, xix, Hefte iii und iv, pp. 223–8.

² Montelius, *Chronologie*, p. 119.

³ Reinecke, *op. cit.* pp. 231–2.