WILEY

12. Description of Vase Found on Nunwell Down, Isle of Wight

Author(s): O. G. S. Crawford and Arthur Keith

Source: *Man*, Vol. 13 (1913), pp. 19-23

Published by: Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2787922>

Accessed: 27-06-2016 03:02 UTC

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at

<http://about.jstor.org/terms>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Wiley, Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland are collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Man*

remarkable is the survival of the story of the hawk and pigeon. I took it down in Balochi verse in 1884, and a translation of it has been published recently.* It is as follows :—

A hawk and a harmless pigeon struggling together fell into the King's lap, and the hawk first prayed for his help, saying, "Hail to thee, 'Ali, King of Men, thou art certainly the lord of our faith. I left my hungry brood on the bank of the Seven Streams on a deep-rooted tree, and have come swooping round that I may find somewhere some kind of game to take to my ravenous young ones. Thou knowest all; take not from me what I have hunted and caught." Then the pigeon made his petition. "Hail to thee, 'Ali, King of Men, thou art the guardian of our faith. This is my tale: I left my hungry little ones on the slopes of Mount Bambor, and came here to pick up some grains of corn to carry to my starving children. I have been seized by this cruel hawk who has taken me to tear me open. Now give me not to this ravenous hawk, for thou knowest all that has happened."

He called his slave and said, "Kambar, bring me my knife." He laid his hand upon his thigh. "Come, hawk, I will give thee some flesh." Then he cut out as much of his own flesh as was equal to the weight of the pigeon, and even a little more. The harmless pigeon began to weep, "He is not a hawk, nor am I a pigeon; we are both angels of God whom he has sent to try thee, and well hast thou endured the test."

This story is identical with that preserved in the Mahābhārata, although perhaps the simplicity of the modern Baloch bard is more effective than the spun-out disquisitions of the classical poet. In the Amarāwati sculpture† two or three episodes in the story are represented, the pigeon in one is seen fluttering into the King's lap, and in another he is cutting his thigh with his sword. In the last tableaux the two appear in human form before the King, and it would seem that in the Jātaka version both the hawk and pigeon resumed their original forms, and not only one of them as in the Mahābhārata form of the story. So also in the Balochi poem both are declared to be angels sent to test the saint.

The story then, originally Hindu, is seen to have been adopted first by the Buddhists and then by the Mohammedans. Is it possible that it went further, and, after being carried, like so many other Oriental legends, to Europe, furnished the root idea for "The Merchant of Venice"?

M. LONGWORTH DAMES.

T. A. JOYCE.

England: Archæology.

Crawford: Keith.

Description of Vase found on Nunwell Down, Isle of Wight. By **12**
O. G. S. Crawford. With a Report on the Associated Cranium and Femur by
Arthur Keith, M.D., Conservator of Museum, Royal College of Surgeons, England.

The skull and other bones and the urn described below belonged to the old Isle of Wight Museum, which has recently been incorporated with the museum at Carisbrooke Castle. When at Newport the relics were contained in a small glass cabinet, the key of which had been lost. This was perhaps fortunate, as the specimens were preserved from harm in it, with their labels. Besides the urn and bones, the case contained the following objects:—Several flint "flakes," one found close to the skull; a round shore-pebble, and a natural flint of much the same size (these are said to have been "placed on either side of the skeleton"); and an oval-shaped "hammerstone" of gritty rock, probably greensand. The description on the label is as follows:—"The contents of a grave from an ancient British barrow on Nunwell

* *Popular Poetry of the Baloches*. By M. Longworth Dames. London, 1907.

† B. M. Ferguson's *Tree and Serpent Worship*. Pl.

"Down, near Brading, I.W., opened November 28th, 1881, by Captain J. Thorp, and "presented by him to this museum, May 15th, 1885. . . . No remnant of metal "was found in the grave. . . . About 100 tons of flints were heaped over "this grave." Mr. Hubert Poole, of Shanklin, has kindly sent me an extract from *The Antiquary*, Vol. V (1882), p. 119, which describes the opening of the barrow. I quote it nearly in full.

"On the Middle West Down, beyond Nunwell, Isle of Wight, facing the north and east, by kind permission from Lady Oglander, the owner of the estate, I removed about 15 inches of earth from the present surface, on a spot I had previously marked, feeling convinced, from its peculiar shape (once, no doubt, an extensive mound or tumulus, but now flattened), and its faint outline of mixed chalk, forming a large circle, barely perceptible to the ordinary observer, on the ground ploughed up for cultivation, that something worthy of investigation lay hidden.

"By compass I trenched the north, south, east, and west, when I quickly came upon a most compact body of flints, so placed that when the whole surface was uncovered, it bore the exact shape of a large mushroom, for upon examination I found it equal on all sides, from the apex to the outside of the circle, well put together; in fact, like a solid paved causeway, measuring in diameter $22\frac{1}{2}$ feet, and nearly 3 feet 2 inches in depth in the centre of the flints, measuring down to 12 inches. Under this extraordinary mass of flints, and exactly in the centre of the circle, there was a round stone (*not* flint), as if placed to mark the centre, and act as a guide round which the flints were to be placed to form a proper arch. Close to this stone was an urn or 'passing cup,' with two handles placed horizontally, the hole in each handle being so small as to suggest that it was intended to pass a string through for suspension. It only contained earth and a few chips of flint, and stood upright, and is $5\frac{1}{4}$ inches high and 8 inches in diameter, apparently of unbaked clay, with very rude diamond-shaped markings scratched on its outer surface. On the left side of this cup I found a human skull, the jaw and splendid teeth of which touched the rim of the cup, and on the right side of the skull, above the ear, a wedge-shaped hole, 2 inches long, and nearly half an inch wide, cleanly cut in the bone, as if by a sharp weapon.

"Upon further removing the earth, I laid bare the skeleton of a well-grown man, apparently more than 6 feet high, and buried in a sitting position. Most of the ribs and other small bones, together with a portion of the jaw, had crumbled away, the body being so placed and doubled up as to bring the knees level with the chest. . . . Close under the jaws I found a flint flake, corresponding with the shape of the hole in the skull, and which, I consider, might have caused the death wound, having, as it were, fallen out of the skull as the body mouldered away. The skeleton lay or sat east and west. I could not discover any remnant of metal of any description. On either side of the skeleton were two smooth stones, the size and shape of an egg, one a flint and the other a shore pebble."—J. THORP.

I am not inclined to place much confidence in the speculations of the author and they do not appear to be verified by expert investigations; but the account of the excavation seems accurate and reliable. The flints may or may not have been used as implements. The oval "hammerstone" was very probably used for some purpose.

The dimensions of the urn are as follows:—Height, 148 mm.; width of rim, 205 mm.; width of base, 90 mm.; thickness, 8 mm. It is made of fine clay, baked hard, and with very little flint grit; it is of a reddish-brown colour and slightly burnished; where broken the edges are black. It is ornamented with a line-pattern made by a sharp instrument. The ornament (whose general arrangement can be seen in the accompanying illustration) runs diagonally in bands of fourteen or fifteen

roughly parallel lines set close together; the average width of each band is about 25 mm. Round the rim and just below it runs a band (about 15 mm. wide) of five or six parallel lines crossed diagonally by shorter ones. Just below the rim are two "lugs" set side by side and nearly touching; they are each pierced horizontally with a small hole just wide enough to admit a lead pencil. They are scored on the outside with diagonal grooves. They can have served no useful purpose.

I have been unable to discover, either here or on the Continent, any urn exactly resembling this specimen. In the British Isles I know of none even remotely resembling it, nor does Mr. Abercromby, who has seen a photograph of it. It is not, of course, a cinerary urn, but neither does it belong to any type of beaker or food-vessel. Sir Arthur Evans has seen the urn and does not know of any similar specimen. Thinking that it might belong to one of the numerous types of German pottery I sent a photograph to Professor Götze, of Grosslichterfeldt, and the following is a copy of his reply: "An absolutely identical vase from the neolithic period in Germany is unknown to me. But the ornament is similar to that on a neolithic

" beaker from the district of Aurich, now in the Provincial Museum, Hanover.
 " The same ornament
 " occurs at any rate
 " also in Great Britain
 " on vases which are
 " related to the neo-
 " lithic wares of the
 " Continent, but placed
 " by Mr. Abercromby
 " in the Bronze Age.
 " A similar form, but
 " without a handle
 " and with different
 " ornament, I have
 " figured in *The Vases,*
 " *Forms and Orna-*
 " *ment of the Neo-*
 " *lithic Cord-decorated*
 " *Ware in the Basin*
 " *of the Saale, Plate I,*

NUNWELL VASE.

" Fig. 28. The provenance is Schneidlingen, district of Aschersleben. The vase
 " is now in the Provincial Museum, Halle."

From this it is clear that both the ornament and shape of the Nunwell vase are known in Central Germany, though not found associated in any individual specimen. Both, however, are sufficiently peculiar to justify the expectation of a cultural connection, and it would seem that we must look to Central Germany for the most nearly allied culture. The roughness with which the ornament is imposed and the slightly abnormal features of the vase are just what we should expect in an object made in a strange country by an immigrant people who have not yet forgotten their native arts and crafts.

This hypothesis is confirmed by Professor Keith's account of the skull and femur which were found in the same grave as the vase. They are those of an individual typical of the "Bronze Age race," which appears to have brought with it into England and Scotland the class of ceramic known as "beakers" or "drinking cups." In a number of cases in England skeletons of this race have been found associated with beakers. I do not know whether the characteristics of the race which is associated with similar beakers in Germany have been in-

vestigated, but if so they will probably be found to agree with those of our "Bronze Age" type.

The Isle of Wight lies athwart the path of every invader of Wessex. Almost visible from the south (St. Catherine's Head is less than 60 miles from Cherbourg), it has from the earliest times been in close touch with France. It is, however, from the east that most invasions have come. Coasting along the inhospitable shores of Sussex but few harbours would attract the invader until he reached the sheltered waters of Spithead, and there the first haven to confront him would be that of Brading, where he could sail right up to the chalk slopes upon its southern margin. No doubt subsequent crews landed in the harbours further west, both on the island and on the mainland. History repeats itself when viewed geographically; the Jutes followed in the wake of their Bronze Age predecessors. The Isle of Wight has aptly been called "the door-mat of Wessex," for we can detect upon its shores the footprints of many peoples.

FIG. 1.

REPORT ON THE ASSOCIATED CRANIUM AND FEMUR. By Professor Keith.

"A brachycephalic skull typical of the Bronze Period. Of a strong muscular man, aged about forty, and 5 feet 7 inches in height (1,670 mm.). The age is estimated chiefly from the degree to which the teeth are worn; the dentine is partly exposed on the chewing surfaces of the first molars, the last molars are slightly worn. The condition of the teeth thus indicates a man of about thirty, but the condition of the sutures indicates an older man. The chief sutures are obliterated on their internal aspect; the sagittal suture is almost closed on its outer aspect; the coronal can be traced, while the lambdoid is still open. The sutures and general condition of the skull suggests that the man was over forty at death. The height is estimated from the femur, which had a height, in the standing posture, of 456 mm.

FIG. 2.

"The general features of the skull are accurately shown in the figures 1, 2, 3, so that it is not necessary to give a lengthy description.

"The maximum length of the skull from glabella to occiput is 179 mm.; the prominent supraciliary ridges project 3 mm. in front of the glabella. The maximum

width of the skull, estimated by doubling the diameter of the right side, for the left is defective, is 146 mm.; the cephalic index (proportion of width to length) is 81.6, brachycephalic. The supra-auricular height is 115 mm., rather a moderate amount.

"The forehead is marked by extremely prominent supraciliary and supra-orbital ridges, the supraciliary and supra-orbital elements being partly fused. The forehead is wide, the minimum frontal diameter being 104 mm.; the width, at the upper margin of the orbits, 110 mm. The frontal air-sinuses are of small size—15 mm. in height, 15 mm. in width, and 10 mm. from back to front. On the inner aspect of the frontal bone is a descending median crest of bone, 8 mm. in height. On the upper part of the forehead the frontal bone is only 6.5 mm. in thickness, towards the bregma 8 mm., but at the glabella, from the cribriform plate to the glabella, it is 24 mm.—a high measurement.

"The face is strongly formed, being long and of rather more than moderate width, with wide, strongly-marked angles to the jaws, and wide, square, prominent chin. The length of the face from nasion to incisor point (upper face length) is 70 mm.; from nasion to lower border of chin (lower face length), 123 mm. The facial width (bizygomatic), 130 mm. In life he would certainly have passed as a strikingly handsome man.

"I have accurate drawings of the lower jaw, but it is unnecessary to publish these as the mandible is characteristic of the Bronze Age people. The width at the angles is 100 mm.; between the outer ends of the condyles, 126 mm. Its height at the symphysis is 32 mm., its thickness there 16 mm. In conformity with the long face, the ascending ramus of the jaw is high—72 mm.

"The palate is regularly formed, its width between the second molars being 68 mm. (a wide palate); its length is only 46 mm. The first upper molar measures 10.5 by 11 mm., the second 10 by 11 mm. On one side no third molar or wisdom tooth has been developed; on the other side this tooth has been lost before death. There is no evidence of dental disease, all the teeth being sound.

"The neck was thick and strong and well hafted to the skull. The bi-mastoid width of the neck was 126 mm.; its front-to-back thickness, measured from inion to a point between the anterior borders of the mastoid processes, 73 mm.

"If a tracing of this skull be superimposed on a long-headed type of skull, so that ear-hole falls on ear-hole, the outstanding differences between the short and long-headed people will be realised. In the short-headed people the skull has been flattened posteriorly, and it seems as if the brains had been pressed to an undue extent into the pre-auricular part of the skull.

"The femur shows all the characteristics of the Bronze Age type. The shaft is twisted; the upper end of the shaft flattened from back to front; the lower extremity in proportion to the shaft; very wide."

O. G. S. CRAWFORD.
A. KEITH, M.D.

FIG. 3.