
The Distribution of Early Bronze Age Settlements in Britain: Discussion

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Captain LYONS: In the absence of Dr. Myres, who is unable to be present, I will ask Mr. Crawford to read his paper on the "Distribution of Early Bronze Age Settlements in Britain."

Captain LYONS (after the paper): I have no first-hand knowledge of the subject myself, so I am quite unable to appraise the weight to be assigned to the very interesting coincidences Mr. Crawford has brought before us this afternoon.

Sir ARTHUR EVANS: We are all very much indebted to Mr. Crawford for his very interesting paper, largely, as he says, suggested by Mr. Abercromby's researches. One fixed point to bear in mind is that Ireland, at the close of the Neolithic times, was a kind of El Dorado of the West, and we see the connections thus brought about between Ireland, Germany, and Denmark, and other Continental regions introducing various new elements into Britain. Not only have we bronze thus coming in from over the North sea and the Channel, but we find the spiral ornament, which had apparently reached Denmark and the lands of the lower Elbe through the old amber trade with Central Europe and the Danubian basin, propagating itself in Ireland, though we have much fewer traces of it in this country. New Grange supplies good examples of this and other decorative motives introduced in this way.

One of the great difficulties suggested by Mr. Crawford's researches is that although we have the evidences of trade relations, and see the spiral ornament coming in from the Elbe region, the "beakers" which he brings into connection with this line of intercourse are so far as is known very sparsely represented in Ireland. That is a remarkable fact. But on the other hand, as Mr. Crawford has shown by a very suggestive map, the distribution of these beakers extends over a large part of the West and South of this island. We must also remember that besides the valleys of the Rhine and the Elbe, and some Central European areas, such as Bohemia and Moravia, they are found in the south of Europe. Their distribution can be traced throughout Western Gaul to the Iberic peninsula. One or two have been found as far afield as Sicily. They are, I think, more at home in Spain and Portugal than Mr. Crawford quite seems to realize, and it must be also borne in mind that archaeology there is in such an inchoate state that a single specimen of an object may well have the real equivalents of a much larger number. There is one point, moreover, in connection with their southern distribution which has struck me, and that is that at the end of the Stone Age and the beginning of the early Metal Age in Southern and Eastern Spain there are certain caves of that period which have been explored, and in one of those have been found, together with objects of the earliest Metal Age, certain bags of esparto grass which look as if they could not be other than the prototypes of these clay beakers.* Now, of course, it is quite possible that in early times the esparto fabrics of Spain may have had a considerable vogue, and even have spread to distant European areas. I cannot help thinking that evidence may eventually be forthcoming of a line of such commerce running along the west of Gaul. We see, at any rate, traces of an early trade route at the beginning of the Bronze Age along that route. Occasional finds of Iberic types of bronze implements have been even made in these islands, some in Cornwall, and one or two in Ireland; and on the other hand, a certain number of gold finds have occurred along this Iberic

* Since this statement has been made, I have been convinced by some observations of Mr. A. A. Fergusson Leeds, who has a first-hand knowledge of ancient Peruvian sepulchres, that the accounts published by Gonzora, on which it was based, are, in part at least, due to a mystification. Some of the objects found in the Cueva de los Murciélagos are clearly Peruvian! How they were introduced into the cave is another question.

route, some of which are certainly, and others probably, derived from Irish sources. The evidence is by no means clear, and we can only hope that further researches on the truly scientific lines which Mr. Crawford has been following, may enable him to throw a much clearer light on these early trade lines.

Mr. HENRY BALFOUR: I have nothing to add to this controversy, but I should like to ask a question of Mr. Crawford. First of all, I would like to congratulate him on having embarked on what I certainly regard as a most useful piece of research. The collation and mapping of the scattered material relating to specific types must lead to important results. I think that already it has led to giving us some results of a highly suggestive and interesting character. When he speaks of "flat celts," I would rather like to know definitely exactly what he includes in that term. Does he include all the types of copper and bronze celts which may reasonably be described as flat; those which have even rudimentary transverse stops and flanges, which might be described as flat, but which must be regarded presumably as very much later than those primitive copper and bronze celts which practically imitate the neolithic type of celt? I should like to know very definitely from him how much he includes in his term "flat celt" as applied to his maps, because a considerable period of time must have elapsed during the evolution of the higher types, and I hope that in publishing his paper Mr. Crawford may be induced to give a tabulated statement of the material, stating definitely what types he includes, what his material is, and giving a definite statement of the individual specimens on which his conclusions are based, and in what museums and collections they are located at the present time. I suggest this really in the hope that what he has done may lead to something further, because I should regard a tabulated statement as a kind of "ground-bait" which would attract further information. Maps, such as Mr. Crawford has produced already, although extremely valuable at the present time as they are, are still more valuable when they are allowed to grow, and the attraction of fresh material for his own use into his own fold, used on similar lines to his, will prove of immense value to the subject and will cause his piece of research, which is to some extent in the initial stages, to develop into something extremely fruitful.

Mr. R. A. SMITH: Mr. Crawford has brought the Early Bronze age home to us this afternoon, and I am glad to find his researches have added to the material collected in the prehistoric chapters of the Victoria History. Pioneer work is the most difficult, and generally leads to further research. These chapters were written by people interested in particular counties, who have done their best to bring together material which would otherwise have run the risk of being lost. It is something to have swept together the available literature, and Mr. Crawford has filled up some of the gaps. The few criticisms I should like to offer refer to matters of principle. In the first place, from the archaeological point of view, I do not think it is quite fair to associate the "flat celts" (whatever that term implies) with the "beakers." To my mind they belong to two different races. Mr. Abercromby's map shows the settlements of the beaker-using people, and his view is (or was in his early papers) that these people came over the North sea. The map certainly suggests that that was the case, but at the Glasgow Exhibition last year I was assured by a local archaeologist that many beakers had been overlooked in the districts near Glasgow, a point rather against Mr. Abercromby's view that these people came from the east. Of course the beaker people, once arrived in Scotland, may have wandered west and down into the middle and south of England; and I believe some got to Ireland, because, besides the instance given by Mr. Crawford in his paper, there was a group of beakers discovered at Moytirra in co. Sligo. Then again, with regard to the beakers, I should like to know what types he includes.

Mr. Abercromby has isolated the caliciform, or tulip type, which is the earlier one, the others being derived from that and more closely connected with those in Bohemia and Germany. A beaker, therefore, wants some sort of definition as well as the flat celt, and ought not to be associated with the flat celt; the map itself shows that they are of distinct origin. Ireland is full of flat celts, but only a few beakers have been found there. That in itself shows that they belong to different civilizations, and I do not think that the beaker people brought bronze over with them. Stone celts in Ireland are very numerous, so numerous that they become rather monotonous, and the flat celts are evidently derived from the stone celts. There is no break at all in the evolution, which shows that the Irish bronze industry was indigenous, and was not brought by the beaker-using people. In spite of one alleged discovery in association with a flat celt, the crescents may not go back much before 1000 B.C., whereas early flat celts go back to 2000 B.C., and from their number I should think that Ireland probably led the way in bronze-working, at least in this part of the world. That is not altogether a novel idea, because Canon Greenwell and Mr. Parker Brewis have contended that the bronze spear-head was evolved entirely in the British Isles. On the Continent spear-heads are either very primitive or of a highly developed form, the intermediate stages not being represented. If we could evolve the spear-head, we could also evolve the celt. We ought not to imagine that an abundance of flat celts means that the country was behind-hand. In certain districts that might be the case, but in Ireland occur all the stages in the evolution of this implement. The tulip-beaker on the Continent is generally associated with dolmens, or at least occurs mostly in the dolmen area. In Brittany it is very common, and I understand there are a great many found in Guernsey. It looks as if the original beaker came along the Mediterranean and up the west coast of Spain and France to various parts of England. Mr. Crawford's work, based as it is on scientific lines, is of a kind that must have a great effect on the future of English archæology; and if he can do for England what Lissauer did for Germany, he will certainly benefit archæology, and I hope himself.

MR. HAROLD PEAKE: I must add my congratulations to Mr. Crawford for his treatment of the early Bronze age, for I feel that these maps, and others drawn on similar lines, will help to solve many problems connected with early trade. I cannot quite agree with Mr. Smith that the beaker people and flat celt people must be different, because the maps of these objects do not coincide, for beakers are household articles and show where people live, while celts may be articles of commerce and indicate the lines pursued by their owners in trade. Nevertheless, with Mr. Smith, I feel that Mr. Crawford has not yet proved that the beaker people first introduced metal to these islands. The general lines shown by the celts and the gold objects, which may, perhaps, be somewhat, but not much later in date, seem to show that there were two main streams of trade running to Ireland; one from Spain by the west of France, and the other from the mouth of the Baltic. In neither of these directions is it clear that beakers are found, while they are common in the region between these lines, where gold ornaments are absent. When a new people arrive simultaneously with a new culture, it is natural to conclude that one must have introduced the other; but this may prove a fallacy. It is possible that climatic causes may have driven two or more peoples to move at the same time. The general conclusion that I should arrive at from Mr. Crawford's maps is that the people of the Baltic, having learned the use of metal from trade with the Mediterranean, came to Ireland in search of gold, while simultaneously the beaker people arrived in England from the Rhine and the Elbe, and a trade arose with Spain. Had the beaker people carried on this trade in bronze and gold, we should expect to find some evidence of their occupation in the neighbourhood of the Irish goldfields,

and some Irish gold objects in their original homes in Central Europe. But further investigation on the lines begun by Mr. Crawford should solve the problem, and I should like to support Mr. Balfour's suggestion that Mr. Crawford should publish lists of beakers and celts, without which the maps will lose much of their value.

Mr. S. HAZZLEDINE WARREN said that when staying at Freshwater, in the Isle of Wight, some years ago, he saw a collection of ancient pottery in the possession of a Mr. Robert Walker, of that place. Most of these vessels were cinerary urns, but among them was one very beautiful beaker. Unfortunately the speaker did not know what had become of this. The original owner was now dead, but it might be recovered if inquiries were made. It was found at the foot of Afton Down. The speaker also referred to Eastern Essex, where he had done a good deal of work for some years past, as a beaker locality. Below the salt marshes of Eastern Essex there is a buried prehistoric surface, and this surface yields a large number of stone implements very similar to those found in the round barrows, together with fragments of the beaker. This surface passes down below low tide, and is overlaid by the tidal clay, so that these beaker-using people lived in this country before the last submergence took place. He thought that this was an important point in working out the geography of the time, and one which might also influence some of the trade routes. It is remarkable that on the rising ground, inland from these Essex marshes, he had not yet been able to find any of the characteristic industry of the beaker-using people. This looked as if they were invaders from the sea. Some thought their flint to be non-British; it is certainly non-local, and may not improbably have come by water.

Dr. J. W. EVANS: I should like Mr. Crawford to tell us what his opinion is as to the source of these beakers. Were they in all cases manufactured in the different localities in which they are now found, or did those who used them bring them with them when they invaded the country, or acquire them by way of trade?

Mr. CRAWFORD: I am afraid there is not time to reply to all the most interesting criticisms that have been made, but I must thank you all very sincerely for coming here this afternoon and making them, and for the very favourable way in which you have received my paper. I only hope it may induce others to help in *mapping* the distribution of type-objects.

Sir Arthur Evans has mentioned the discovery of prehistoric string-bags in Spain, and I venture to suggest additional evidence in support of the derivation of beakers from basket prototypes. In an article on the sources of design in early pottery,* Prof. Schuchhardt gives an illustration of a cord-basket from Africa, absolutely identical in shape and ornament with some of the caliciform vases of Central and Western Europe. The alternate zones of dark and light shades are most striking. In their book on the Akikuyu of British East Africa, Mr. and Mrs. Routledge give illustrations of certain string-baskets with waists, which recall certain other types of beakers. Is it possible that material for making such string-bags existed in Central Europe as well as in Spain, but that, for climatic reasons, no objects made from such materials have survived there? Or that the prototypes of beakers were made of woven leather thongs, like some which are made to-day in the Sudan?

I am glad to say that I have already made the schedules which Mr. Balfour has mentioned, and hope it may be possible to publish them with this paper. For every one of the dots on the maps I have got a line giving the site of the discovery, bibliography, present abode, and so on; and, when it was possible to obtain them, dimensions of the object and conditions of the discovery. Of course, in a large

* 'Prähistorische Zeitschrift, 1909,' pp. 37-54 (fig. 1, p. 42).

number of cases it has been impossible to discover more than the fact that a flat celt *has* been found. This collection of material, which Mr. Peake originally suggested I should undertake, was made from museums, proceedings of societies, and from all kinds of sources, but I have been careful not to include any flat celts, except those which I have seen myself or of which an illustration is given, or at least some positive evidence that it is really a flat celt and not one of a later type. While it has thus been impossible here to draw any distinction between the different types of flat celt, I have excluded all celts with a clearly defined stop-ridge, or with flanges that have been cast and not merely beaten up. This indiscriminate preliminary mapping is, I believe, quite sound in principle, since it gives one a broad outline to start upon; the detailed distribution of sub-types can then be worked out by any one with the help of the schedules. In passing I should remark that the very earliest types, such as the primitive triangular copper celt of Ire'land, are not found in Britain. I have, as a matter of fact, found practically no evidence to upset the hypothesis—for such, as Mr. Balfour has said, it is—that flat celts of all types belong to different stages of a single culture period of no great length.

I should like to know upon what grounds Mr. Smith dates the gold lunulæ to about 1000 B.C. The only associated find known is that from Harlyn, in Cornwall, where two lunulæ were found with a flat celt of an early type. The evidence of the association is quite clear, and has been accepted without question by the author of the first account of its first discovery,* by Sir John Evans,† M. Reinach, ‡ Mr Coffey, § Prof. Montelius, || M. Déchelette,¶ and by the author of the British Museum handbook; ** and it is universally agreed that celts like the Harlyn specimen cannot be placed, at the lowest estimate, later than 1500 B.C.

I have examined the volumes of the 'Victoria County History' for notes of finds of flat celts. Unfortunately the importance of recording exact particulars of isolated finds is seldom realized by the authors of the articles on Early Man, and the descriptions of them are often so vague as to be quite useless to the student of type-distribution. In many cases (*e.g.* in the article on Early Man in the first Hampshire volume) they are entirely ignored. The maps are occasionally useful as indices.

The evidence for the discovery of beaker-fragments at Mountstewart, co. Down, rests upon a badly drawn illustration and is not accepted by Mr. Coffey. The Sligo beaker-fragments are still in existence and there appears to be no doubt of their authenticity.

I have taken all the types of beaker as belonging to a single period to which Mr. Abercromby assigns a minimum length of about 200 years. They can be roughly equated with flat celts by the association of both separately with flat tanged daggers.

Copper celts may, I think, be derived from stone celts in many regions (*e.g.* Cyprus, Hungary, Spain, Egypt, etc.), so that this line of argument will throw no light on the place of the first discovery of metal. As regards the route by which the knowledge of metal reached Britain, there is an interesting piece of evidence, a curious little blade, found at Winterbourne Bassett, in Wi'ts. It has three rivets and a raised mid-rib running down the middle, and it clearly belongs to a type

* Mr. Edward Smirke, *Arch. Jour.*, **22**, 1865, pp. 275-277.

† 'Ancient Bronze Implements,' p. 42.

‡ *Rev. Celtique*, **21**, 1900, pp. 81, 82.

§ *Proc.*, Royal Irish Academy, **27**, 1909, p. 252.

|| *Archæologia*, **61**, 1908, p. 128.

¶ 'Manuel,' **2**, p. 354.

** 'B.M. Guide to the Bronze Age' (1904), p. 146.

common in south-east Europe and Cyprus* (Fig. 10). It seems to me that this rare find is just what one would expect. The knowledge of metal comes first through trade intercourse in the form of one or two such precious examples manufactured in the place where metal has been discovered and mined. The knowledge at once becomes widely dispersed, and copper is mined wherever it is found under favourable conditions. The demand for ready-made objects ceases, but each people shapes the implements of the new material after the model of the old.



FIG. 10.

The mention of a beaker from Afton Down, in the Isle of Wight, is of great interest. The only other example recorded from the island is one found with a barbed flint arrow-head at Nodiam, Carisbrooke, in 1857. The Hampshire basin has always attracted invaders, but direct evidence that the beaker peoples landed there has hitherto been rare. That is mainly because the Isle of Wight—and to a less degree the opposite mainland coast—has long been archæologically in the same state as Spain. It is hoped that the foundation of a central museum at Carisbrooke Castle, and the researches thereby entailed, will do much to remove this reproach.

I imagine that the beakers must all have been made on or near the spot where they have subsequently been found. It is not at all likely that an organized trade in pottery, such as that which existed during the Roman occupation, would have been possible in the beaker period.

Captain LYONS: I am sure I may express the thanks of all who have been present at the meeting this afternoon to Mr. Crawford for his very interesting treatment of a large amount of material which throws much light on the settlements and movements of some of the early inhabitants of these islands.

(*To be continued.*)

REVIEWS.

EUROPE.

BRITISH VEGETATION.

'Types of British Vegetation.' By Members of the Central Committee for its Survey and Study of British Vegetation. Edited by A. G. Tansley, M.A., F.L.S., University Lecturer on Botany in the University of Cambridge. Cambridge: University Press. 1911. *Plates and Illustrations.* 6s. net.

THIS useful work, illustrated throughout with fine photographs, well contradicts the statement often heard that a highly scientific exposition of facts must needs be "dry" reading. The various sectional writers in it, among whom the editor, Mr. Tansley, figures prominently, have contrived to present the study of British vegetation in a new and interesting manner, always laying stress upon the influence of special types upon the scenery of the country.

* See *Wiltshire Archæological Magazine*, vol. 37 (June, 1911), plate iv., fig. 3. Similar examples have been recorded from Nant, Aveyron (Déchelette, Manuel, 2, fig. 39), Attersee (Munro, 'Lake-dwellings,' fig. 39, No. 17), Sillein, Hungary (Pulszky, 'Kupferzeit,' p. 77, fig. 2), Cyprus (Dussaud, 'Civ. Préh.' fig. 118).