

XIII.—*On an Enamelled Bronze Cup, and a Celt and Ring Mould, in the possession of Sir W. Calverley Trevelyan, Baronet; with Observations on the Use of Metals by the Ancient British and the Romans.*
By EDWARD CHARLTON, M.D., Secretary.

THE enamelled bronze cup, figured above, was found some years ago, in a ploughed field at Harwood, near Cambo. We have been unable to learn whether any vestiges of a place of sepulture were observed in the neighbourhood of the spot. Ornaments of bronze have been repeatedly found in and near places of sepulture, both in this country and elsewhere; and while the rude stone celt and hammer have been generally conceded to the Britons, all ornaments, vessels, and weapons of bronze, have been thought to be of Roman manufacture. This opinion, however, is no longer maintained by many of our best archaeologists, and more credit is given to the inhabitants of Great Britain anterior to the Roman era, for having attained a certain degree of acquaintance with the use of metals. To the Britons, we would refer the celts of bronze, of which many are in the Museum; and it appears, too, that the early Scandinavian ad-

venturers were cognizant of the use of bronze, and employed it for their weapons as well as for domestic ornaments. In the Museum of Copenhagen are some vessels of bronze, with the edging from the mould still remaining upon them, and fragments of moulds, with small portions of metal still adhering within them, have been frequently discovered in the Scandinavian peninsula. Many of the highly ornamented axes and sword-hilts of bronze in the same collection, consist of a mere thin plate of bronze, moulded upon a form of clay, either to give lightness to the weapon, or more probably to spare the waste of metal as precious in those times as gold.

Some of the bronze and gold vessels in the Copenhagen Museum bear ornaments of considerably intricacy and beauty of design. The oldest specimens are adorned with concentric rings, and raised or sunken points. Sometimes the ornaments are deeply engraved, and their hollows filled up with gold. We have, however, no example upon record of the graven ornaments on a bronze cup or vessel of the British period, being filled-in with enamel, as in the present specimen, which we ourselves are satisfied can only be referred to the time of the Roman or Saxon occupation of this island. The form of the ornaments, the nature of the enamel, and the shape of this elegant little vessel, all bespeak a Roman origin. It is observed by Sorterup, of Copenhagen,^a that cups and urns of bronze, with a well-marked foot or stand, are almost all to be considered of Roman manufacture. The foot of this cup, though low, is neatly rounded, as though turned on a lathe. Figs. 91 and 93 of Mr. Sorterup's essay, give good examples of this kind, from the Copenhagen Museum, and 93, though without ornament, closely resembles in shape the specimen now before us. The mouldings, for so we may term the ornaments of the cup, are decidedly Roman. The egg moulding is twice repeated, above and also below the elegant wavy pattern, which, however, bears no resemblance to those patterns observed on the Scandinavian cups and urns of bronze or gold. Lastly, as we said before, the blue glass enamel in the egg mouldings, and in the ornamental wavy pattern, can only, we think, belong to Roman or Saxon artificers, though it cannot be denied that beads of beautiful blue glass

^a *Annaler for Nordisk Oldkyndighed, etc.*, 1845-6.

are occasionally found in British encampments, and that many antiquaries believe glass to have been not unknown before the arrival of the Roman legionaries. We do not think that this cup can be referred to the middle ages: the mouldings are of a classic period; there is not a vestige of mediæval design about the whole.

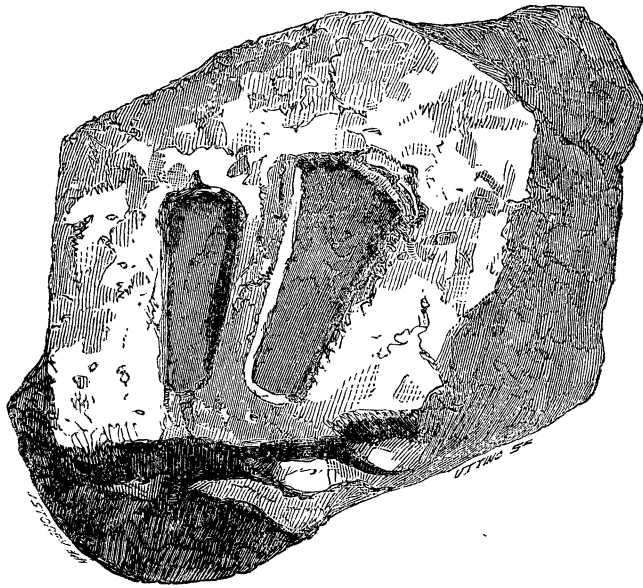
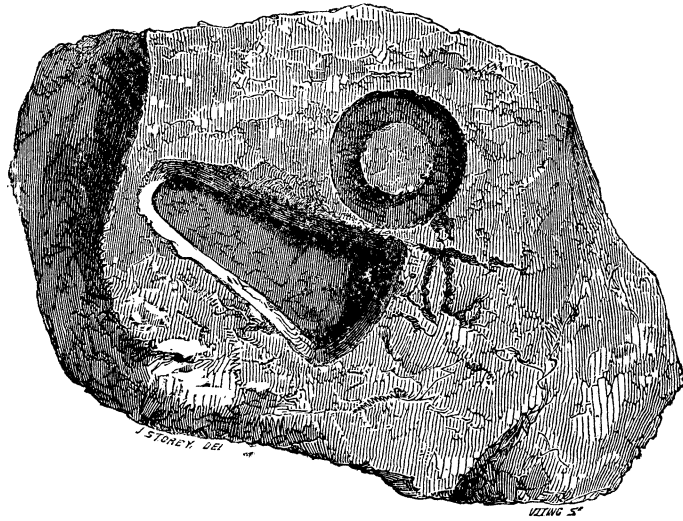
There are two bronze vessels in shape resembling modern coffee-pots, in the Museum of the Society; another is in the possession of the Rev. J. C. Bruce; and a fourth now shewn, and possesses peculiar interest from the circumstances under which it was found. There is another in the possession of a gentleman at Haltwhistle, and more no doubt exist in various parts of the country. These vessels have been, almost up to the present, time unanimously described as Roman tripods, yet they have not been found in greater abundance in the vicinity of Roman stations than in other parts of the country. It is indeed a matter of no small difficulty to determine the age of these vessels. They have been repeatedly found in peat mosses, either alone or with other vessels, such as bronze pots or cauldrons, goblets, etc., as at Closeburn Hall, Dumfriesshire, and near North Berwick Law, in 1848. We can hardly, I think then, refer them to Roman times alone, nor can we determine them to be exclusively British. The form of the spout resembles the figures so beloved by the ancient Scandinavian artificers, yet we hesitate in believing them to be of foreign origin. On the other hand, from the circumstances attending the discovery of the one in our own possession, it might fairly be argued that these curious vessels were fabricated in the middle ages. During the course of the last spring, a farmer, while digging in a deep peat moss, about half a mile to the west of Bellingham, on the North Tyne, found at some distance below the surface of the moss, the vessel in question. On cutting a little further he discovered lying in a heap, or nearly so, above three hundred and forty coins of the period of Edward I. and II., and of Alexander II. of Scotland. The coins were all of the kind termed the groat or silver penny. Of these one hundred and seventy-eight had been coined at London, fifty-three at Canterbury, twenty-eight at Durham, sixteen at Bristol, eighteen at Berwick, seven at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, six at York, five at Lincoln, three at Waterford, two at Dublin, and one apparently at

Chester, eleven are of Alexander of Scotland; twelve others are not as yet deciphered—in all three hundred and forty. There can be little doubt but that these coins had been originally concealed by the owner in the moss on some sudden hostile incursion. In all probability a skin or cloth had been tied over the mouth of the vessel, which having decayed, the coins had fallen out, and by the well known gradual movements of the moss had at length been separated several feet from the vessel in which they had been originally hidden. The great thickness of the bronze of which these vessels are generally composed would no doubt tend greatly to their preservation. If they really belonged to a very early age, if they were coeval with, or anterior to the Roman occupation of Great Britain, it is perfectly possible that they might have lasted uninjured for the space of nearly two thousand years, and consequently might have been found by our ancestors, or dug up from the mosses in which, as in the present instance, they were perhaps to be again entombed. If they were really pieces of antiquity in the middle ages as they are now, it is perfectly possible that they were regarded even then with a superstitious reverence as many of these objects are at the present day in remoter districts.

The idea of ensuring safety to a hidden treasure by concealing it in a vessel of supposed talismanic properties, from its unknown origin, was not altogether an improbable one; for we read of a bronze cauldron, or as antiquaries would term it, a Roman camp-kettle, having hung for centuries suspended from a boss in the richly sculptured roof of Tullyallan Castle, near Kincardine, and the family legend bore, that so long as it hung there, the castle would stand, the family of Tullyallan would flourish. We may add that the coins found near the vessel are all in the most perfect state of preservation; and those of Durham are especially important, as some of the rarest types of the coins of the bishoprick are amongst them.

It is not our intention, on the present occasion, to enter into a description of the numerous and important Bronze Celts, hatchets, and other weapons of offence and defence in the Society's collection; we only wish specially to refer to an interesting and almost unique object deposited temporarily here by Sir W. C. Trevelyan, Bart., one of the most zealous

cultivators of archæological science in this country. The bronze celt, axe, chisel, knife, or pole-axe, as it may be, was at one time thought to have been introduced solely by the Romans; but later researches have, we think, nearly decided the question, that bronze articles and weapons were fabricated in Britain long before the landing of Julius Cæsar on our shores. The elegant leaf-shaped swords are now acknowledged to be British, and we cannot refuse the same origin to the ruder and more easily-formed celt. Celt-moulds of various forms, some of great elegance, have been repeatedly discovered in Great Britain. There are at least six or eight of these enumerated in the elaborate article on this subject in the Journal of the Archæological Institute. Many of the celt-moulds in the British Museum and elsewhere, are of bronze, some, such as those found in the isle of Anglesea, are of hone-stone, or some other hard material; but it is seldom that the rude original type of mould is met with such as we have in the specimen here before us. Almost all the moulds in the various collections are double, that is, they consist of two separate pieces fitting accurately to each other, so as to form the mould on each of the celts that was to be cast. It must be obvious to all that this is a great improvement upon the single hollowed mould, into which the metal was poured and allowed to level itself by its own specific gravity, forming no doubt a surface rough and irregular, which was afterwards polished by manual labour, and ornamented by graven lines and dots to suit the taste of the artificers. The Society possesses, or did possess, a very interesting rude celt of this kind, found near Chollerford, about six years ago. Such celts were generally thin but solid, they were cast without any core in order to spare the metal, nor do they even present the loop for attaching them to a handle which we observe in the more perfect implements of the kind. The celt-mould under consideration was found some years ago in a field a little to the north of Cambo. It is formed of an irregular block of the common sandstone of the district, and has evidently been only a single, or if we may so call it, a half-mould. On the one side there are the matrices for two celts, one broad but shallow, and somewhat widened towards the cutting edge; the other more chisel shaped, and smaller; in the Belfast museum there is a stone celt-mould closely resembling this. On the other



Celt and Ring Mould.

side is a deeper and somewhat more wedge-shaped matrix, cut to the depth of about half-an-inch in the stone, and close to it is the unique ring matrix, evidently for the purpose of forming a flat ring for ornament or for domestic use. Bronze rings are not common, but they have been discovered attached to the more elegantly formed hollow celts cast with a loop for the attachment of a cord; the great breadth of this ring however precludes the idea of its having been intended for the purpose above mentioned, even if any loop had been visible in the matrix. We should rather believe that in this mould was cast a large flattened ring to which a pin and catch were afterwards added to form a rude and heavy brooch. The celt and ring, or brooch, would of course when first cast be very rough on the upper surface, and this would require to be smoothed down by manual labour.