



AN ENCRUSTED CINERARY URN.

X.—AN ENCRUSTED CINERARY URN OF THE BRONZE AGE

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This urn (plate XLVII) was accidentally found by a lad when digging in a sand pit near Ryton on Tyne towards the end of May, 1928. The position of the sand pit is on the right hand side of the road leading from Blaydon via Peth Head to Folly and Ryton, and about 100 yards short of the cross-road from Stargate to Blaydon Burn. When the sand was cut away there was a slide from above, out of which rolled the then perfect urn. Unfortunately, its downward course was stopped by a stone which broke it. There is only a thin layer of soil above the sand, and the urn appeared to come from the top of the slope—i.e. it must have stood but an inch or two below the grass level. The lad is not sure whether it was standing mouth upward or inverted.

The urn is of Abercromby's type 6. It is 13 inches high, $11\frac{1}{2}$ inches diameter at the lip, and $4\frac{1}{8}$ inches diameter at the base. Its upper surface is decorated in zones of raised and incised ornamentation. The distinctive feature of the urn, and that from which it derives its name of encrusted ware, is the raised chevron decorating the upper zone. This raised decoration was usually applied when the clay had become partly dried; the union, in consequence, is frequently incomplete.¹ But in the example under consideration, the raised decoration appears as part and parcel of the urn.

¹ Greenwell's *British Barrows*, p. 438.

In 1927 Dr. Cyril Fox, Director of the National museum of Wales, published a distribution map of the encrusted urns of Great Britain and Ireland.² The total number then known was forty-eight, of which five were from the north of England,³ twelve from Scotland, three from Wales, one from the Isle of Man, and sixteen from Ireland. As those from the north of England and from Scotland are the simplest and most resemble their prototype the food vessel, it is probable that, as he affirms, the type was evolved in the north east of England and south east of Scotland, whence it spread to Ireland.

Although it is a local type it is the first example in the museum.

No definitely dateable object has been found in association with this type of urn, but Dr. Cyril Fox places those of England and Scotland about 1000 years B.C., and those of Ireland some centuries later.

² *Antiquaries Journal*, vol. VII, pp. 115-133.

³ One of these from Prudhoe—*British Barrows*, p. 438; and *New County History*, vol. XII, pp. 9-11, and *Arch. Ael.*, 4th ser., vol. V, plate IX, fig. 1.

