

I.

NOTES ON A BRONZE CALDRON FOUND AT HATTONKNOWE, DARNHALL, IN THE COUNTY OF PEBBLES. BY WILLIAM BUCHAN, F.S.A. Scot.

The bronze caldron which forms the subject of this paper was found in July last on the farm of Hattonknowe, belonging to Lord Elibank, in the parish of Eddleston and county of Peebles. A labourer called John M'Cafferty was opening an old tile drain when he came upon it about 3 feet below the surface. He extricated it with great care, emptied out the peat inside, and took the caldron home to his lodgings, where he kept it for about a week, and on the night of 20th July left it at my house in my absence. On returning next day I drove to Eddleston and visited the place with M'Cafferty and Constable M'Kenzie, the local policeman. The drain had been left open; it ran down a hollow amongst grassy knolls in a field about 1000 feet above sea-level. The soil was peaty and had been dug out about 3 feet, laying bare the old tiles. In the left-hand side of the drain, looking north, was a hollow from which the caldron had been excavated, and the marks of the outside ends of the rivets were still distinctly visible in the peat. The bottom of the drain was clay, and it was clearly apparent that the caldron had been resting in an upright position on the subsoil. The drain was said to have been cut about forty years ago, and the wonder is

that the labourers at that time did not come on the caldron, which must have been lying within a few inches of the side of the cutting. M'Cafferty said there was a birch stick lying across the caldron when found, and that he had emptied out the contents on the side of the cutting. I instructed Constable M'Kenzie to collect the peat which M'Cafferty had thrown out, and also some of the peat around the place where the caldron had been lying, and to send the whole down to



Fig. 1. Bronze Caldron found at Hattonknowe, Darnhall, parish of Eddleston, Peeblesshire. ( $\frac{1}{8}$ .)

Peebles along with the birch stick. He did so, but I have not been able to discover anything of interest in the peat.

The caldron (fig. 1) is made of three sheets of thin light-coloured bronze, the two upper sheets riveted together at the ends to form the upper part of the vessel; the third sheet, which forms the bottom, is rounded into an egg-shape, and is fastened by a circular line of transverse rivets to the upper part. Beginning at the top, the upper sheets curve outwards from the inside to form a rim from  $1\frac{1}{4}$  to  $1\frac{3}{8}$  inches wide, with a hammered

striated transverse pattern ; the rim then bends inwards and then outwards into three parallel semicircular mouldings, close together, going round the circumference, with the same striated ornament. The depth of the rim inside is  $2\frac{3}{8}$  inches. Below the last moulding the caldron swells outwards with an ogee curve, and then slopes downwards to the transverse line of rivets joining the upper and lower sheets. The weight is barely 5 lbs. 10 oz., the breadth across the top (outside measurement) 21 inches, the depth  $15\frac{1}{2}$  inches, the outside circumference at the widest 5 ft.  $9\frac{1}{2}$  inches, and round the circumference where the upper and lower sheets join 5 ft.  $1\frac{1}{8}$  inches. The bronze is thickest at the bottom ; at the top it is extremely thin. The caldron is in a fair state of preservation, and is complete with the exception of one handle. Originally there were two of these, fastened to the upper part of the rim immediately above the perpendicular line of rivets. The remaining handle is a solid bronze ring  $4\frac{3}{8}$  inches wide, outside measurement. It is about  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch thick, with two faces bevelled to the outside and two to the inside. It plays freely in a bronze loop which is riveted to the rim. This loop has three semicircular transverse mouldings similar to those on the rim. The riveting is beautifully done ; the ends of the rivets fastening the top sheets to the bottom sheet are flat on the inside of the caldron ; on the outside they are rounded, are  $\frac{1}{16}$  inch thick, project about  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch, and are then cut square off. There is a small riveted patch on the widest part of the circumference.

This caldron may belong to the Late Bronze Age, and is probably some centuries anterior to the Christian era. From its position and surroundings, the caldron was probably hidden or abandoned in a wood containing or composed of birch trees. The existing handle was on the side next the drain, so that the missing handle (which cannot be found) was not knocked off by the labourers who originally cut the drain. It is possible, indeed, that the loss of the handle was the reason why the caldron was hidden or abandoned by its owner.

This caldron somewhat resembles two which are in our National Museum. The first (fig. 2) was found in 1768 in Kincardine Moss,



Fig. 2. Bronze Caldron found in the Moss of Kincardine. (4.)



Fig. 3. Bronze Caldron found in the West of Scotland. (4.)

Stirling, "upon the surface of the clay, buried under the moss," in circumstances somewhat similar to this one. The second (fig. 3) is from the West of Scotland. These caldrons are described in the Society's *Proceedings*, vol. xix. pp. 313, 314, and the illustrations are here repeated.

The Hattonknowe caldron differs from the first of these in having the rim formed of the same sheets of metal as the upper part of the caldron; the riveting is also different. From the second it differs in respect that the latter is formed of more sheets of bronze and the riveting is different. The handles of the second and their loops and fastenings are similar to the remaining handle and loop of the Hattonknowe caldron, which differs from both the Museum specimens in shape—they are globular, in colour they are much darker, and in weight they are much heavier.

Mr J. Romilly Allen, F.S.A. Lond., Editor of *The Reliquary and Illustrated Archaeologist*, who saw a photograph of this caldron, writes me that he considers it intermediate in form between the round-bottomed caldrons of the end of the Bronze Age and the *situle* of the Hallstadt Period, which are flat-bottomed. A good example of the flat-bottomed caldron, found in Flanders Moss, Cardross, has been described and engraved on p. 37, vol. xxii., of the Society's *Proceedings*.

The round-bottomed or spheroidal caldrons have been found in Scotland, England, and Ireland, but, according to Sir John Evans (*Ancient Bronze Implements of Great Britain*, p. 414), they appear to be unknown beyond the British Isles. Dr Munro, however, in his *Lake Dwellings of Europe*, p. 290, states that both the round- and the flat-bottomed have been found in the Oppidum La Tène, and on fig. 92, Nos. 18 and 19, he shows two specimens of round-bottomed caldrons, which appear, however, to be much smaller than the large specimens which have been found in the British Isles. The *situla* or bucket-shaped caldron has been found in Scotland, England, and Ireland, and is also widely diffused on the Continent, occurring in Italy, Austria, Hungary, North Germany, Scandinavia, and France.

In *The Ulster Journal of Archæology* for the year 1857, vol. v. p. 82, there is a paper by Mr Robert MacAdam on a bronze caldron found in County Down. He gives a number of interesting references in ancient Irish and Welsh literature, showing that caldrons were, of old, valued possessions of princes and chiefs, and that some of them were alleged to possess magical properties. The following quotations from Mr MacAdam's paper may be of interest:—"The cauldron seems to have been considered an important article among the ancient Irish. Mention of it occurs in various old poems, romances, and annals. Thus, in the romantic tale of the *Battle of Magh-Rath*, or the *Banquet of Dun na n-Gedh* (published by the Irish Archæological Society), which the Editor assigns to the twelfth century, one of the incidents is the borrowing of the royal cauldron in the king's house; and a number of other celebrated caldrons are enumerated, with the names of the places where they were kept." . . . "Perhaps the most curious notice of caldrons is that contained in the will of Cahir Mor, King of Leinster, and afterwards monarch of Ireland in the second century, which is preserved in the *Book of Lecan*, and also in the *Book of Ballymote*. In a remarkable inventory there given of the valuable articles bequeathed by him to his family are particularised fifty copper caldrons."

"Various superstitions were connected with Irish caldrons. Amongst the remarkable objects said to have been brought to Ireland by the colony of the Tuatha de Danaan was a cauldron called *Coirean Dughda*, which had certain magical properties. One of the caldrons enumerated in the romance already quoted (the *Battle of Magh-Rath*) was called the *Caire Ainsicen*, and was of such a nature that 'no one went away from it unsatisfied; for whatever quantity was put into it, there was never boiled in it but what was sufficient for the company, according to their grade or rank.' . . ." This caldron is specially interesting to us because it was one of the chief possessions of Eochaidh Buidhe, King of Dalriada, and was kept in his residence at Dunadd (Argyleshire), where he used it to feast the host of Alba and the King of Ulster before the battle of Magh-Rath.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See the account of Dunadd by Capt. Thomas in the *Proceedings*, vol. xiii. p. 33.

In Spain, in later times, the caldron seems to have been one of the *insignia* of a military leader. In Dr Woodward's *Heraldry*, vol. i. p. 405, it is said: "The caldron or cooking-pot which appears in the coats-of-arms of so many great Spanish families ought perhaps rather to be counted among the military charges. The *Pendon y Caldera* were presented by the sovereign to the newly created *Ricos hombres*, or Knights Bannerets—the banner denoting authority to levy and lead troops, the caldron the ability to feed them. . . . Out of these caldrons often issue a number of eels, which are usually blazoned as serpents, as in the arms of Guzman, Dukes of Medina-Sidonia, etc.—azure two caldrons in pale chequy or and gules, the handles and five serpents issuing at the junction of the handles with the caldron, all compony of the second and third. The whole within a bordure-compony of the arms of Castile and Leon . . ."

In addition to the references already given, Mr Romilly Allen has kindly furnished me with the following, which I have consulted so far as I could obtain access to the books, viz.—Sir Wm. Wilde's *Catalogue of the Museum of the Royal Irish Academy*, p. 530; *Ulster Journal of Archæology*, vol. v. p. 84, from which I have already quoted; *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, series 5, vol. vii. p. 437, and series 5, vol. ix. p. 256; E. P. Shirley's *Account of Farnley, in the Province of Ulster*, p. 185; *British Museum Bronze Age Guide*, p. 48; *Revue Archéologique*, N.S., vol. vi. p. 237; *Manadsblad of the Stockholm Society for 1889*, p. 125; *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, series 3, vol. v. p. 346.

When I received this caldron I reported the circumstances, as Procurator-Fiscal, to the Exchequer, who claimed the caldron, placed it in the National Museum, and compensated the finder.