

## IV.

## A ROMAN BRONZE PATERA FROM BERWICKSHIRE, WITH NOTES ON SIMILAR FINDS IN SCOTLAND. BY R. C. BOSANQUET, F.S.A.

By the kindness of Mr Graham Callander, I am permitted to give some account of a Roman patera of bronze, which came to the National Museum in 1920, along with other antiquities formerly in the collection of Lady John Scott (1810-1900), by the gift of Miss Alice Helen Warrender. It bore a label, believed to be in Lady John's handwriting, which was copied into the Museum register: "found in 1882 while a drain was being dug near the house at Whitehill, Westruther, Berwickshire."

The farm-house called Whitehill lies some 500 yards north of Westruther village, within two miles of Spottiswoode, the home of Lady John's childhood and also of her later years; for after the death of her mother, Mrs Spottiswoode, in 1870, she returned to it as tenant for life.

What may be a reference to this discovery—if it be a reference, it seems to be inaccurate—occurs in the *Berwickshire Naturalists' Club Transactions*, vol. xviii. (1901-1902), p. 115, in a description of Westruther parish by Mr Andrew Thompson, F.S.A. Scot.: "of antiquarian interest are the antlers of deer found at Whiteburn, and the bronze urn and Roman camp-kettle in Jordon-law Moss, where 10 feet down the large oaks of prehistoric times give a wholly hard-wood bed." Now the only other bronze vessel in Lady John Scott's collection is a small pear-shaped jar of bronze,  $2\frac{1}{8}$  inches in height, "found in 1881 in Legerwood Churchyard." Mr Thompson was at one time schoolmaster at Westruther, and his paper shows local knowledge. It seems possible, however, that he was not well informed as to the contents of Lady John Scott's Museum, and that he had in mind the Legerwood bronze urn and the Whitehill patera, finds which were in no way connected. Jordon-law Moss is nearly a mile from Whitehill, and extends almost to the grounds of Spottiswoode House. On the other hand, he may refer to a different find, otherwise unrecorded.

Mr Thompson's phrase about "the large oaks of prehistoric times" deep down in the moss, recalls a passage in which Sir Walter Scott discusses such finds of Roman bronze vessels as made within his knowledge near Roman roads in the Lowlands. We may think that he had in mind a fine patera which hangs, unfortunately without record of its origin, in the hall at Abbotsford. "Camp-kettles of bronze of various

sizes are found on the lines of these roads, particularly where marshes have been drained for marl. It may in general be remarked that in Scotland the decay of a natural forest is the generation of a bog, which accounts for so many antiquities being found in draining. Sacrificial vessels are also frequently discovered, particularly those with three feet, a handle and a spout, which greatly resemble an old fashioned coffee-pot without its lid"<sup>1</sup>—but these, as we now know, are mediæval.

Just such a deposit as Sir Walter Scott mentions came to light in 1890 in a great fen called Prestwick Carr,<sup>2</sup> a few miles north of the Northumbrian Wall—twelve bronze cooking utensils, large and small, including seven of the same saucepan shape as the patera from Whitehill. One of them has much in common with it and will be referred to again.

The export of Roman bronze vessels into northern lands was discussed by the late Heinrich Willers in two important books which materially advanced our knowledge.<sup>3</sup> The present paper deals only with pateræ of saucepan form.

Typologically the oldest example in the Scottish museum is a fragmentary small pan (F.R.A. 1196) found at Newstead, with base 2½ inches in diameter and handle 3½ inches long. The base is almost flat, exhibiting only one circle in very low relief, as compared with the elaborate armature of later times.

Next come two exceptionally large vessels bearing the stamp of a Campanian maker, P. Cippius Polybius. One, found beside a crannog in Dowalton Loch, Wigtownshire, is probably the most perfectly preserved vessel of the kind in any collection. Its diameter is 8¼ inches, its full length 15½ inches. The bronze head and loop fixed under the rim on the side opposite to the handle may have been added after it reached this country. The still larger specimen, found near Barochan, Renfrewshire, is not in such good condition, nor was it originally so well finished. It is 9 inches in diameter, 17½ inches in length. Roughly contemporary with these was a patera found at Friar's Carse, Dumfriesshire, in 1790, and known only by description, bearing the stamp of L. Ansius Epaphroditus. These two makers worked in the neighbourhood of Capua in South Italy between A.D. 60 and 90 or 100. Their date is fixed by the fact that saucepans and other vessels made by them are found at Pompeii and Herculaneum.

<sup>1</sup> *Essay on Border Antiquities in Miscellaneous Prose Works* (1834), vol. vii. p. 24.

<sup>2</sup> *Northumberland County History*, vol. xii. (1926), pp. 41-50.

<sup>3</sup> See in particular his *Neue Untersuchungen über die Römische Bronzeindustrie von Capua und von Niedergermanien*, Hannover, 1907, which contains fuller lists of the makers' stamps than had previously been brought together. My own material, collected before and since, supplements his in important respects.

An analysis of the find-spots suggests that the wares of both firms were shipped, probably from the neighbouring port of Puteoli, (1) to the head of the Adriatic—they occurred together in a large find at Siscia on the main road from Aquileia to the lower Danube: (2) to the North Sea, whence traders conveyed them (*a*) to the garrisons on the Rhine—both stamps were found in the legionary camp at Neuss: and (*b*) to the Baltic—two pans of Polybius and one of Epaphroditus were associated in a Danish grave. They were trade-goods which the barbarians valued and for which no doubt they paid a big price. The pans of Cippius Polybius found in a Wigtownshire lake-dwelling, and of Ansius Epaphroditus from Friar's Carse in Dumfries, show that a similar trade was done with the natives of North Britain.

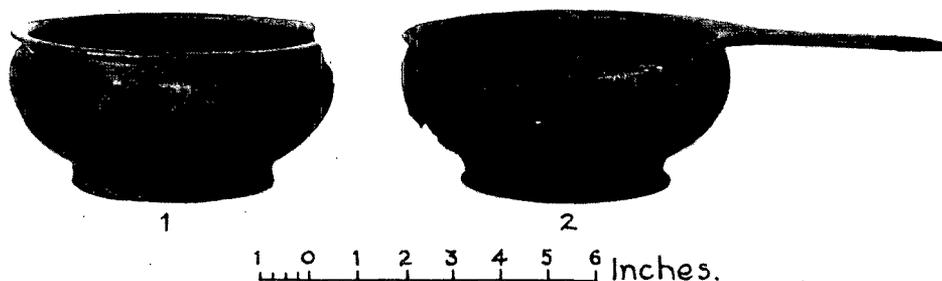


Fig. 1. Pateræ from Blackburn Mill and Whitehill.

The patera before us (fig. 1, No. 2), from Berwickshire, is an interesting example of a late type of provincial rather than Italian manufacture. The almost hemispherical body and spreading foot have been claimed as an invention of the Gaulish bronze foundries.<sup>1</sup> But I prefer to describe this piece as provincial rather than Gaulish, for the clumsy modelling, especially of the handle, betrays unskilful imitation. It may have been made elsewhere than in Gaul, perhaps on the Rhine or even in Britain.

It is well preserved, except for a break in the bowl on the side farther from the handle, and is covered with a smooth, very dark brown-black patina. "The handle has been broken off and mended after its discovery," says the register.

A narrow fillet below the rim bears a neatly engraved pattern of arcades, or rather gables, with little circles interposed between the

<sup>1</sup> Willers, *Neue Untersuchungen*, p. 80.

points. The pattern is familiar, since it occurs in the same position on one of the Lamberton Moor pateræ, and on the largest of the five from Stittenham, now at Castle Howard.<sup>1</sup>

On the handle is a triangular group of punch-marks arranged thus :

3 semicircles  
 2        ,,  
 1 circle with central point.

Let us consider first the characteristic spreading foot.

The need for such strengthening is proved by actual examples such as a patera in the Prestwick Carr find. At the angle where the wall meets the base the metal had worn thin and cracked. This was repaired with a strip of sheet bronze bent over the angle and secured by three rows of twelve fine rivets—a neat piece of tinker's work. There is a similar patch among the fragments from Ruberslaw in the Hawick Museum.

The evolution of the base-rim, a new protective device, can be traced

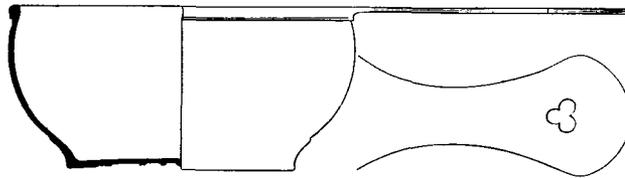


Fig. 2. Patera from Longfagh, Crichton, with view of top of Handle. (½.)

from small beginnings early in the second century. We have a thickening of the wall, designed to protect the most vulnerable part of the vessel, in the patera from Crichton on Dere Street (fig. 2).<sup>2</sup> And we have it fully developed in a silver patera found at Backworth in Northumberland with brooches and coins, the latest said to be of Antoninus Pius, A.D. 139.

It is a commonplace that the founders, who cast and afterwards chased these bronze vessels, copied prototypes in silver. One of the most famous, certainly the most ornate, of bronze vessels found in Britain, the patera signed by Boduogenus, found in a fen near Ely and preserved in the British Museum, is clearly inspired by silversmith's work.<sup>3</sup> The elaborate handle is a rich but incoherent medley of classical motives, combined by the riotous fancy of a Celtic craftsman. Marine motives appear at the two ends, but on the central portion, in keeping with

<sup>1</sup> *Proceedings*, xxxix. p. 370; *Archæologia*, xli. (1868), plate xv. p. 325.

<sup>2</sup> In the National Museum, Edinburgh, *Proceedings*, v. (1865), plate v. p. 188.

<sup>3</sup> *Archæologia*, xxviii. (1840), plate xxv. p. 436.

tradition, the design is a tangle of vine-branches, expressing the same meaning as the Thyrsus discussed below (p. 251). The bowl has the same spreading foot and shoulder pattern as the example from Whitehill.

Now the Backworth hoard was buried about the middle of the second century, and the silver patera which I mentioned as related in shape to the Gaulish type of bronze saucepan was made for dedication in a temple of the Mother Goddesses, probably on the English Wall and not before the reign of Hadrian. We may, I think, take it that this new shape made its appearance between 120 and 150.

I know of only one other example of the form found in Scotland. It was found in the same county near Blackburn Mill on the Water of Eye along with a great hoard of iron tools, evidently the stock-in-trade of a farmer, now preserved in the National Museum.<sup>1</sup> It is often referred to as the "Cockburnspath find," but the name is misleading for Cockburnspath is miles away in a different valley. The patera from Blackburn Mill, shown in fig. 1, No. 1, beside the one from Whitehill, has lost its handle, which has broken away at the very edge of the bowl. This happened not infrequently to pateræ of the new Gaulish shape, owing to the great weight of the solid spreading foot. A vessel in the Prestwick Carr hoard of the same shape as ours has had its handle broken in just the same way, and has been supplied with a make-shift handle attached by three bronze straps.

The two specimens just cited have a fillet on the shoulder with a pattern less carefully engraved than that of the Whitehill specimen. Indeed on the one from Blackburn Mill the pattern is reduced to a succession of vertical strokes. I have noted only one parallel for this simplification of the pattern; it is a vessel of the same shape, bearing a dedication to the God Alisanu, by one Paullinus, found at Gissey-sur-Ouche, Côte d'Or, and now in the Museum at St Germain near Paris. The gables and tiny circles have disappeared. The specimen before us has the ornament in a less degraded form. The arcaded fillet came into fashion about the beginning of the second century. This must be the approximate date of the Stittenham hoard, which contained two pateræ by the Campanian maker, Cippius Polybius, and three which bear no maker's name. The ornament appears on the largest of the latter, a deep pan with low foot-rim. It is found also on a series of rather shallow pans with low foot-rim, which seem to be the predecessors of the Gaulish shape. There was one such in the Prestwick Carr hoard (No. 14); the units of the pattern are widely spaced, and there is a beading of dots above. Another patera at St Germain, found at the confluence of the rivers Saône and Doubs, exhibits a rich leaf pattern

<sup>1</sup> *Proceedings*, i. (1855), p. 42; xix. (1885), p. 312.

on the fillet.<sup>1</sup> What I have called the gable pattern or arcading is a simplified version of a Greek leaf frieze, such as appears on the beautiful Campanian ewer from Newstead.

We have discussed the links furnished by the shape of the body and the fillet pattern; there remains the ornament on the handle, a triangular group of five punched semicircles and one circle.

Carelessly composed compass patterns, ovolos, and groups of circles are common on pateræ of the middle and later part of the century. Gaulish makers took over from their Italian predecessors the custom of engraving on the handles of specially well-finished pateræ the figure of a Thyrsus, or wand of Bacchus. This attribute of the wine god, familiar in the Greco-Roman art, was a stick tipped at either end with a fir-cone and twined with tendrils of ivy. I have suggested else-

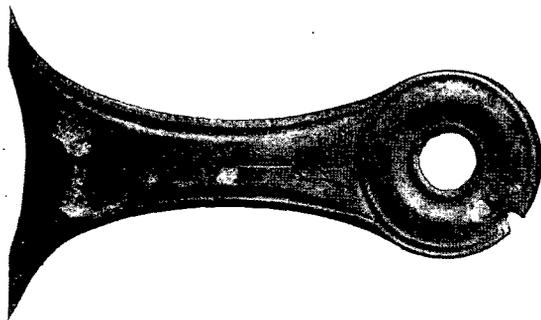


Fig. 3. Handle of Patera from Lamberton Moor.

where that this ornament served to distinguish pans which were to be used for serving hot water at table from those made for ordinary cooking. One of three saucepans found at Ruberslaw in Roxburghshire, and one of four found on Lamberton Moor in Berwickshire (fig. 3), are distinguished in this way.<sup>2</sup> The classical custom of mixing wine with hot water needs no exposition here.

While the earlier Gaulish copies of the Thyrsus are faithful enough, it soon assumed other forms in the hands of designers who had no idea what it represented, and re-arranged its elements at their will. Thus on two Gaulish pateræ in the Copenhagen Museum we find an ornament composed of an ovolo bordering the expansion, detached circles large and small, an ellipse in the place occupied by the fir-cone, and triangular groups of three small rings. One of these is certainly Gaulish work for it bears the stamp of Nigellio, a maker whose nationality is indicated by

<sup>1</sup> It bears the curved stamp of its maker, Celsinus, *C.I.L.*, xiii. 3, p. 693, No. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Both finds were published in these *Proceedings*, vol. xxxix. (1904-05), Ruberslaw by Mr A. O. Curle, Lamberton by Dr Joseph Anderson.

the finding of two of his pans in France.<sup>1</sup> On other examples we find the ovolo and triangular groups, sometimes at both ends of the handles, but generally massed next the expansion. The next step is to increase the number of circles forming the triangle to six, as on the handle before us, or to ten as on a handle bearing the name Silvanus at Wiesbaden,

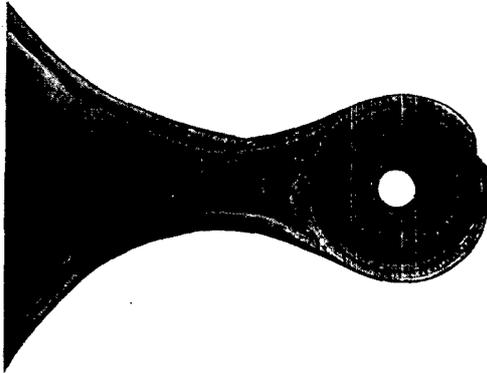


Fig. 4. Handle of Patera from Whitehill.

while a maker named Talio, whose signed works are to be seen at Berlin and Vienna, used triangular groups composed of six or seven rows.

On the Whitehill patera the preference for semicircles (fig. 4) may be due to a reminiscence of the ovolo border. There is one other handle (FT 38) bearing an ornament of this class in the National Museum (fig. 5). It is said to have been found in East Lothian, but the precise locality

is unknown. The surface is much worn and the ornament difficult to detect. The curved maker's stamp, characteristic of the second century, begins with a "C" and appears to end as usual with F (ecit). The late Dr Haverfield thought that he read CIPPO for CIP(i)PO(lybi),<sup>2</sup> but careful scrutiny does not support the reading. The Cipii and their contemporaries in the first century used a straight stamp, and there is no instance of Cipi being abbreviated to Cip.

We have discussed the form of the pan and the ornament on its shoulder and handle. It remains to support suggestions already made as to its mid-second century date by quoting some cases of similar vessels found with dated objects.

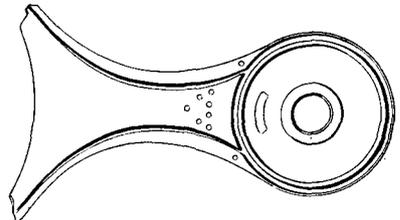


Fig. 5. Handle of Patera found in East Lothian. (3.)

There is only one class of objects in use in the Roman Empire that invariably bear a date—the bronze *diplomata*, called *constitutiones* in the corpus of Latin Inscriptions, certificates of citizenship issued to time-expired soldiers. We must remember that such a document was of value not only to the veteran but to his descendants, and might be preserved for many years.

A perfectly preserved pair of these tablets were found in 1867 at

<sup>1</sup> This handle is illustrated in *Nordiske Fortidsminder*, II. i. p. 35, fig. 57.

<sup>2</sup> *Arch. Journ.*, I. p. 305; *Eph. Epigr.*, ix. (1913), p. 660, No. 1312 b.

Weissenburg in Bavaria, a fort slightly behind the Raetian Limes, in the remains of a burned house of the civil settlement outside the fort proper. The find was made in preparing a site for a railway station, but it was followed up by an archaeological excavation. Among the objects that came to light were two bronze pateræ, one of the Gaulish form under consideration, bearing on its shoulder a more elaborate form of the arcading, with groups of three dots in the blank spaces. Once more the handle is missing. The coins found, twenty-nine in number, were mostly of Trajan, Hadrian and Antoninus Pius, the latest being one of Julia Mæsa and two of Alexander Severus.<sup>1</sup>

The diploma had been issued in A.D. 107 to a soldier of a cavalry regiment (*Ala I Hispanorum Auriana*) which succeeded an infantry cohort (*Cohors IX Batavorum*) at Weissenburg in or after the reign of Hadrian. The only dated inscription left by this *Ala* is of the year 153.

A second instance of a veteran's diptych associated with a bronze patera comes from Aszar near Kis Bér (south of Komorn and due west of Buda-Pest) in Pannonia. The deposit consisted of a bronze patera bearing the maker's name *Caratusu(s)*, a pair of smaller pans, a large fibula of local "Pannonian" pattern, and a quantity of silver ornaments. They were found in 1884, and sold with the Egger collection at Sotheby's in 1891. Where they now are I do not know.

This veteran's certificate is dated 148. The patera found with it has a plain straight-sided body.

The handle is decorated with three triangular groups of circular punch-marks, such as appear on the Whitehill handle and also on the one from East Lothian; one group is in the corresponding position adjoining the expansion, the other two are placed at either end of the curved maker's stamp.<sup>2</sup>

A third example of association, this time with coins, is a find made in 1857 at Rykenbach in Canton Schwyz, north-east of the Lake of Lucerne. There had been hidden beside a big stone two pateræ, a silver penannular brooch and bracelet, a blue glass bead, and eighty silver coins, ranging from Otho to Septimius Severus. There were three coins of Severus, and twenty-one of Antoninus Pius. This hoard passed into a private collection. The published account shows that one patera was of our Gaulish form, with a decorated fillet on the shoulder, and a curved maker's stamp, *ACA*.<sup>3</sup>

Typologically the Cockburnspath pan with its blunter foot and simplified shoulder pattern seems later than that from Whitehill. The

<sup>1</sup> *Der Obergermanisch-Raetische Limes*, lief. xxvi. p. 38.

<sup>2</sup> *Archæol. Ertesítő*, 2 s. v. (1885), pp. 24 ff.

<sup>3</sup> *Mitteilungen der antiq. Ges.*, Zurich, xv. plate iv. 10, cf. p. 80.

East Lothian handle with its curved maker's stamp and triangular group of punched circles represents the same later stage—for on the Whitehill handle the semicircles are derived from the traditional ovolo bordering the expansion-disc, used by Nigellio and others. We may, I think, conclude that these represent the type of saucepan that was being imported into Roman Scotland in the Antonine period. After the withdrawal of the Roman garrisons such importation seems to have ceased.

It is noteworthy that these three examples of the mid or late second century patera all come from the eastern Lowlands, whereas imported bronzes of the first century are more abundant on the west. This is consistent with the scarcity of Roman trade-goods in Ireland. The Roman fleet had opened up and surveyed the coasts of Ireland and Scotland in the days of Agricola and his successors, whose observations are recorded in the Geography of Ptolemy. But evidence of intercourse with Ireland or the south-western Lowlands during the second century is almost wholly lacking. One reason for the withdrawal early in the reign of Commodus may have been the difficulty of maintaining communication with the Clyde through narrow seas that were controlled by unfriendly tribes alike on the Scottish and the Irish side. The chain of Roman garrisons which lined the coast of Cumberland and Westmorland show that even south of the English Wall it was necessary to secure the left flank against attack from the sea. It would have been impossible to spare troops enough to maintain a similar screen of forts on the left flank of the advanced Antonine front.

I have to thank Mr Graham Callander and his assistant, Mr A. J. H. Edwards, for the photographs and line-drawings which they have kindly provided to illustrate this paper.