

Beaker Pottery from the Oxford Region: 1939-1955

By HUMPHREY CASE

FINDS of Beaker pottery have continued since 1939, when the late Mr. E. T. Leeds published his paper 'Beakers from the Oxford District'.¹ The purpose of the present paper is to list these new finds, and (since some give useful evidence about the relationship of one type of beaker with another) to make a provisional reassessment of Beaker-Culture settlement in the region.²

Leeds based his regional survey on the typology used for Great Britain and Ireland by Lord Abercromby, modified by Sir Cyril Fox, Professor Grahame Clark, and himself. In southern England he saw two distinct Beaker-Culture groups of immigrant origin, represented by A- and B-beakers; C-beakers he regarded as hybrids. The primary diagnostic of these types was shape.³

Since 1939, further large modifications have been suggested, although neither of the two main essays—by Mr. George Willmot and Professor Stuart Piggott—has been published at length. Piggott has substituted the terms 'Long-necked', 'Bell' and 'Short-necked' for A, B, and C respectively. Like Willmot, he looks to the Rhineland for his sources; he relates bell-beakers to continental bell-beakers, and sees them as of immigrant origin; C-beakers are also regarded as immigrant. Long-necked beakers he sees as largely local developments from the other two types, influenced by continental

¹ *Oxoniensia*, III (1938), 7-30. Beakers listed in that paper are referred to below by the numbers given them by Leeds, thus, *Berks.* 1, *Oxon.* 5, etc. I have made my numbering consecutive to his. Beakers accessibly illustrated, other than those herewith, are: Abercromby, *op. cit.* in note 11: *Berks.* 3-6, *Oxon.* 23, 26, 32-3. *Archaeologia* LXXVI (1926/7), 62: *Berks.* 10. *Antiq. J.* XI (1931), 59: *Oxon.* 30. *Id.* XIV (1934), 267-274: *Oxon.* 1-4, 6. *Id.* XV (1935), 38: *Berks.* 8. Leeds, *Oxoniensia*, III, 7 ff.: *Berks.* 2, 4, 5, *Oxon.* 9, 10, 14-16, 18, 20.

² I am most grateful to Mr. Donald Harden for reading a draft of this paper, and making numerous suggestions for its improvement. Thanks are due to Mrs. M. E. Cox for the illustrations.

The Oxford region is understood, in the discussion as generally excluding the Berkshire Downs and the Chilterns. Finds in the area of Leeds's map (*op. cit.* in note 1, fig. 1) not discussed here, or by him, are for example: *Berkshire Downs*; Chieveley (*Proc. Newbury Dist. Field Club*, VI, 218), Churn (*id.* VII, 169); *Chilterns*; Bledlow and Saunderton (J. F. Head, *Early Man in South Buckinghamshire* (1955), pp. 51-2).

³ Abercromby followed, with minor variations, the typology published by John Thurnam in 1871 (*Archaeologia*, XLIII, 391-4). *A beaker*: 'The body or lower part is more or less globular; the upper, separated from the lower by a constriction . . . , forms a brim which almost equals the lower part in height. The sides of this brim . . . are straight . . .' *B beaker*: ' . . . there is no demarcation between the body of the cup and the brim, but the one glides into the other by a gradual curve. The brim is of slight elevation . . . the body . . . is oval.' *C beaker*: [Compared with type A] 'the body is oval rather than globular . . . and the brim much lower, not more than a third or fourth of the height of the lower part.'

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Corded-Ware beakers. Dr. Hubert Savory, in contrast, has stated the possibility of a French origin for certain English and Welsh beakers, and even suggested a reflex movement between Britain and the Netherlands.⁴

Here, in a local survey, I use a classification to suit local circumstances. Abercromby's general classification by shape is employed, but decoration is stressed. Although I would prefer to adopt Piggott's graphic terms, I retain the old ones, pending his definition of his new ones in detail. I use the old terms more loosely than would be allowed by Thurnam's definitions, which are too rigid in practice.

FINDS OF BEAKER POTTERY : 1939-1955

A. *Little Rollright, Oxon. (Oxon. 34).* Rock : Great Oolite.

Mr. C. Haynes found a beaker (FIG. 1) when working in the quarry south of the Rollright-Little Compton road.⁵ He described himself as removing the overburden of loose weathered stone from the solid unweathered, when he noticed the beaker 'in a pipe in the solid'. No other relics were seen. The find-spot was near the 800 ft. contour on the main Jurassic ridge, about a mile from, and intervisible with, the Rollright Stone Circle. *National Grid* : 42/284307. Ashmolean Museum, 1951.379. Complete and moderately well-made. Base less abraded than the wall. Paste : Fine but with some shell-grits at least 14 mm. long. Ware : Rather soft, traces of polishing. Firing : Light brown surface, slightly flushed ; darkened inside at lip and patch on belly ; visible core light-brownish red. Decoration : Incised, possibly with a wooden tool since grain marks are visible.

It is the first found in this part of Oxfordshire. Compared with others in the region it falls into a class of B-beakers with intermittent incised or notched zones of horizontal lines relieved with oblique hatching or loose cross-hatching. Compare Stanton Harcourt (*Oxon.* 31), Stanton Harcourt grave 2 (*Oxon.* 45, see page 6 below; FIG. 2), Chelsey (*Berks.* 4), and less typically Abingdon (*Berks.* 2).

B. *Cassington, Oxon. : Smith's No. II pit (Oxon. 35-38).* Rock : Summertown-Radley terrace gravel of the Evenlode.

(1) One sherd of beaker ware (*Oxon.* 35 ; Ashmolean Museum, 1939.497) was found in filling of ring-ditch A.⁶ *National Grid* : 42/450102.

(2) A fine example of an A-beaker (*Oxon.* 36 ; FIG. 1) was 'found towards S.W. corner of field'⁷ by Mr. John Bradford. *National Grid* : around 42/449100. Ashmolean Museum, 1943.10. Well made, and nearly complete. Base abraded. Large frost-fracture. Paste : Fine with few or minute grits, 1 mm. long or less. Ware : Rather soft, varnished since discovery. Firing : Black core, brown exterior with flushed patches. Decoration : Incisions (rounded and without grain) made possibly with a bone tool.

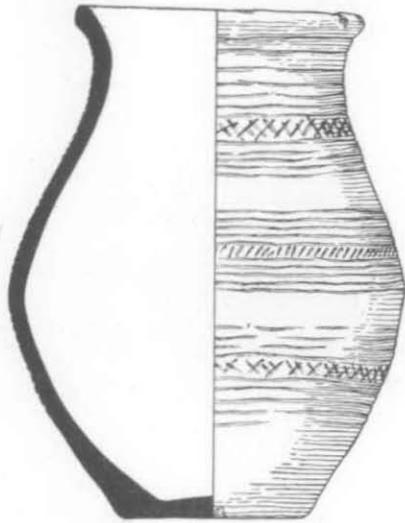
It belongs to a class of A-beakers with the upper part of the neck slightly convex (sometimes pronouncedly) but without an exterior moulding under the rim. Others

⁴ *Revista de Guimarães* (1950), LX, 370-1.

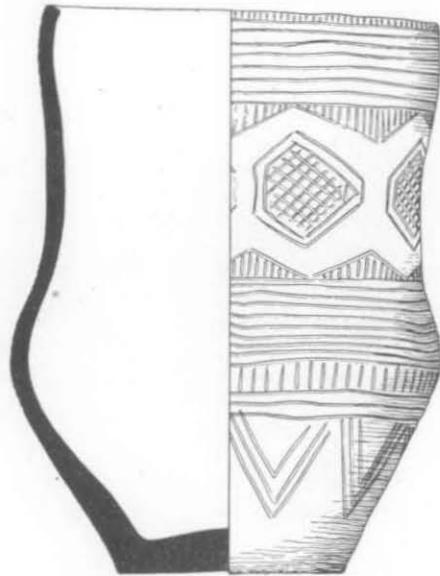
⁵ Noted in *Oxoniensia*, XVI (1951), 80. The distance given ('half a mile') is incorrect. The 'pipe' may have been a deep grave as at Cassington or Lambourn.

⁶ *Oxoniensia*, V (1940), 5.

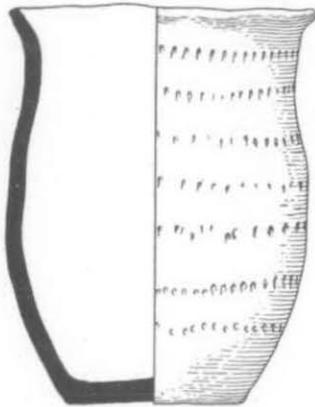
⁷ Ashmolean Museum Register ; *Oxoniensia*, VIII/IX (1943/44), 193.



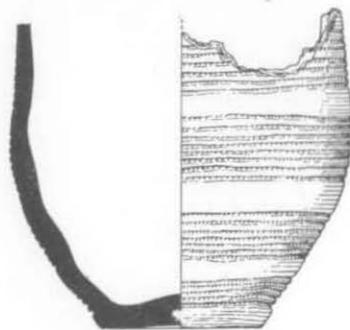
Oxon. 34



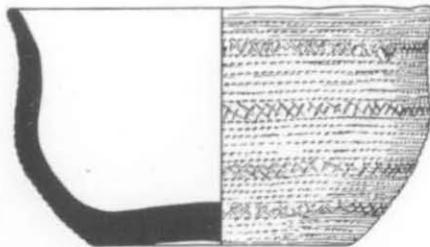
Oxon. 36



Oxon. 39



Oxon. 40



Oxon. 41

FIG. 1

Beakers from Little Rollright (*Oxon.* 34), Cassington (*Oxon.* 36), Eynsham (*Oxon.* 39) ;
grave-group (*Oxon.* 40-1) with awl from Eynsham.

Scale : $\frac{1}{2}$

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in this class are Eynsham (*Oxon.* 42 ; FIG. 2), Eynsham Cemetery grave 1 (*Oxon.* 12, handled), grave 3 (*Oxon.* 16, handled), and grave 8 (*Oxon.* 18), Wytham (*Berks.* 11, sherds), Oxford (*Oxon.* 23), and North Stoke (*Oxon.* 51 ; see below, p. 10).

(3) Superimposed contracted inhumation burials were found by Mr. Bradford in a grave at the centre of a ring-ditch, diameter 60-64 ft., of which the bank had been outside the ditch.⁸ Post-holes were possibly associated with the burials. *National Grid* : 42/450100.

With the lower burial were found fragments of a beaker (*Oxon.* 37 ; Ashmolean Museum, 1947.305) which belongs to a class of B-beakers with continuous plain zonal ornament of cord impressions. Others in the class are Stanton Harcourt grave 2 (*Oxon.* 46 ; FIG. 2) and Clifton Hampden (*Oxon.* 11 ; FIG. 2).

With the upper burial was found a beaker (*Oxon.* 38 ; Ashmolean Museum, 1947.306) which belongs to a class of A-beakers with an exterior moulding under the rim. Others in the class are sherds from a pit at Cassington (see below, page 18), Eynsham cemetery graves 4 (*Oxon.* 17 ; FIG. 5) and 15 (*Oxon.* 20), Hardwick (*Oxon.* 22 ; FIG. 2), and Appleford (*Berks.* 3, handled ; see below, p. 12).

C. *Eynsham, Oxon.* (*Oxon.* 39-42). Rock : Summertown-Radley terrace gravel of the Thames.

(1) About 500 yards north-north-east of the area of the Beaker-Culture cemetery, a beaker (*Oxon.* 39 ; FIG. 1) was found by Mr. Bradford with a contracted inhumation burial in a grave cut by a ring-ditch.⁹ *National Grid* : 42/424085. Ashmolean Museum, 1941.13. Moderately well-made and complete. Base in similar preservation to rest. Paste : Fine, vesicular where grits have fallen out—some remaining 1-1.5 mm. long (quartzites ?). Ware : Fairly soft, traces of external polishing. Firing : Light brown with flushed and dark patches and grey or black core. Decoration : Probably with the bone of a small bird or mammal, in places mere vertical scratches, in others fairly deep impressions.

It belongs to a class of rather poor-looking B-beakers with approximately upright and roughly zonal decoration of finger-nail and bone impressions (or stabs). Others in the class are Cassington Cemetery grave 1 (*Oxon.* 3), Summertown (*Oxon.* 27), Oxford (*Oxon.* 24), Stanton Harcourt (*Oxon.* 30), and Sutton Courtenay (*Berks.* 10 ; oblique impressions), and possibly sherds from a pit at Cassington (see below, p. 18).

(2) An inhumation burial was found by Mr. Bradford further south, about 250 yards north-east of the cemetery area, with a fragmentary beaker (*Oxon.* 40 ; FIG. 1), a bowl of B-beaker type (*Oxon.* 41 ; FIG. 1) and an awl, probably of copper (FIG. 1). *National Grid* : 42/423083.

Oxon. 40 : Ashmolean Museum, 1941.14. Well made, built in rings. Base very abraded. Paste : Fine, with few grits of flint and quartz, up to 4 mm. long. Ware : fairly hard and well polished. Firing : Light brown, flushed and darkened ; one dark patch on belly. Decoration : Notched impressions with narrower tool, and with less space between teeth compared with tool used on bowl.

This fragmentary beaker falls into a class of B- and C-beakers with intermittent unrelieved incised or notched zones of horizontal lines. Others in this class are : C-beakers : Stanton Harcourt (*Oxon.* 28, classified by Leeds as A ; FIG. 4), and Abingdon (*Berks.* 1, also classified by Leeds as A ; FIG. 4). B-beakers : Eynsham ? (*Oxon.* 15), Stanton Harcourt (*Oxon.* 29 ; FIG. 4), and Long Wittenham (*Berks.* 7, sherds). *Oxon.* 15 may be classified as B2 ; *Oxon.* 29 also seems related to that type.

⁸ *Oxoniensia*, XVI (1951), 1-4.

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Oxon. 41 : Ashmolean Museum, 1941.15. Well made and nearly complete. Base unabraded. Paste : Fine with few grits, 2 mm. or less long, limestone gravel (?). Ware : Fairly hard ; slightly polishing apparent round base. Firing : Light red or reddish-brown exterior, darkening at base inside and out and one prominent dark patch on belly. Decoration : notched tool of 11 teeth, length 3.2 cm. ; another 4.2 cm. more or less. Notches 1.1-1.3 mm. broad.

The decoration of this bowl may be compared with that of the Little Rollright beaker (*Oxon.* 34 ; see above, p.) and others in its class. However, its continuous zoning places it in a class described below under *Radley* (*Berks.* 12 ; p. 8), although cross-hatching does not otherwise figure there.

(3) An A-beaker (*Oxon.* 42 ; FIG. 2) was found by Mr. Bradford 'within the area of the cemetery'.⁹ *National Grid* : 42/422081. Its classification is discussed above under *Oxon.* 36 (*Cassington*). Ashmolean Museum, 1941.12. Well made : fragmentary. Base abraded. Paste : Fine with small grits, up to 4.5 mm. long. Ware : Fairly soft, slightly polished. Firing : Light reddish-brown surface, slightly flushed and with dark patches (more inside). Decoration : Uneven, made with a sharp tool, possibly a flint.

D. Stanton Harcourt, Oxon. : *Beard Mill or Vicarage Field* (*Oxon.* 43-46). Rock : Summertown-Radley terrace gravel.

Two graves unmarked by ring-ditches or any other features,¹⁰ were found during gravel-digging by Ivor Partridge Ltd., when working a strip north of that reported by Mr. Nicholas Thomas (*Oxoniensia*, xx (1955), 1 ff.). I searched for other burials in the vicinity but found none. *National Grid* : 42/400055.

(1) This oval grave (long axis about 230 degrees) was excavated in May, 1953, by the Oxford University Archaeological Society directed by Miss Mary Craster. It contained a loosely contracted inhumation burial lying on the left side, head to the south-west, right hand on pubis, left forearm across chest. Dr. D. F. Roberts, Anthropology Laboratory, Department of Human Anatomy, Oxford, kindly comments, 'The fragments represent a single individual, probably a female. The age appears to be approximately 18-20.' Two struck flints (FIG. 2) lay behind the middle vertebrae. A B-beaker (*Oxon.* 43 ; FIG. 2) stood upright behind the pelvis. It was lifted containing its filling of loamy soil. When the sherds had been separated from the soil, it was found that two beakers were involved. The smaller (*Oxon.* 44 ; FIG. 2), also of type B, had been placed inside the larger. Both beakers stand alone compared with others from the region. Miniature vessels are known from English Beaker-Culture graves,¹¹ and from the Corded-Ware and Beaker-Cultures of the continent.¹² The larger beaker is discussed below (p. 15).

Oxon. 43. Ashmolean Museum, 1953.110a. Moderately well made ; fragmentary and very comminuted. Base not abraded. Paste : Fine with minute grits (<0.5 mm.). Ware : Fairly soft, slightly polished. Firing : Exterior reddish-brown, flushed and darkened, interior with dark patches. Decoration : Impressions possibly of a reed, small ones with the point, large with the broken stem. The upper zone shows traces of white filling, which may have been intentional.

⁹ *Oxoniensia*, vi (1941), 85.

¹⁰ Noted in *Oxoniensia*, xvii/xviii (1952/53), 218.

¹¹ E.g. a miniature corded B-beaker with a burial in uncertain relationship to burials with C- and handled beakers in barrow 116, the Aldro group, Yorkshire Wolds. J. R. Mortimer, *Forty Years*, . . . , pl. xiii, fig. 100 ; J. Abercromby, *Bronze Age Pottery* . . . (1912), I, 29, pl. xi, no. 120.

¹² E.g. Stampflus, *Die Jungneolithischen Kulturen in Westdeutschland* (1929), pl. iii, 22 ; viii, 21 ; x, 22.

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Oxon. 44. Ashmolean Museum, 1953.110b. Poorly made; fragmentary, frost-fractured and pitted. Base as rest. Paste: Fine with no grits visible to naked eye. Ware: Soft, slightly polished at rim. Firing: Reddish-brown surfaces, black core. No decoration.

Flint flakes. Ashmolean Museum: 1953.110 c and d. Long flake, with marks of abrasion on both edges; polished at platform and tip. Indeterminate flake, with damage by fire at tip.

(2) The excavation of this grave in June, 1953, was begun by workmen, and completed by my wife and myself; the workmen damaged the skull of the burial and some of the pottery. The grave was 84 ft. from grave 1, and was aligned towards it on a bearing of 130 degrees. It was oval and rounded, 5 ft. 3 in. long, 3 ft. wide and dug about 1 ft. 6 in. into the gravel. Its filling was slightly stony reddish loam.

The burial was a tightly contracted inhumation lying on the right side. The left hand was at the left knee-cap, and the right arm was over the chest, the wrist under the chin with the fingers extended downwards. The upper part of the right tibia was missing; the break was ancient. Dr. D. F. Roberts kindly comments, 'The fragments represent a single individual, a mature adult of middle age. Evidence of the pelvis suggests a female sex; the skull is notable for its thickness.'

A beaker (*Oxon.* 45; FIG. 2) lay on its side in the space bounded by the feet and pelvis of the burial and the edge of the grave; its mouth was towards the pelvis. Small parts of the rim and body were missing—damage which might have been caused by workmen; but damage which caused half the base to be missing was ancient. Two sherds of another beaker (*Oxon.* 46; FIG. 2) were found in the material excavated from the grave by workmen. The breaks were with one exception new, indicating that more of this beaker existed as an ancient deposit.

Oxon. 45. Temporarily in collection of H. J. Case. Incomplete but well-preserved; very well made. Base in same condition as rest. Paste: Fine with practically no grits. Ware: Hard and polished externally. Firing: Yellowish-brown exterior, very even in colour; darker interior; grey or black core. Decoration: notched stamps.

Oxon. 46. Temporarily in collection of H. J. Case. Well made. Paste: Fine, with practically no grits. Ware: Hard, polished externally and internally at rim. Firing: Reddish-brown inside and out, black core. Decoration: Impressions of twisted cord.

The B-beaker at the feet of the burial (*Oxon.* 45) may be classified with the one from Little Rollright (see above, *Oxon.* 34, p. 2). The sherds (*Oxon.* 46) are of a B-beaker decorated with continuous zonal ornament of cord impressions, like a beaker from Cassington (see above, *Oxon.* 37, p. 4) and sherds from Clifton Hampden (*Oxon.* 11; FIG. 2). The stratigraphical relationship between the two types of B-beaker pottery is not as clear as might be wished, for the contents of the grave show ancient and modern damage. Since the cord-ornamented sherds are unlikely to have been placed in the grave filling accidentally, it is assumed here that both types were in contemporary use.

E. *Stanton Harcourt: Linch Hill Corner* (*Oxon.* 47). Rock: Summertown-Radley terrace gravel.

An almost complete B-beaker with loose herring-bone decoration (*Oxon.* 47, FIG. 3), was found by Professor W. F. Grimes with arrow-heads and a bone pendant

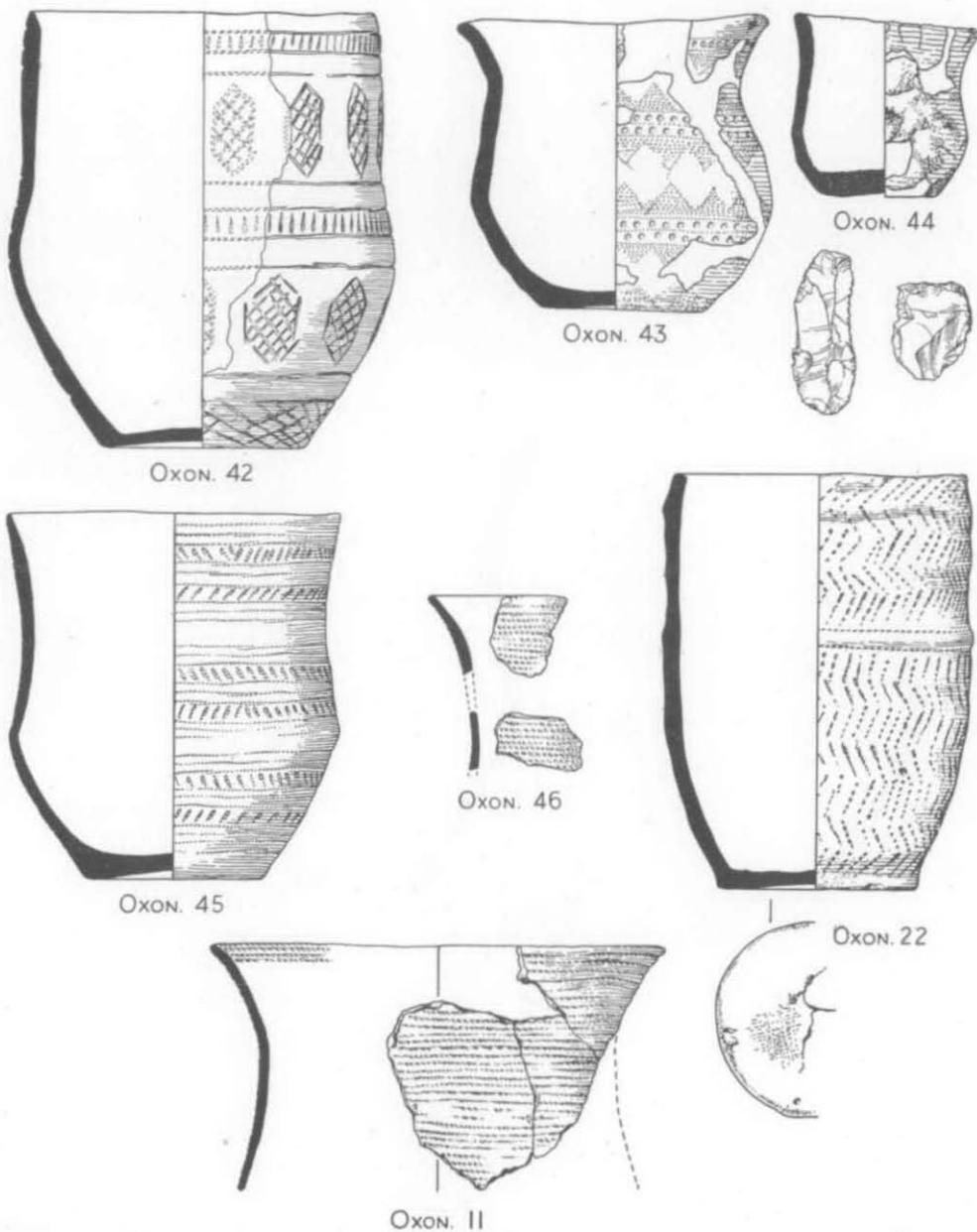


FIG. 2

Beakers or sherds from Eynsham (*Oxon.* 42), Hardwick (*Oxon.* 22), and Clifton Hampden (*Oxon.* 11); grave-groups from Stanton Harcourt: grave 1 (*Oxon.* 43-4) with flints, and grave 2 (*Oxon.* 45-6).
Scale: $\frac{1}{2}$

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(Ashmolean Museum, 1945.100-102) in a grave with a contracted inhumation burial.¹³ The grave was on the circumference of a small ring-ditch at the centre of which was a contracted inhumation burial with a jet slider and a flint knife with polished edge—both of secondary Neolithic association.¹⁴ *National Grid* : 42/416049. The beaker is discussed below (see p. 16) under *herringbone decoration*.

F. *Standlake, Oxon.* (*Oxon.* 48). Rock : Summertown-Radley terrace gravel.

During grave-digging, an inhumation burial was found with sherds of a beaker (*Oxon.* 48) decorated with finger-nail impressions.¹⁵ *National Grid* : 42/388045.

G. *Langford Downs, near Lechlade, Glos.* (*Oxon.* 49). Rock : Gravel.

One sherd (*Oxon.* 49 : Ashmolean Museum, 1952.563) found by Mrs. Audrey Williams in primary silt of ring-ditch 2.¹⁶ *National Grid* : 42/214029.

H. *Radley, Berks.* (*Berks.* 12). Rock : Summertown-Radley terrace gravel of the Thames.

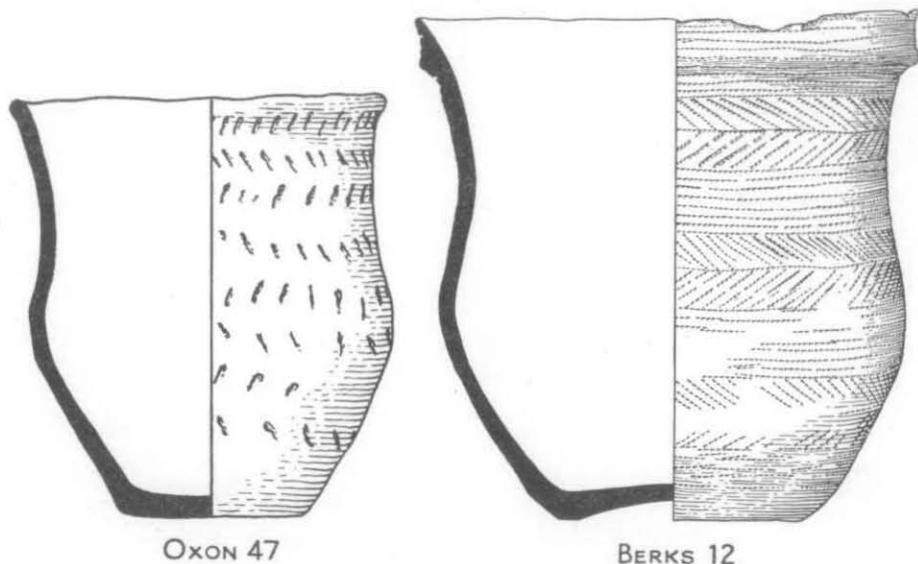


FIG. 3

Beakers from Stanton Harcourt (*Oxon.* 47) and Radley (*Berks.* 12).

Scale : $\frac{1}{2}$

A contracted male inhumation burial with a B-beaker (*Berks.* 12 ; FIG. 3), gold ear-rings and flint arrow-heads (Ashmolean Museum 1944.121-123) was found by Mrs. Williams in a grave at the centre of barrow 4a of the Barrow Hills Field barrow cemetery. This barrow was in relationship with barrow 4 and a

¹³ *Oxoniensia*, VIII/IX (1943/44), 34-45.

¹⁴ Thus Piggott, *Neolithic Cultures . . .* (1954), 311 ; but Childe can also say that they 'are appropriate to the Food Vessel complex' (*Prehistoric Communities . . .* (3rd edn. 1949), 118).

¹⁵ *Oxoniensia*, VI (1941), 88. The whereabouts of these sherds is unknown.

¹⁶ *Oxoniensia*, XI/XII (1946/47), 63.

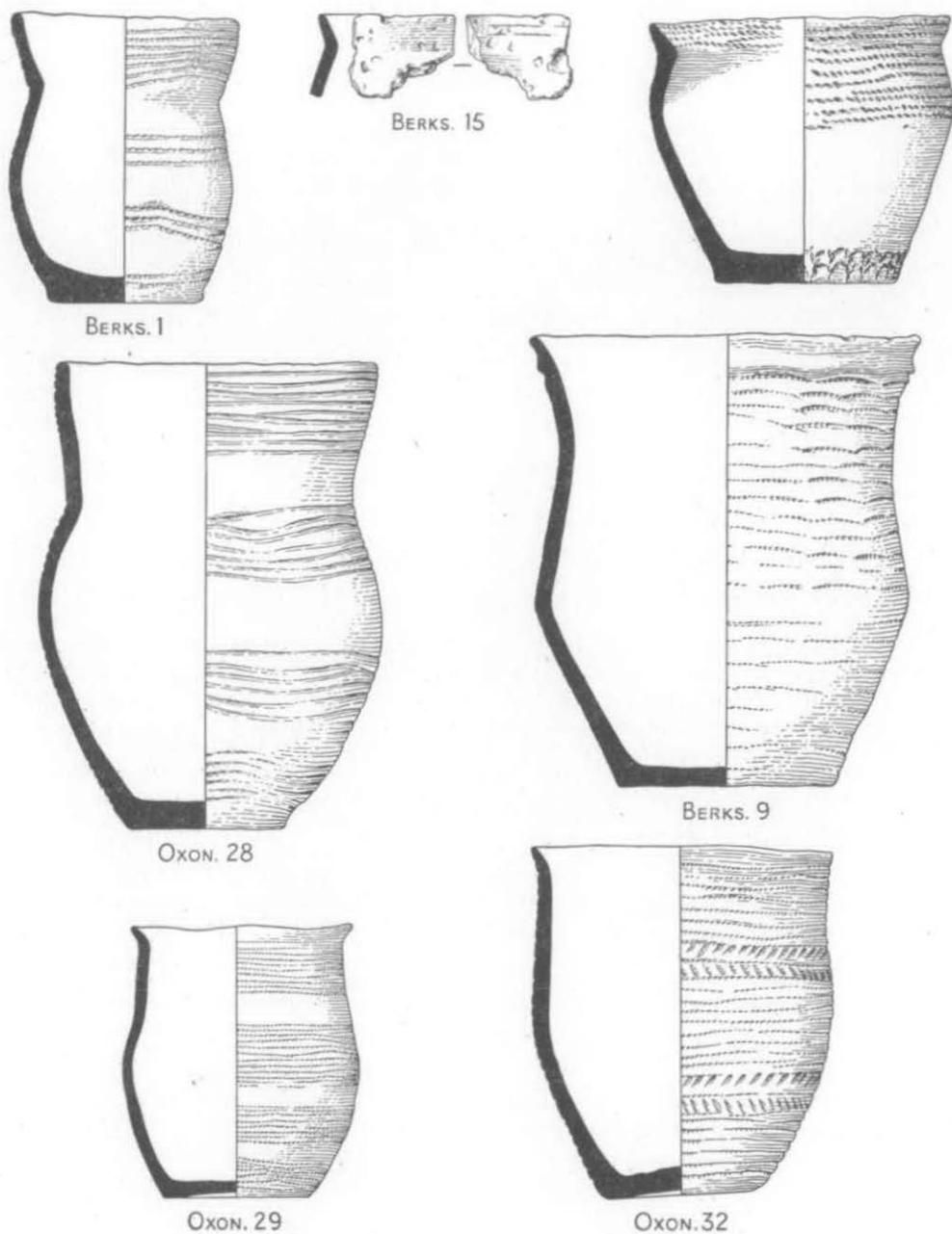


FIG. 4
 Beakers or sherds from Abingdon (*Berks.* 1 and 15), Sutton Courtenay (*Berks.* 9), Stanton Harcourt (*Oxon.* 28-9) and Yarnton (*Oxon.* 32); food-vessel from Yarnton (top right).
 Scale : $\frac{1}{2}$

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cremation burial with a small flat bronze knife (see below, p. 14).¹⁷ *National Grid* : 41/515984.

The beaker may be compared with other B- and hybrid beakers with continuous notched zones of horizontal lines relieved by transverse hatching; Cassington Cemetery grave 11 (*Oxon.* 7, classified by Leeds as A; FIG. 5), Summertown (*Oxon.* 25), Yarnton (*Oxon.* 32; FIG. 4) and Radley (*Berks.* 8). The bowl from Eynsham (*Oxon.* 34; see above) must also be placed in this group, although it has cross-hatched zones. The moulding under the rim (or 'collar') of the Radley beaker (*Berks.* 12) is comparable to that of a B-beaker from Sutton Courtenay (*Berks.* 9; FIG. 4). A-beakers also carry mouldings below the rim (see below, p. 16).

I. *Abingdon, Berks.* (*Berks.* 16). Rock: Summertown-Radley terrace gravel of the Thames.

I found two sherds of beaker ware (*Berks.* 13, probably type B) in the latest filling of the outer ditch of the causewayed camp in 1954.¹⁸ *National Grid* : 41/511984.

J. *Dorchester, Oxon.* (*Oxon.* 50 and 53). Rock: Summertown-Radley terrace gravel of the Thames.

(1) *Site XII.* A very well made and practically complete B-beaker (*Oxon.* 50), two small copper knives and a stone wrist-guard (Ashmolean Museum: 1950.395 i-iv) were found by Mr. Richard Atkinson with a contracted inhumation burial of a young male in a grave central to a ring-ditch.¹⁹ The beaker is discussed below (page 14). *National Grid* : 41/571956.

(2) *The Big Rings.* Several sherds of A- and B-beakers (*Oxon.* 53) were found by Mr. Nicholas Thomas in the ditch filling of this double-entrance henge monument.²⁰ Mr. Thomas kindly showed me the sherds in advance of publication; he referred them all to one period. *National Grid* : 41/573955.

K. *Little Wittenham, Berks.* (*Berks.* 14). Two sherds of beaker ware (*Berks.* 14), one possibly of type B (Ashmolean Museum, 1950.3) were found by Mr. Peter Rhodes during excavation of an Iron Age building and Romano-British layers.²¹ *National Grid* : 41/564925.

L. *North Stoke, Oxon.* (*Oxon.* 51). Rock: Chiltern Outwash gravel.

An A-beaker (*Oxon.* 51) of the same class as *Oxon.* 36 (FIG. 1) was found by Mr. Hector Catling with a contracted inhumation burial under an almost-destroyed barrow with ring-ditch of diameter about 35 ft.²² *National Grid* : 41/612857.

FINDS BEFORE 1939 ABOUT WHICH NEW INFORMATION IS NOW AVAILABLE

1. *Hardwick, Oxon.* (*Oxon.* 22). Rock: Summertown-Radley terrace gravel. The A-beaker (*Oxon.* 22; FIG. 2; Banbury Museum) appears to have been found with a burial during gravel-digging in the now disused pit west of the cross-roads. *National Grid* : 42/376058. Recent examination has shown the faint

¹⁷ *Oxoniensia*, XIII (1948), 1-9: *Inventaria Archaeologica*, G.B.2.

¹⁸ *Antiq. J.*, xxxvi (1956), 16.

¹⁹ *Oxoniensia*, xv (1950), 106: *Inventaria Archaeologica*, G.B.1.

²⁰ *Oxoniensia*, xvi (1951), 80.

²¹ *Oxoniensia*, XIII (1948), 22.

²² *Report of Visitors of Ashmolean Museum*, 1954, p. 16, pl. viA.

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impressions on its base of what may have been the rush or grass mat on which it was made (FIG. 2). It belongs to the same class as *Oxon.* 38 (see above, p. 4, under *Cassington*); it is also discussed below under *herringbone decoration*.

2. *Abingdon, Berks.* (*Berks.* 15). Summertown-Radley terrace gravel of the Thames.

During the 1926/7 excavations of the causewayed camp, a rim sherd of beaker ware (*Berks.* 15; FIG. 4) with faint linear internal decoration was found in Pit D with Neolithic Abingdon Ware pottery.²³ I have compared this rim with that of the bowl from Eynsham (*Oxon.* 41; FIG. 1), but it might conceivably have come from a C-beaker (cf. *Berks.* 1; FIG. 4) or even from a beaker-food-vessel hybrid (cf. from Yarnton, *Oxon.*; FIG. 4, top right).

3. *Clifton Hampden, Oxon.* (*Oxon.* 11). Rock: Summertown-Radley terrace gravel of the Thames.

Re-examination of the sherds (*Oxon.* 11; FIG. 2) found with a prehistoric burial in the churchyard (!), has shown their decoration inside and out to be impressions of twisted cord. They fall into the same class as a beaker from *Cassington* (*Oxon.* 37; see above, p. 4) and sherds from Stanton Harcourt (*Oxon.* 46; FIG. 2). *National Grid*: 41/947956.

4. *Culham, Oxon.* (*Oxon.* 52). Rock: Summertown-Radley terrace gravel of the Thames.

In Jesse King's papers, presented to the Ashmolean Museum by the late Mr. A. E. Preston, is a water-colour painting of a beaker sherd with continuous zonal decoration, apparently of notched impressions (*Oxon.* 52; FIG. 5), titled, '... part of a drinking cup, plac'd near the Shoulder of a human Skeleton, from Culham Fields, Oxon, unfortunately broken by the incurious Labourer: the small fragment was the only part I was able to procure . . . 1843'. The find was made during excavations for the Didcot/Oxford Railway. *National Grid*: 41/510950. The beaker may have belonged to a class with unrelieved incised or notched zones of horizontal lines, sometimes with a minor interruption at the waist. Others in the same class are Summertown (*Oxon.* 26), Sutton Courtenay (*Berks.* 9; FIG. 4), and *Cassington* (*Oxon.* 2, with grooves under the rim), and possibly Drayton St. Leonard (*Oxon.* 13: lost).

5. *Sutton Courtenay, Berks.* (*Berks.* 16). Rock: Probably terrace gravel.

In the same papers is a painting of a beaker sherd (*Berks.* 16; FIG. 5) with intermittent linear zonal and cross-hatched decoration (cf. *Oxon.* 34; FIG. 1), titled, 'Fragment of a funeral cup placed by the Knees of the Deceased, from Sutton Courtney Field, the only part preserved, also accompanied by a spear of brass, lying by the side of the skeleton'. This entry may associate the tanged knife of Beaker-Culture type from Sutton Courtenay²⁵ with the sherd, since a painting of the knife also appears in the papers, titled 'Found at Sutton lying by a Skeleton with the traces of a wooden handle'. A sherd of Romano-British ware is illustrated in the papers and described as found 'near the shoulder' of what appears to have been the same skeleton 'accompanied by a brass spear . . .'. *National Grid*: around 41/500940.

6. *Appleford, Berks.* (*Berks.* 3). Rock: Possibly Flood-plain terrace of the Thames.

²³ See *op. cit.* in note 18, 23.

²⁴ This beaker has been sent in exchange to the National Museum, Copenhagen.

²⁵ *Later Prehistoric Antiquities of the British Isles* (British Museum, 1953), fig. 8, no. 5.

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Sherds of the handled beaker (*Berks.* 3) which is discussed above under *Cassington* (see p. 4) and below under *herringbone decoration* (see p. 16), are illustrated in King's papers as "Fragments of a funeral Urn, full of fine black mould, taken from beside a large and small skeleton, supposed to be mother and child . . ." *National Grid* : Around 41/5259930.

7. *Lambourn, Berks.* : *The Seven Barrows* (*Berks.* 5-6).²⁶ Rock : Upper Chalk.

The A-beaker (*Berks.* 5) probably came from a barrow (No. 31) less than 1 ft. high and about 26 ft. in diameter on the edge of a larger barrow (Mr. Leslie Grinsell's barrow No. 15) with an inhumation burial with arrowheads, other struck flints, and a V-perforated jet or shale button. This barrow, recorded by Major G. W. G. Allen before destruction, showed the probable original appearance of the North Stoke barrow and other Beaker-Culture barrows in the region.

The C-beaker (*Berks.* 6) came from a saucer barrow (Mr. Grinsell's barrow No. 17) of diameter about 32 ft. with outer bank and two internal graves. One of these graves contained superimposed male contracted inhumations, the lower one with the C-beaker and struck flints ; the upper one with a flint dagger. The second grave contained the inhumation burial of a child, probably with another C-beaker (*Berks.* 17). This barrow, recorded by Mr. Grinsell and Major Allen before its destruction, showed the probable original appearance of the Cassington barrow with similarly superimposed burials (see above, p. 4). *National Grid* : around 41/330830.

THE RELATIONSHIP WITHIN THE REGION OF VARIOUS TYPES OF BEAKER

STRAIGHT-ZONED B-BEAKERS

In the lists above I have described B-beakers with (i) continuous corded zones (cf. *Oxon.* 11, Clifton Hampden ; FIG. 2) ; (ii) more or less continuous, unrelieved incised or notched zones of horizontal lines (cf. *Berks.* 9, Sutton Courtenay ; FIG. 4) ; (iii) continuous incised or notched zones of horizontal lines, relieved normally by transverse hatching (cf. *Berks.* 12, Radley ; *Oxon.* 32, Yarnton ; FIGS. 3 and 4) ; (iv) intermittent unrelieved incised or notched zones (cf. *Oxon.* 29, Stanton Harcourt ; FIG. 4) ; (v) intermittent incised or notched zones relieved with oblique hatching or loose cross-hatching (cf. *Oxon.* 45, Stanton Harcourt ; FIG. 2) ; and (vi) generally vertical and roughly zonal finger-nail or bone impressions (cf. *Oxon.* 39, Eynsham ; FIG. 1). I refer to them as *straight-zoned* to distinguish them from B-beakers which carry zonal motives which might be described as crooked, for instance zig-zags, hatched triangles, or predominant herringbone patterns.

All these straight-zoned beakers may have been closely related. The following were in use together : (i) and (v), witness Stanton Harcourt burial 2 (see above, page 6) ; (ii) and (vi), witness a burial at Summertown (*Oxon.* 26

²⁶ *Berks. Archaeol. J.*, xli (1936), 32-6, and forthcoming volume. The beakers are Abercromby, *op. cit.* in note 11, nos. 7 and 41.

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and 27) ; and possibly (ii) and (iii) were contemporary, since beakers from Radley (*Berks.* 12 ; FIG. 3) and Sutton Courtenay (*Berks.* 9 ; FIG. 4) have mouldings under the rim. Some are better made than others, but there is no sound evidence for devolutionary series. Since type (i) with continuous corded zones was in use in Lincolnshire while long barrows were still being made²⁷ and since some examples of type (vi) might conceivably be late or native work, (i) and (v) may have an early bias, and (ii) and (vi) a later one ; but this grouping is not justified by present evidence.

In my opinion the likely immediate continental source of these straight-zoned beakers is the Rhineland. (Compare other views noted on page 1.) Parallels may be better found there than in any alternative area²⁸—suggesting movement into the region up the Thames valley. The suggested Rhenish prototypes may be assigned to a late Neolithic period showing interaction of Bell-beaker and various Single-Grave-Culture traditions. Exact matches between the Rhineland and upper Thames need not be expected, and the Oxford beakers show their insularity by their more loosely cross-hatched zones and the comparative multiplication of their plain ones. Type (i) decoration has been found in Spain and western France,²⁹ but its occurrence in the Netherlands³⁰ and west Germany,³¹ its easterly tendency in the British Isles,³² and its presence in the lower Thames valley,³³ argue that the Oxford examples are derived from the Rhineland.

Straight-zoned ornament of type (iv) occurring on B, B2 (*Oxon.* 15, Eynsham ?) and C- (or BC-) beakers (*Oxon.* 28 ; Stanton Harcourt ; *Berks.* 1, Abingdon ; FIG. 4) shows that here in the upper Thames valley these types were related.³⁴ At no great distance from each other, the Lambourn and Cassington barrows (see above, pages 4, 12) show that users of B- and C-beakers shared a similar monument. A Rhenish origin has been claimed for some B2- and C-beakers. Recently Dr. Isobel Smith has noted northern European occurrences of the 'barbed-wire' ornament of the C-beaker (*Berks.* 6) from the Lambourn barrow and suggested that this decoration

²⁷ *Archaeologia*, LXXXV (1935), 53.

²⁸ E.g. Sangmeister, *op. cit.* in note 31, pl. i, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 13 (note mouldings under the rim on 9 and 13) ; ii, 3 ; iv, 1, 3, 8, 9, 12 ; Stampflus, *op. cit.* in note 12, pl. viii, 22, 26.

²⁹ Savory, *op. cit.* in note 4, 369. See also *Actas . . . IV Sesión, Congresos Internacionales de Ciencias Prehistóricas . . .* (1956), 543, and Dr. R. Riquet, *Bull. de la Soc. Préh. Française* (1953), 412-13.

³⁰ There are examples in Assen and Leiden museums.

³¹ E.g. Edward Sangmeister, *Die Glockenbecherkultur und die Becherkulturen* (1951), pl. iii, 8.

³² Childe, *op. cit.* in note 14, 93. But elsewhere Childe has suggested a British origin for this type (*Actas . . . Sociedad Española de Prehistoria*, xxi, 200-1.)

³³ Mortlake, Surrey. *British Prehistoric Pottery* (Victoria and Albert Museum, 1952), pl. 6.

³⁴ Cf. also straight-zoned decoration of type v on a Bell beaker (of type C profile according British classification) from the central Netherlands : Dr. P. J. R. Modderman, *Berichten v.d. Rijksdienst v.h. Oudheidkundig Bodemonderzoek i. Nederland*, v, pl. xi, 2.

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belonged to a late Neolithic period in the Netherlands and north-west Germany.³⁵

Pottery typology alone cannot decide whether the *movement*, which brought B- and C-beakers to the Oxford region, was caused largely by immigrant people or largely by cultural fashion. Brachycephalic skulls suggest that immigration played some part, but the predominance of dolichocephalic ones emphasizes the possible role of fashion.³⁶ The term *movement* is used here with these qualifications in mind.

Turning to relationships with other cultures, beaker pottery, possibly of straight-zoned type, overlapped with the final period of use of the Neolithic causewayed camp at Abingdon (see above, pages 10 and 11). At the other end of the scale a hybrid vessel from Yarnton, Oxon. (FIG. 4, top right)³⁷ suggests that this type of beaker contributed to the development of local Food-Vessel pottery; however, the Beaker-Culture burial from barrow 4a, Radley (with *Berks.* 12, FIG. 3), seems to me to have been prior to the full Bronze Age burial.³⁸

B-BEAKERS WITH OTHER TYPES OF DECORATION

The few B-beakers which have other than straight-zoned decoration deserve special mention. A beaker from Dorchester (see above, *Oxon.* 50, page 10) stands apart not only for its striking workmanship, but also for its decorative features—transverse impressions, hatched triangles, and close cross-hatching.³⁹ Mr. Atkinson has kindly expressed the opinion in conversation that the Dorchester assemblage is immigrant and exotic, and that the knives and wrist-guard may have had a Rhenish, or even central European origin. A different immediate origin in north-west Europe from that of the straight-zoned class seems indicated. Rather oblique evidence suggests that the

³⁵ *London University Institute of Archeology*, 11th Ann. Rep. (1955), 36-7.

³⁶ Brachycephalic skulls were recorded from Sutton Courtenay (*Berks.* 9, B type ii), Cassington Cemetery graves 6 (*Oxon.* 5, indeterminate sherd) and 10 (*Oxon.* 6, hybrid), and Eynsham Cemetery grave 14 (*Oxon.* 9, hybrid). Otherwise more or less dolichocephalic skulls appear to have been more numerous in both cemeteries. Both the secondary Neolithic and the Beaker Culture burials (*B. herringbone*, see above, p. 6) from Linch Hill, Stanton Harcourt were dolichocephalic (*Oxoniensia*, VIII/IX (1943/44), 61-2). On 'the basis of cranial character', the burial from Barrow 4a, Radley (with B type iv) was described as 'roughly intermediate' between the British Neolithic and English Bronze Age types (*Oxoniensia*, XIII (1948), 17). A skull from one of the Summertown burials (with *Oxon.* 26-7, B types ii and vi) was described by Rolleston as a 'Misch form' (Manning MSS., Ashmolean Museum). The following newly discovered skeletons will be made available for study at the British Museum (Natural History), South Kensington, London; Stanton Harcourt 1 and 2, Dorchester and North Stoke.

³⁷ Abercromby, *op. cit.* in note 11, pl. xxix, no. 7.

³⁸ With great respect to the excavator, I incline to this interpretation of the wealth of detail which she observed.

³⁹ Professor Christopher Hawkes gives a list of comparative specimens in *Inventaria Archaeologica*, G.B.1.

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arrival of this beaker in the region may have been earlier than that of some of the straight-zoned class. The metal of the larger of the two knives found with it appears continental rather than Irish; while the gold ear-rings from barrow 4a, Radley, assuming them to have been of Irish make, suggest that trade in metal objects made in the British Isles had by then begun.⁴⁰

A fragmentary beaker from Cassington (*Oxon.* 1) has two zones of zig-zag decoration, which places it outside the straight-zoned group; it has an anomalous foot-ring base.⁴¹

The beaker from Stanton Harcourt grave 1 (*Oxon.* 43; FIG. 3) is exotic; its decoration recalls that of the late Neolithic Er-Lannic ware, centred in Brittany, the influence of which appears, however, on incense cups of the Early Bronze Age Wessex Culture of southern England.⁴² The beaker is thus likely to have been later than the majority of the straight-zoned ones and, alone of those discussed so far, suggests movement into the region from the southwest. On the other hand, one can compare it with a beaker from Chislet, Kent.⁴³

HYBRIDS

Five beakers are strongly hybrid of A and B. Cassington cemetery grave 5 (*Oxon.* 4), Eynsham cemetery grave 18 (*Oxon.* 21; FIG. 5), and grave 14 (*Oxon.* 19, and see below under *herringbone* decoration) have a rather biconical shape. Cassington cemetery grave 11 (*Oxon.* 7; FIG. 5) has also this shape, but, since its decoration is straight-zoned, it might be classed as B. Another hybrid, a handled beaker from Cassington Cemetery grave 10 (*Oxon.* 6), has features suggestive of an A-beaker with moulding under the rim, but shape more appropriate to a B-beaker. The awl found in Eynsham Cemetery grave 18 has a somewhat ridged centre section, and may be distantly related to a type with prominent stop-ridge found in southern France and Portugal, also in graves of the post-Bell-beaker Adlerberg culture of the Rhineland, and in the well-known late Bell-beaker grave from Exloo, Odoorn, in the Netherlands. In any event, hybridization of A- and B-beakers is likely to have been taking place in the region at a time equivalent to the close of the Bell-beaker phase in north-western Europe.

⁴⁰ Forthcoming report of the Ancient Mining and Metallurgy Committee of the Royal Anthropological Institute. The association of a gold earring similar to those from Radley with a corded beaker at Kirkhaugh, Northumberland, is probable but not certain. V. G. Childe, *Prehistoric Communities* . . . , p. 93; cf. *Archaeologia Aeliana* XIII (1936), 210.

⁴¹ The beaker from the central Netherlands, cited in note 34 had this kind of base: Modderman, *op. cit.*, fig. 15.

⁴² For the latest discussion see Piggott in *L'Anthropologie*, LVIII (1954), 15-18.

⁴³ Abercromby, *op. cit.* in note 11, pl. vii, no. 34.

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HERRINGBONE DECORATION

This occurs on hybrid and A-beakers (e.g. on *Oxon.* 22 ; FIG. 2), as well as on B-beakers, and reminds one of the decoration on S-beakers of the Netherlands or Herringbone beakers of west Germany.⁴⁴ The B-beaker (*Oxon.* 47, FIG. 3) from the ring-ditch at Linch Hill Corner, Stanton Harcourt, is outstanding. Professor Gordon Childe has mentioned some easterly parallels to the bone pendant found with this beaker.⁴⁵ Dr. Isobel Smith recently discussed the assemblage, and suggested a late date in the north-west European Neolithic sequence.⁴⁶ The beaker, however, differs from typical continental examples since decoration is not confined to the upper part of the vessel, but is overall, as on a straight-zoned beaker. Thus typologically, and in place of origin, it stands related to that kind of beaker ; in chronological relationship with it, it may have been late rather than early, since the burial in which it was found was secondary to a burial with Secondary Neolithic associations (cf. also the orientations of the graves, see *Appendix* below).

Other beakers from the region with herringbone decoration seem late rather than early—Eynsham cemetery grave 14 (*Oxon.* 19, a hybrid) ; Appleford (*Berks.* 3) and Hardwick (*Oxon.* 22 ; FIG. 2),⁴⁷ both A-beakers of the type with mouldings under the rim. One cannot explain the hatching of straight-zoned beakers like *Oxon.* 32 from Yarnton (FIG. 4) and *Oxon.* 25 from Summertown, or *Berks.* 12 from Radley (FIG. 3) as inspired by Northern European herringbone decoration, since the motive occurs on west European bell-beakers.⁴⁸

A-BEAKERS WITH MOULDINGS UNDER THE RIM (e.g. *Oxon.* 17, Eynsham Cemetery grave 4 ; FIG. 5)

The superimposed burials at Cassington (see above, page 4), show the priority of a B-beaker of straight-zoned type (i) over an A-beaker with moulding under the rim. This succession is evidently significant if one compares the Lambourn (see page 12) and Cassington burials ; at Cassington, the skeletons faced opposite directions and the upper burial was in no sense placed in the same grave as the lower burial as at Lambourn, but rather mutilated it.

However, the upper beaker from Cassington—the A-beaker—carried crudely executed but typical straight-zoned B-decoration, showing clearly an

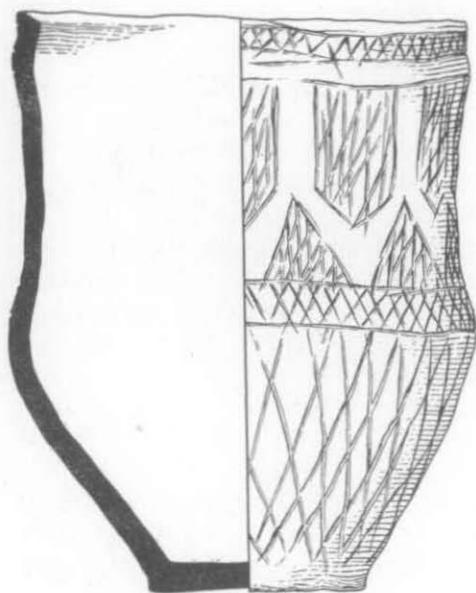
⁴⁴ Cf. Modderman *op. cit.* in note 34, fig. 5 ; Sangmeister, *op. cit.* in note 31, pl. x : Stampfuss, *op. cit.* in note 12, pl. i, 12, however is quite a good match for the beaker from Linch Hill Corner.

⁴⁵ *Oxoniensia*, VIII/IX (1943/44), 43 ; V. G. Childe, *Prehistoric Communities*. . . , 118.

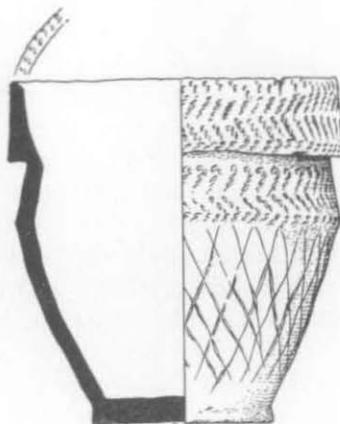
⁴⁶ See note 35 above.

⁴⁷ Cf. for decoration a food-vessel from Kew (Abercromby, *op. cit.* in note 11, pl. xxx, no. 21). Herringbone decoration is common on food-vessels. Cf. also some Danish Single-Grave-Culture beakers, e.g. P. V. Glob, *Studier over der Jyske Enkeltsgravkultur* (1945), fig. 64, no. 1.

⁴⁸ A. del Castillo Yurrita, *La Cultura del Vaso Campaniforme* (1928), pl. xcii, 6 ; cx, 6.



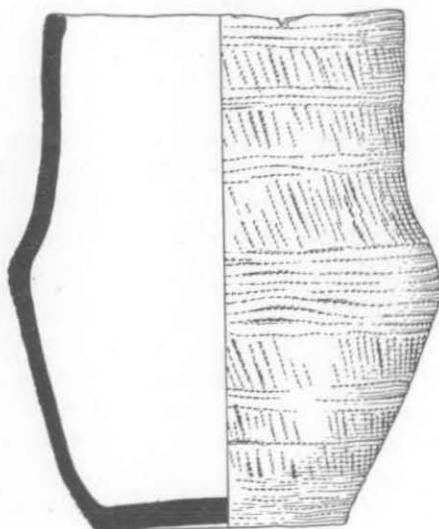
Oxon. 17



Oxon. 52



Berks. 16



Oxon. 7



Oxon. 21



FIG. 5.

Beakers from Eynsham (*Oxon.* 17) and Cassington (*Oxon.* 7). Scale : $\frac{1}{2}$.
 Sherds from Culham (*Oxon.* 52) and Sutton Courtenay (*Berks.* 16) after King.
 Scale : possibly $\frac{1}{2}$.

Grave-group from Eynsham (*Oxon.* 21, scale : $\frac{1}{2}$) with awl (scale : $\frac{3}{4}$).
 Collared urn from Stanton Harcourt. Scale : $\frac{1}{2}$.

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overlap between these types of A and B. They share mouldings under the rim which also suggests that they are related. Also, an overlap between A- and B-beakers generally is illustrated by the finds from the Big Rings, Dorchester (see above, page 10).

Turning to other relationships, finds from a pit at Cassington⁴⁹ show the association of A-beaker sherds of the type with moulding under the rim⁵⁰ with other A-beaker sherds of uncertain type,⁵¹ and with an A-beaker sherd not otherwise matched in the region;⁵² with a sherd of possibly a B-beaker of straight-zoned type (vi),⁵³ and a sherd probably from a Peterborough Culture bowl.⁵⁴

The cross-hatched belly of the beaker from Eynsham cemetery grave 4 (*Oxon.* 17; FIG. 5) is more or less identical in everything but size with that of a small collared urn, with cord-impressed herringbones on neck and collar, from Stanton Harcourt (FIG. 5, top right); and this interesting urn neatly shows the co-existence of this type of beaker and the Peterborough Culture bowl—an obvious child of both parents. The bone pommel of the knife associated with an A-beaker of this type (*Oxon.* 20) from Eynsham cemetery grave 15⁵⁵ can be related to Wessex Culture pommels from barrow 7, The Ridgeway, Dorset,⁵⁶ and the Manton barrow, Wilts.⁵⁷ One of the solid rivets of this knife is bronze; so appear to be the other solid rivets and the blade.⁵⁸ This type of beaker, then, overlaps with the full Early Bronze Age.

A-BEAKERS WITH CONVEX NECKS AND WITHOUT MOULDINGS (e.g. *Oxon.* 36, Cassington; FIG. 1)

This type stands out of relationship with other types except at the Big Rings, Dorchester, and perhaps in the Cassington pit. No doubt it overlapped with the other main A-beaker type; both have handles; both shared the Eynsham cemetery. Its decoration more strongly recalls that of continental bell-beakers, being predominantly zonal, with hatched geometrical figures; the hatched saltires of the crudely-made beaker from Eynsham cemetery

⁴⁹ *Oxoniensia*, III (1938), 15. Unlike Leeds, I do not see any obvious Neolithic A element in these sherds. Leeds saw only two sherds as of beaker ware; I see more, but to avoid confusion I have not altered his serial numbers.

⁵⁰ *Op. cit.* in note 49, pl. v, nos. 4, 11, and probably nos. 1, 2, 3.

⁵¹ *Op. cit.* in note 49, pl. v, nos. 5, 7-10. A-beaker with convex neck, etc. ?

⁵² *Op. cit.* in note 49, pl. v, no. 12. Cf. for somewhat similar decoration Abercromby, *op. cit.* in note 10, pl. v, 13 tris; *Wilts. Arch. Mag.*, xxxviii (1913/4), 42, fig. 1.

⁵³ *Op. cit.* in note 49, pl. v, no. 6.

⁵⁴ *Op. cit.* in note 49, pl. v, no. 13; cf. *Oxoniensia*, v (1940), pl. ii, c.

⁵⁵ *Oxoniensia*, III (1938), 29, fig. 6. Since this article was written, Miss M. A. Smith has published very interesting comments on this grave-group in *Inventaria Archaeologica*, 3rd set, G.B. 14.

⁵⁶ *Proc. Dorset Nat. Hist. and F. C.*, LVIII (1937), 24, pl. v, 9.

⁵⁷ *Proc. Prehist. Soc.*, IV (1938), 70, fig. 8, no. 12, amber and not slotted vertically like the other two.

⁵⁸ Forthcoming report of the Ancient Mining and Metallurgy Committee of the Royal Anthropological Institute.

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grave 8 (*Oxon.* 18) are noteworthy;⁵⁹ and the massed chevron hatching of *Oxon.* 16 from Eynsham cemetery grave 3 strikingly recalls motives on vessels of the Danish Single-Grave Culture.⁶⁰ However, *floating ornament* (for instance the hexagons on *Oxon.* 36 and 42; FIGS. 1 and 2) is characteristically British.

BEAKER-CULTURE SETTLEMENT

Whatever its origin—whether immigrant into these islands as an entity or whether locally developed (see above, page 1)—the A-beaker seems to have been initially immigrant into the Oxford region, since its distribution is selective. This can be seen if the evidence is viewed in the mass.⁶¹

It then appears that B-beakers are well spread throughout the region on both banks (FIG. 6); that A-beakers occur only sporadically below Oxford (once on the right bank), are absent from Stanton Harcourt, but remarkably concentrated at Eynsham; and that the Eynsham and Cassington cemeteries are in contrast, the A-beaker being seen in more typical form from Eynsham, while hybrids are the general rule from Cassington. No beaker with straight-zoned decoration was associated for certain with a grave in the Eynsham cemetery.⁶²

Interpretation of the stratigraphical evidence and of the distributions thus suggests an initial colonization along the Thames by B- and C-beakers, ultimately derived from the Rhineland; a secondary selective colonization, by A-beakers;⁶³ and users of the two main types living side by side in the region, sharing the henge monuments⁶⁴ and influencing each other, but on the whole keeping separate.

B- and C-beakers probably arrived here during the final period of use of the causewayed camp at Abingdon, and possibly late rather than early in the Bell-beaker phase in north-western Europe. A-beakers probably arrived here before the close of that phase on the continent, and continued in use until the emergence in the region of the collared urn and of the Wessex Culture in Wiltshire and Dorset. This whole period should cover the first flush of the Irish copper industry and last at least till the use in these islands of the first alloys with tin.

⁵⁹ Cf. Castillo, *op. cit.* in note 48, pl. cliii, 5, pl. cxiv, 1.

⁶⁰ E.g. Glob, *op. cit.* in note 45, fig. 40, no. 1.

⁶¹ I used drawings to one-third scale placed in relative geographical positions on a large floor space.

⁶² It is uncertain whether *Oxon.* 15 came from Eynsham.

⁶³ Leeds suggested an easterly direction; *op. cit.* in note 1, 16.

⁶⁴ If all the henges can be assumed, on the evidence from the Big Rings (see above, p. 10), to belong initially to the Beaker Culture, then the inspiration behind the Deadman's Burial, Eynsham (*Antiquity*, xxix (1955), 223-6) may be represented by A-beakers, and behind the Devil's Quoits, Stanton Harcourt (*Oxoniensia*, viii/ix (1943-44), 24-34), by B-beakers. The Westwell henge (*Oxoniensia*, xiv (1949), 84-6) may indicate a rich area of Beaker-Culture settlement as yet undocumented. The Rollright Stones may have been a monument of this culture.

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Beakers in the region are associated with shale or jet, copper, bronze and gold,⁶⁵ and possibly with all the great henge monuments. The prosperity and vitality of the local Beaker Cultures need no stressing. A two-fold explanation can be sought, firstly in the position of the Oxford region in one of the great early trade routes, secondly in its gravel subsoil.

Miss Lily Chitty's map of flat copper and bronze axes⁶⁶ suggests that one of the routes by which these early types were traded from Ireland was across north Wales, thence across the Cotswolds to the upper Thames and thence to the middle and lower Thames valleys. Stone axes of Great Langdale and other rock may previously have come by the Cotswolds.⁶⁷ Users of beakers strongly favoured the Stanton Harcourt-Eynsham-Cassington area, which stands athwart this route, and it is likely that they handled this early metal trade.

Settlement (if graves are an indication) seems to have been concentrated on patches of Summertown-Radley terrace gravel (FIG. 6).⁶⁸ They were above the reach of floods but within easy distance of water, gave a light soil, calcareous and well-drained, and had undoubtedly been partly cleared by Neolithic colonists already; and, to an immigrant from the lower Rhine, the flat country around Stanton Harcourt may have resembled earlier homes.

APPENDIX

NOTES ON BURIAL RITUAL

(i) *Barrows*. There is no regional evidence for the belief that users of beakers were builders of large barrows: rather the reverse. Writing of the cemeteries, Leeds noted 'the absence of any sign of a tumulus'.⁶⁹ Evidence gathered since he wrote has been either of graves without barrows (Stanton Harcourt 1 and 2) or with

⁶⁵ *Shale or jet*: Cassington (Oxon. 2; B type ii). *Copper*: Dorchester Site XII (Oxon. 50, B anomalous); possibly Sutton Courtenay (Berks. 16, poss. B type v). *Bronze*: Eynsham Cemetery grave 15 (Oxon. 20; A with moulding). *Copper or Bronze*: Eynsham Cemetery grave 18 (Oxon. 21; hybrid); Eynsham burial 2 (Oxon. 40 and 42, B or C type iv and B type v). *Gold*: Radley Barrow 4a (Berks. 12; B type iv).

⁶⁶ In Sir Cyril Fox, *Personality of Britain* (4th edn., 1943), pl. vi.

⁶⁷ *The Oxford Region* (ed. A. F. Martin and R. W. Steel, 1954), 78, fig. 24; see *Proc. Prehist. Soc.*, xvii (1951), 99 ff. and fig. 3 for distribution of implements of Groups vi and vii.

⁶⁸ I am grateful to Dr. K. S. Sandford, Dept. of Geology, Oxford, for help with fig. 6. Finds on other gravels are: *Flood-plain terrace*: Drayton St. Leonard, Oxon. 13; probably Appleford, Berks. 3; possibly Sutton Courtenay, Berks. 16. *Outwash gravel at approximately flood-plain level*: North Stoke, Oxon. 51. *Wolvercote Terrace*: Summertown, Oxon. 25-7. Large areas of the flood-plain terrace have been worked around Radley without bringing any finds to light. See *The Oxford Region*, pp. 76-84, for the distribution of prehistoric finds.

⁶⁹ *Op. cit.* in note 1, 10.

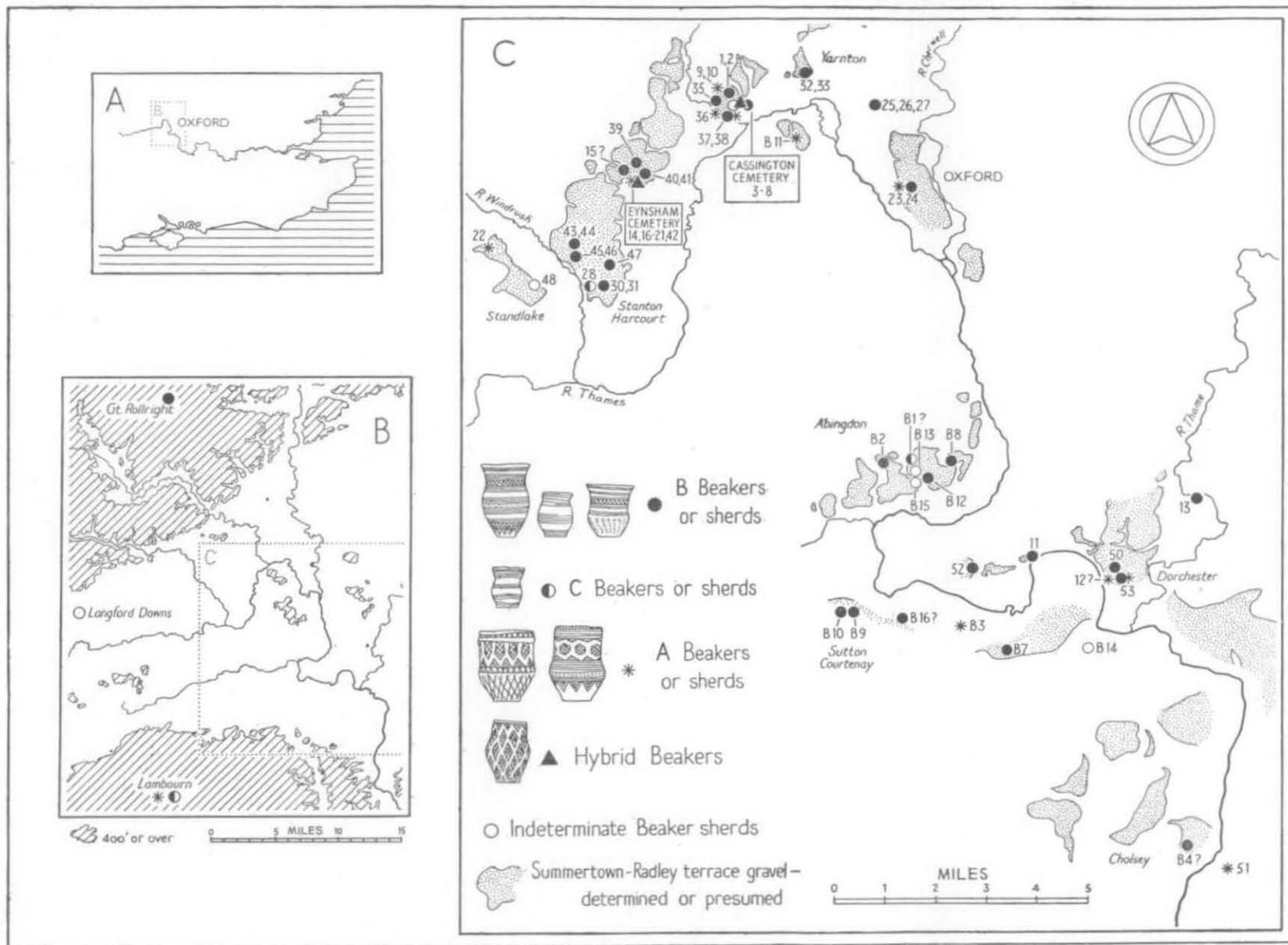


FIG. 6

Distribution of Beaker pottery in the Oxford region.

Based on Ordnance and Geological Survey maps by sanction of the Controller of H.M. Stationery Office.

BEAKER POTTERY FROM OXFORD REGION

small or insignificant barrows (Cassington, Linch Hill, Radley, Dorchester, North Stoke, Lambourn).

(ii) *Multiple Burials*. There are a few instances in the region of more than one burial in the same grave. *Superimposed*: Cassington Cemetery grave 9 (without beakers); Cassington, Smith's II pit (*Oxon.* 37, B type i; under *Oxon.* 38, A with moulding); Lambourn (*Berks.* 5, C under flint dagger). *Together*: Appleford (*Berks.* 3, A with moulding); Summertown (*Oxon.* 25, B type iii).⁷⁰

(iii) *Alignment of the grave*. There is no clear-cut evidence that users of A- and B-beakers practised distinct alignments. In the central Netherlands, according to Dr. P. J. Modderman, the E.-W. facing S. orientation was common for Beaker Culture burials of all types;⁷¹ in the Early Bronze Age, the orientation of the grave changed to NW.-SE. or SW.-NE.⁷² The NW.-SE. orientation was popular in the Oxford region; the contrast between the Cassington and Eynsham Cemeteries is noticeable.

In the list given below the first cardinal point refers to the skull and the second to the pelvis.

SE.-NW., facing NE.: Cassington Cemetery grave 10, *Oxon.* 6 (hybrid) and 11 (*Oxon.* 7, B type iii); Stanton Harcourt grave 2 (*Oxon.* 45, B type v); Stanton Harcourt, Linch Hill, burial with secondary Neolithic association.

SW.-NE., facing NW.: Cassington grave 9, possibly upper grave; Stanton Harcourt grave 1 (*Oxon.* 43, B anomalous).

SW.-NE., facing SE.: Cassington Cemetery grave 8.

NE.-SW., facing NW.: Cassington Cemetery grave 2, and probably grave 1 (*Oxon.* 3, B type vi); Cassington, Smith's II, superimposed burials, lower burial (*Oxon.* 37, B type i).

NE.-SW., facing S. or SE., and NNE.-SSW., facing ESE.: Cassington Cemetery graves 3, 9 lower burial, and possibly 5; Cassington, Smith's II, superimposed burials, upper burial (*Oxon.* 38, A with moulding); Eynsham Cemetery grave 18 (*Oxon.* 21, hybrid).

NW.-SE., facing NE., and NNW.-SSE., facing ENE.: Eynsham Cemetery graves (*Oxon.* 16, A convex), 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 14 (*Oxon.* 19, hybrid, herringbone), 15 (*Oxon.* 20, A with moulding), 16 and 17. Linch Hill, Stanton Harcourt (*Oxon.* 47; B herringbone). Radley, barrow 4a (*Berks.* 12, B type iii).

N.S., facing E.: Cassington Cemetery grave 12 (*Oxon.* 8, possibly B); Lambourn stratified burials (*Berks.* 5, C).

E.-W., facing S.: Eynsham Cemetery grave 4 (*Oxon.* 17, A with moulding).

Alignments are also known for the following:

NNE.-SSW.: Drayton St. Leonard (*Oxon.* 13, B possibly type ii).

NW.-SE.: Summertown double burial (*Oxon.* 25, B type iii).

N.-S.: Summertown (*Oxon.* 26 and 27, B types ii and vi); Clifton Hampden (*Oxon.* 11, B type i).

⁷⁰ 'Two bodies were reported to have been found lying side by side, the heads touching each other . . . They seem to have been contracted.' (Manning MSS., Ashmolean Museum).

⁷¹ Modderman, *op. cit.* in note 34, 20, esp. note 4.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 21.