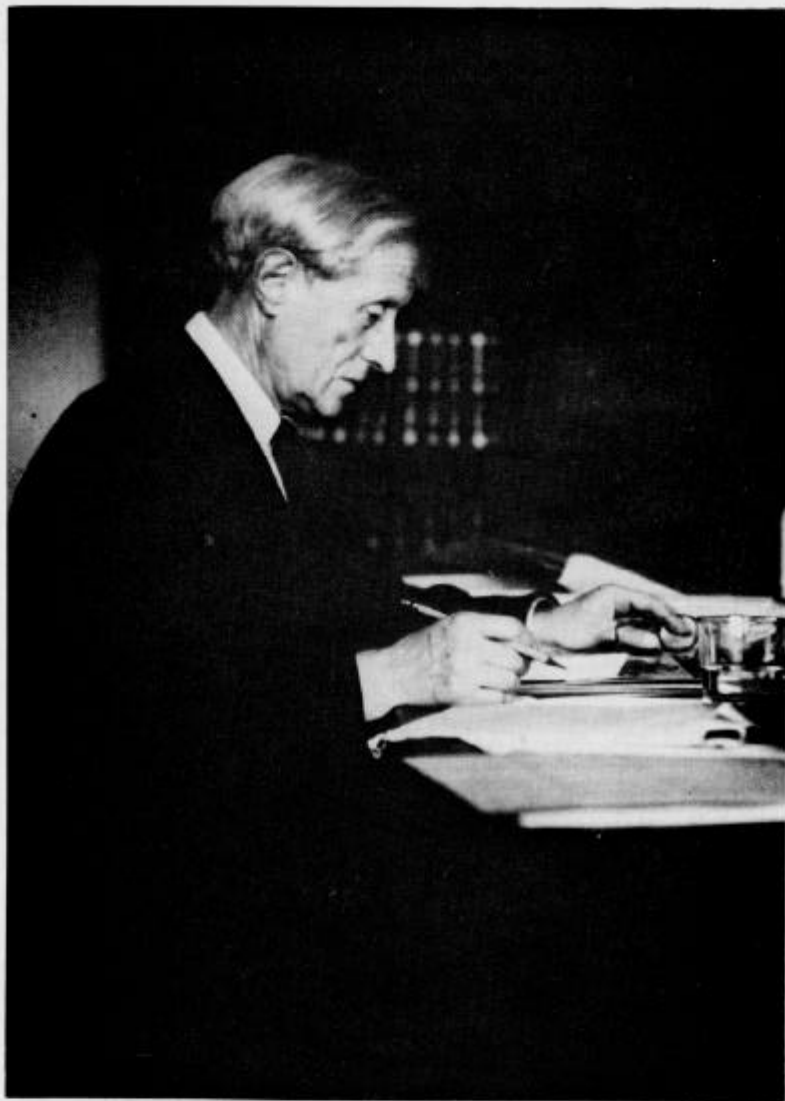


PLATE XXVII



JOHN DAVIDSON BEAZLEY, C.H.

SIR JOHN BEAZLEY

1885-1970

JOHN DAVIDSON BEAZLEY was born in Glasgow on 13 September 1885, the elder son of Mark John Murray Beazley of London, and Mary Catherine Davidson of Glasgow. His father's father had been born at Ickford in Buckinghamshire, and married Rosanna Holland, a Protestant Irishwoman; his mother's father, John Davidson, was probably from Montrose in Scotland. He learnt much about arts and crafts from his father, who was an interior decorator. His mother, a nurse, was of sterling character, and the mainstay of the family in many vicissitudes.

After the birth of the younger brother, Mark, in 1887, the family moved to Southampton, where in 1896 the two boys went to King Edward VI School. The school magazine for 1898 has an entry 'J. D. Beazley, the youngest boy in form VI, has been elected to Christ's Hospital by open competition'; he seems to have come first among all the entrants. Sixty years later he wrote: 'I never forget how much I owe to Southampton and to the School, above all to H. W. Gidden, kindest and wisest of men, but also Fewings and Holmes and the others who bore with me, taught me, and befriended me.' (Gidden was Classics master, Fewings Head Master, and Holmes Second Master.)

In 1897 his father moved to Brussels to learn the technique of glass-making, taking his wife and younger son with him. John—who throughout his life was called 'Jack' or 'Jacky' by family and friends—remained at Christ's Hospital and visited the family during vacations, until in 1912 they migrated to West Virginia, where his brother managed a glass factory and his father was in charge of one of its departments. His mother died in 1918, his father in 1940, and his brother in 1956; all are buried at Charleston.

The home in Brussels gave him a base from which he was able to travel extensively in Europe—his first recorded journey is a walking-tour with his brother in Champagne, and he took his mother to Italy in 1911—and in Brussels he was first fired with his passion for Greek vases, for he once wrote of the exquisite cup there by Onesimos, depicting a young girl going to the bath, as his 'first vase-love'. It was indeed the first vase he remembered having seen.

At Christ's Hospital, where his classics master was F. H. Merk, once a scholar of Balliol, he was a Classical Grecian, but in his last year he also won prizes for Religious Knowledge, French, and English Essay, and was awarded the Prix de Sans-Souci of the Société Nationale des Professeurs de Français en Angleterre. In 1903 he took first place in the classical scholarship examination at Balliol. Here his tutors were Cyril Bailey and A. W. Pickard-Cambridge. He took firsts in Classical Moderations and Literae Humaniores, and of university prizes and scholarships nearly swept the board—Ireland Scholar and Craven Scholar in 1904; Hertford Scholar in 1905; Derby Scholar in 1907. In that year he also won the Gaisford Prize for Greek prose with 'Herodotus at the Zoo', his first published work, which catches both the style and the mood of Herodotus to perfection, and in the marginal notes gently derides German editors of the classics. It was reprinted for the second time in 1911, and again, in Switzerland, in 1968. His interest in verbal scholarship never flagged; if he had chosen that field it is plain that he would soon have been among the half-dozen leading linguistic scholars in the world, and editors in later years fortunate enough to enlist his aid over their manuscripts or proofs left their readers in no doubt of their debt to him.

Oxford did not immediately recognize his genius. He gave tuition for Moderations as Lecturer at Christ Church in 1907, but when next year his appointment to a permanent Studentship (Fellowship) was discussed, one report, allegedly from someone in Balliol, said that he was 'idle and irresponsible'. His idleness must have consisted in not spending his time on what he knew already, his irresponsibility in devoting it to studies then off the beaten track; for instance, he writes casually to his hostess after a week-end: 'I came back and read three speeches of Demosthenes that I had never clapped eyes on before, one of them quite sordid and amusing.'

In 1908 he was elected Student and Tutor at Christ Church, a post that he held for seventeen years. E. S. G. Robinson knew him at this time, and writes:

I well remember his private hours. He was only two or three years older than I, and they were very informal. His conversation was brilliant; his presence, as I remember it then, translucent features topped by pale gold hair, was dazzling. He thought it would be amusing to polish up my verse composition; perhaps a reaction from his deliberate abandonment about this time of writing English verse. We took Housman's 'Shropshire Lad' and turned many of its poems into Latin

elegiacs. He would go through my copy with skill and kindness, then, in a few minutes, with idiomatic and effortless ease, produce his own version.

Our first meeting, however, was not over Latin elegiacs. In the previous year a wave of pageants—episodes of local history enacted by locals—had swept through the country, and Oxford must have hers like other places. Obviously there was no lack of material, and the result was more successful than most. One of the best episodes was a mediaeval allegory, the Masque of Learning, showing the Good Student and the Bad Student alternately tempted by Folly, with the Seven Deadly Sins, and by War, a splendid knight on horseback; but sustained by the Virtues and the Faculties—Philosophy, Jurisprudence, Geometry &c., led by Divinity. Into this scene suddenly burst Bacchus with his rout of nymphs and satyrs (the flower of North Oxford and the University) wreathed, and clad in fawn-skins. Bacchus, aloft in his golden car, was drawn by two yoked satyrs, one of them J. D. Beazley, the other the writer. As Bacchus distributed his treasures to the crowd, students and other hangers-on raised the Goliardic drinking-song *meum est propositum in taberna mori*. It was never quite clear to the writer which side in the end carried the day, but he will always remember the set face of his yoke-fellow and his grim determination to go through with it.

As an undergraduate Beazley had formed a close friendship with James Elroy Flecker, who was next door at Trinity. Both wrote poetry, and they acted in theatricals together. Beazley published three poems in the *English Review* for April 1911; they are distinguished and sensitive, but with no clear promise of greatness. In later life he would never speak of his poetry, and it was not possible to discover how much he had written or why he had abandoned it.

T. E. Lawrence, in a letter to Sydney Cockerell, wrote: 'Beazley is a very wonderful fellow, who has written almost the best poems that ever came out of Oxford: but his shell was always hard, and with time he seems to curl himself tighter and tighter into it. If it hadn't been for that accursed Greek art, he'd have been a very fine poet.' Flecker also esteemed his poems highly, and when, after college, they drifted apart, addressed to him an 'Invitation to a young but learned friend to abandon archaeology and play once more with his neglected Muse'; but by this time Beazley had turned finally to what he knew was to be his life's work.

In the very year that he was to take up the Studentship at Christ Church, he and Flecker were stranded penniless in Florence. Flecker was able to get money from his father, and so pay the *pensione* and his train fare. Beazley went to the British

Consul and applied for help, but it was rudely refused. The landlady of the *pensione*, however, who was Danish, advanced him the money for his return fare and did not insist on being paid for his room and board; and Beazley was able to reach Oxford, where he was expected to have been teaching, with the minimum of delay. Ever afterwards he held all Danes in high esteem—'very decent people they are'.

His first visit to Cambridge seems to have been in 1904. J. T. Sheppard, in his diary for 1905, several times has the word *Beazley* underlined as though to mark an important event, and Beazley nearly fifty years later told of the impression of cleverness left on his mind by conversation there: 'I thought J. M. Keynes and Lytton Strachey the two cleverest men I had ever met; and looking back over the years I still think they are the two cleverest men I ever met.'

His lifelong friendships with two Fellows of Trinity College, Cambridge, Andrew Gow and Donald Robertson, began about 1909. In 1910 he was with Gow in Paris studying in the Louvre. Concentration on Greek art had not prevented his acquiring an extensive knowledge of other forms of art—Italian and, especially, Flemish painting, and together they bought a little picture which they judged to be by Simone Martini. It was eventually found to be from a polyptych of which other panels had been acquired by Langton Douglas, and believing that the panels ought to be reunited, they sold it to him; it is now in the Lehman Collection (Metropolitan Museum of New York) and is thought to be a copy by Lippo Vanni of a figure by Simone Martini.

There are a number of letters and postcards written in 1911 and 1912 to Donald Robertson and his wife Petica, when Beazley was working in museums in every part of France, Germany, and Italy; St. Petersburg he had also planned to visit, but the Hermitage was shut, and he did not go to Russia until 1914; his first journey to America was in the same year. The correspondence is illustrated with satirical pencil drawings of incidents in his travels, displaying a talent which, had he cared, would have won distinction anywhere; henceforth it was to be devoted to making those hundreds of delicate records of Greek vases which are preserved in his archives in Oxford. The letters describe his identification of various Greek vase-painters and the attribution of vases to them; in one letter, for instance, congratulating the Robertsons on the birth of their son Martin, he says 'I count myself a grandfather. The fortieth child was born to Hermonax yesterday'.

On one of these journeys he met in Munich Karl Reichhold, who was engaged in drawing, for Furtwängler's and Reichhold's great 'Griechische Vasenmalerei', the vase in Boston from which the Pan Painter takes his name. Reichhold told him of E. P. Warren, who had bought the vase for Boston, and soon after Beazley was introduced to Warren in Oxford. Warren in turn introduced him to John Marshall, and at Lewes House in Sussex Beazley was able to study at leisure a whole range of newly found or newly acquired vases, sculptures, and gems, and to enjoy the intellectual stimulus of these two fine scholars and lovers of antiquity. The community at Lewes House has been described by O. Burdett and E. H. Goddard in 'Edward Perry Warren' (1941), to which Beazley contributed a chapter on 'Warren as Collector'.

During the First World War he served in Intelligence as a lieutenant of the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve. When he returned to Oxford he continued to teach in Christ Church, and in 1920 was appointed University Lecturer in Greek Vases. The Lincoln and Merton Professorship of Classical Archaeology was then held by Professor Percy Gardner. When, on his impending retirement, the question of his successor arose, those who recognized Beazley's unique qualities had no doubt who it ought to be, but there was some opposition, partly because he was by some thought too remote to be a good teacher—and no doubt he was better with the better pupils—partly because Percy Gardner, who had fought for many years for the recognition in Oxford of Greek Art as a subject of humane studies, distrusted his 'scientific' approach. However, Beazley was elected to the Chair in 1925, and for thirty years made Oxford the focus of the world for the study of Greek art. He was intensely loyal to Oxford, and many still living will remember that in replying to a speech in his honour at the opening in 1967 of the exhibition of his gifts to the Ashmolean, his one theme was gratitude for its privileges.

It was in Oxford in March 1913 that he first met his future wife Marie, daughter of Bernard Bloomfield, having been introduced by her brother Paul, an undergraduate. At the end of the First World War they met again: she was now a widow, her husband, David Ezra, having been killed in France. On 13 August 1919, they were married, and later went, with Marie's young daughter, to the Judge's Lodging, the fine eighteenth-century house in St. Giles', which they shared with the sisters Mabel and Ellen Price, the latter an enthusiastic student of

Greek vases with whom Beazley collaborated in the second Oxford fascicule of the *Corpus Vasorum*.

Marie was a woman of strong and remarkable character. Dark and exotically handsome, highly intelligent, she had been brought up in cosmopolitan society, mainly in Vienna, Roumania, and Turkey. She had read widely, spoke French, the family language, with style—German until the Second War but never after—later also Italian and Spanish; she was an accomplished pianist, and drew with some talent. Her devotion to Beazley was as complete as his to her, and she subordinated her own interests entirely, so that he might work everywhere in comfort and free from interruption; even on their wedding-day he was allowed after a time to go to the Ashmolean, whilst she continued to entertain the guests. Dietrich von Bothmer's words cannot be bettered:

Lady Beazley looked after her husband with a passionate devotion and in a spirit of self-denial seldom found in anybody endowed with so strong a character as hers. Though raised in an age and environment of unperturbed comfort and gracious living, she readily accepted, with all its sacrifices, the world and life of a scholar. At Oxford she ran the household, entertained guests, and looked after many a burdensome detail; on travels abroad she organized everything, from plane tickets to hotels, restaurants and foreign exchange. . . . During the long hours her husband worked in museums she sat by his side, reading, or writing letters, and keeping museum curators and museum guards alike engaged in conversation, thus saving her husband much time.

Although completely inexperienced, she made herself an expert photographer of Greek vases, one of the most difficult of subjects because of the reflections from the black glaze and the distortion of the picture by the receding surface of the vase; the hundreds of photographs on large glass plates that she took in many museums testify to her skill and to the superiority of patience and honesty over some of the more specious modern devices.

Some thought it a strange partnership, but were bound to admit that it was impossible to imagine him married to anyone else. He warmly admired her accomplishments and never ceased to delight in her company and her conversation; their loving companionship lasted until her death forty-eight years later. They had no children.

They travelled widely together in the course of his work—to France, Italy, Greece, Cyprus, Turkey, and Israel. In 1924 they visited Spain, and both were entranced by Spanish music and

dancing and by the Spanish way of life. Just before the Second World War she invented a knitted cylinder which could be variously used—as muffler, helmet, body-belt, knee-rug, and otherwise—and which he aptly named *kredemnon* after the life-saving garment given to Odysseus by Leucothea. When war broke out she and her friends knitted hundreds of these which they sent to members of the Forces, especially to seamen and to those manning the mine-sweepers. Both took a personal interest in the recipients, of whom a careful list was kept, and letters exchanged.

In 1941 he had declined an invitation to become the Sather Professor at Berkeley, California, because he did not want to be away from England during the war, and during the war they would never themselves make use of the numerous food-parcels sent by admirers abroad. In 1946 he was again invited to the United States, this time by Dr. Gisela Richter, Curator of Greek and Roman Art in the Metropolitan Museum of New York. Miss Richter had long been a friend and helper, she had supplied him regularly with photographs of vases, had drawn his attention to many obscure collections, and had discussed with him many archaeological matters. He stayed for four months, enjoying her companionship and the life of the Department, revisiting the great American collections, interchanging ideas and information with Bothmer, then her assistant, and receiving from him not only friendship, but also help in the many little problems of travel and daily life which, in the absence of his wife, he was ill-equipped to solve. He returned to Oxford much refreshed.

They now resided at 100 Holywell, a rambling house from room after room of which they were gradually squeezed by the apparatus of learning, until they were living in a small breakfast-room, and his work-table was in a dressing-room upstairs, the whole of the ground floor having become a closely packed reference-library of books, drawings, and photographs.

In middle age he began to suffer from attacks of dizziness, and from deafness. The deafness grew steadily worse, and eventually it became impossible to communicate with him except by pencil and paper or by gestures. He retired from the Lincoln Chair in 1956, and was succeeded by Bernard Ashmole, one of his earliest and most faithful admirers.

In 1949 he had accepted the renewed invitation to become the Sather Professor at Berkeley. This had been one of their happiest ventures, and both made many friends; to an old friend there,

H. R. W. Smith, he dedicated the publication of the lectures he delivered. His retirement gave him further opportunities for travel, and in 1964 he and Lady Beazley paid a successful visit to Australia and New Zealand under the auspices of A. D. Trendall, who had done much to further Greek studies in the Antipodes, and who was now at Canberra. It was in Australia that he delivered his last public lecture, on a subject he loved, the Berlin Painter.

During the sixties Lady Beazley's health began to fail, and she died after a stroke in 1967. He bore the blow with fortitude, but during the rest of his life chance remarks made it clear that he was constantly thinking of her. After her death he retained the tenancy of 100 Holywell and used it for working, but lived in the Holywell Hotel across the street, where he was well cared for. Although his mind remained clear he became much enfeebled, and was unable to speak or write more than a few words, but he continued to correct proofs, to read new books and to make notes upon them. He walked with difficulty, but took pleasure in the exercise and refused to abandon his visits to the Ashmolean, although these became increasingly perilous. After a very short illness he died peacefully on 6 May 1970.

By then he had received the widest possible recognition, and every honour that the world of learning could confer, accepting them all with modesty but with evident pleasure. He was created a Knight Bachelor in 1949 and a Companion of Honour ten years later. In Oxford, besides being an Honorary Student of Christ Church, and an Honorary Fellow of Balliol and of Lincoln College, he had been made an Honorary Doctor of Letters in 1956. Elsewhere in Britain, he had been honoured by degrees at Cambridge, Glasgow, Durham, and Reading; abroad, at Marburg, Lyons, Paris, and Thessalonike. He had been a Fellow of the British Academy since 1927, and in 1957 became the first holder of its Kenyon medal. He was an Honorary Vice-President of the Greek Archaeological Society, Foreign Associate of the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, Foreign Member of the American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, of the Pontificia Accademia Romana, of the Royal Danish Academy, of the Athens Academy, and of the Austrian Academy. He was also an Honorary Fellow of the Metropolitan Museum of New York, and Honorary Member of the Archaeological Institute of America and of the Accademia dei Lincei, which in 1965 awarded him the Antonio Feltrinelli Foundation Prize.

Beazley had several pupils, several devoted disciples from

other universities, and a host of followers; all these profited by the fruits of his labours and applied his methods with varying degrees of judgement. Humfry Payne became interested in Greek art during his last year as an undergraduate at Christ Church, and after graduating in 1924 studied abroad for a couple of years, then became a Senior Scholar of Christ Church and an Assistant Keeper at the Ashmolean Museum, and, in 1929, Director of the British School at Athens. He collaborated with Beazley in an article on the sherds from Naucratis and in a fascicule of the *Corpus Vasorum*; in 1931 he published *Necrocorinthia*, a comprehensive and masterly study of archaic Corinthian art, and, just before his untimely death in 1936, *Archaic Marble Sculpture from the Acropolis*, which contains the most sensitive study of archaic Greek sculpture ever written in English. This was an outstanding mind brought to its finest temper by Beazley's tuition and example. Beazley never ceased to feel his loss, and speaks of him in the *Dictionary of National Biography* in terms that might well be applied to himself: 'a fine eye, deep respect for the individual object, great structural power, wealth of detail combined with breadth of vision, perfect clearness of thought and expression'. Two other distinguished pupils who died before their time were T. J. Dunbabin, Beazley's Reader (senior lecturer) at Oxford, and Llewellyn Brown, who succeeded Dunbabin. Because he was undemonstrative and because he wrote with scholarly restraint, Beazley was sometimes thought to be lacking in warmth; his obituary of Payne and his Foreword to Brown's 'The Etruscan Lion', which is also an obituary, show the falsity of this view.

Another pupil is Dietrich von Bothmer, whose talents came to perfection under his guidance. 'The name of Dietrich von Bothmer', he wrote in the preface to his *Attic Black-Figure Vase-Painters* of 1956, 'often occurs in these pages, for many ascriptions were first made by him: but he has contributed very much besides: all sorts of information on the whereabouts of vases; on obscure publications; above all, on pieces unknown to me or insufficiently known. I have asked him countless questions, and he has never failed me.' And again in the preface to the second edition of *Attic Red-Figure Vase-Painters*:

The red-figure book owes even more to him than the black-figure did. For many years, with the utmost generosity, he has continued to place his notes and photographs at my disposal. Without them many of the vases would be less well-known to me, and many others would not have been known to me at all; many vases, and indeed whole collections,

especially in France, America and eastern Europe. He has found time, from a busy life, to read both the manuscript and the proofs; he has supplied me with countless facts about locations, proveniences, obscure publications, and other matters; and by his patient scrutiny and his acute criticisms he has substantially improved the book.

Bothmer wrote an excellent obituary notice in the *Oxford Magazine* for 12 June 1970, part of which is quoted above. He also helped Beazley constantly with his last great work *Paralipomena*, material which had accrued since the publication of his vast reference-books on vases.

Noël Oakeshott is a pupil who (at first as Noël Moon) has done fine work, especially on early South Italian vase-painting. She married Walter Oakeshott, who became Rector of Lincoln College, to which Beazley's Professorship was attached. They were warm friends to the Beazleys; the College welcomed and honoured him; and after Lady Beazley's death both did much for his comfort.

Of Cambridge disciples, A. D. Trendall has applied his methods with great success to the vast field of South Italian vase-painting, and C. M. Robertson, son of his early Cambridge friends and now his successor at Oxford, has carried on the pure tradition, and has devoted many months of work to completing and seeing through the Press *Paralipomena*, which was only in its penultimate stage at Beazley's death. Robertson has also written profound appreciations of him in the *Journal of Hellenic Studies* for 1965, when reviewing the second edition of *Attic Red-Figure Vase-Painters*, and in the *Burlington Magazine* for August 1970.

It is a commonplace that Beazley revolutionized the whole study of Greek vase-painting, and helped other scholars to an incalculable degree by his published writings. There were other ways, more direct but less well known, in which he aided them. He was constantly consulted, by letter and in person, by scholars and by owners of Greek vases from all over the world. He answered these hundreds of inquiries with courtesy and generosity, withholding none of his knowledge and replying at length in his own careful hand, without the aid of typewriter or secretary. This generosity was occasionally exploited, never, so far as one can remember, by scholars—though perhaps even they sometimes did not acknowledge their full indebtedness—but now and then by dealers, who made use of his attributions to enhance the value of their wares. He would never accept fees for these professional opinions, but was once or twice heard to complain mildly when they failed even to acknowledge his replies.

In the course of his work, and as an essential instrument of it, he built up a body of photographs, drawings, and notes on vases surpassing that of any institution in the world; and these passed at his death to the University of Oxford. His complete library, with an unrivalled collection of offprints, he bequeathed: the other material had been acquired by the University some years before, with the proviso that he should have the use of it as long as he lived. These 'Beazley Archives', now in the Ashmolean, consist of approximately seventy thousand mounted photographs, providing substantial photographic coverage for ABV and ARV and for much besides; many thousand photographs of sculpture, and many hundreds of unmounted photographs; some hundreds of drawings of whole vases; and, finally, several hundred thousand small sheets of fine paper, uniform in size, filled with notes on vases, usually with details of them drawn or traced in pencil.

Oxford has yet another reason to be grateful. Gifts of antiquities to the Ashmolean had been made steadily for over fifty years, and the Exhibition of 1966, when he gave the large residue of his collection, was a selection from more than eight hundred objects, ranging from vases and small bronzes of the first rank to sherds and smaller antiquities—none without interest—that he and Lady Beazley had given. Partly through dealers consulting him, partly by study of sale-catalogues, he usually knew in good time when an object was coming on to the market, and could often secure it, or, when it was beyond his means, advise the Museum to secure it, at its first appearance in the sale-room, or even before. He also received many vases as presents. Though never a wealthy man, he was able in this way to enrich the Museum with gifts worth many thousands of pounds, and, for teaching, inestimably more. On his sixty-fifth birthday admirers from many countries had dedicated to him a volume of the *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, together with a list of his published writings. The catalogue of the Exhibition brought this list up to date; it contains no fewer than two hundred and seventy-five publications. Though some are short, most are not; and all, whether short or long, are written in the same crisp style, with great felicity of phrase, and with the same perfect scholarship.

Beazley's methods have often been described. He was familiar with Giovanni Morelli's system—itself not completely new—by which the identity of Italian painters could be established through a study of details, especially those constantly recurring details such as the ears, eyes, and hands, for which the artist

develops a formula that he is then apt to repeat almost unconsciously, as with a written signature. Morelli claimed for his method the validity of a quasi-scientific experiment, and applied it with a success that must, however, have depended equally on an assessment of the general character and quality of the picture as a work of art. Difficulties arise in that these formulae can easily be imitated by pupils or others, and that the artist himself may modify them with age or change of eyesight, but the underlying assumption is sound enough, and Bernard Berenson used Morelli's method widely on Italian painting. Beazley extended it systematically to Greek vase-painting, which in several ways is more susceptible. The linear technique, which changed little over the years, lends itself more readily than brush-strokes to comparatively simple formulae, not only for eyes, ears, and other anatomical details, but also for many details of drapery; and although there is virtually no literary evidence for the identity of Greek vase-painters, and although signatures are few and often not so easily interpreted as appears at first sight, Greek vases in pristine condition are numerous except in certain old collections, and even there any repainting is obvious in a way that it is not in oil, fresco, or tempera. Finally, there are two other features open to analysis—the decorative details, especially the borders, and the shapes of the vases: the first Beazley explored completely, the second he left partly to others.

Adolf Furtwängler, Paul Hartwig, and Friedrich Hauser had all studied Greek vases with acumen; Beazley owed something to all three, especially to Furtwängler, but his concentration on limited objectives within a rapidly accumulating store of knowledge, and his feeling for the subtle differences of individual styles, soon led to new and far-reaching discoveries. His first major article, published in 1910, was on Kleophrades; his second, in 1911, which he described in a contemporary letter as 'a model of conciseness carried ad absurdum', was on the Master of the Berlin Amphora, afterwards renamed the Berlin Painter, one of the greatest of all Greek vase-painters and perhaps Beazley's favourite among the many hundreds he came to know. During the next few years there appeared a series of articles on various painters, consisting chiefly of lists of vases which he attributed to them and brief studies of their artistic character. That the painters range from the highest to the lowest is symptomatic, for the master-plan, of which these were constituent pieces, was nothing less than the identification of all the painters of Attic red-figured vases, great and humble alike; to

that task and to the parallel study of painters using the black-figured technique, Beazley devoted his life, although he found time for other fields, and produced there enough to have been the life-work of any other scholar.

What he had achieved so far was distilled into his *Attic Red-figured Vases in American Museums*, published under difficulties in the United States in the last year of the First World War, and dedicated appropriately to E. P. Warren and John Marshall, who had built up the great collections in America. It is not an attractive book. The binding is in black and terra-cotta, a colour-combination, supposedly echoing that of the vases, which Beazley disliked; some of the contours of the vases are painted round by the block-makers, a practice which he detested; the line-blocks coarsen his fine pencil-drawings; the print is rather small for the large page, and the text is broken up by lists of vases and by pictures on various scales inserted here and there. Yet the book is valuable beyond compare, and will so remain; it is in effect a history of Attic red-figured vase-painting, unequalled for clarity of exposition, written round the vases in America, but containing a wealth of new material from other collections everywhere, and defining the personality of the painters with a precision that had never been approached before.

The preface sets out its aim with a characteristic blend of self-confidence and modesty:

I have tried to find out who painted each [vase]. I have not been able to assign every vase to its author, although I do not consider that an impossible task, but I have managed to put in place most of the more, many of the less, important pieces. . . . I neither expect that all my attributions will be unhesitatingly accepted nor wish that they should. Some of them will be self-evident, most of them require to be studied or checked.

There then follows a simple explanation of the method, and finally of its difficulties:

There is always danger, of course, of mistaking for the master's work what is really a close imitation by a pupil or companion; of mistaking for the pupil's work what is a late, a careless, or an erratic work by the master; of confounding two closely allied artists. One or other of these things must have happened more than once in the following pages: but I believe that most of what I have written will stand; and when I have felt doubt I have expressed it.

Anyone who wishes to grasp the essentials of the study of Greek vases can still not do better than read those few hundred words, written by one who was then only thirty-three years old.

E. P. Warren had invited Beazley to catalogue the ancient gems that later formed the nucleus of the collection in Boston, and in 1920 appeared *The Lewes House Collection of Ancient Gems*, generously acknowledging his debt to Furtwängler, and dedicated to his friend Andrew Gow who had worked on it with him. Here he showed the same acute perception and the same sensitive appreciation as he had displayed in his studies of vases, and the book is indispensable for anyone undertaking work on the subject.

He continued year by year to gather material and to publish articles and reviews, mainly on vases; in 1925 came the first of his encyclopaedic works, in German, *Attische Vasenmaler des rotfigurigen Stils*. Here the character of each painter is described in a few lines—sometimes in a few words—and there follows a list of his vases. This is conciseness indeed, for within five hundred octavo pages some hundred and fifty painters are distinguished, and no less than ten thousand vases are assigned to them.

A foil to these and to the other vast reference-books he was later to produce is a series of charming lectures marked by a limpid style, extraordinary perceptiveness, quiet humanity, and a complete absence of the verbiage that commonly enshrouds the history of art. 'Attic Black-Figure: a Sketch' (1928); 'Attic White Lekythoi' (1937); and 'Potter and Painter in Ancient Athens' (1944) are examples of these. His chapters on archaic and classical painting and sculpture for volumes IV, V, and VI of the *Cambridge Ancient History* (published afterwards as a book *Greek Sculpture and Painting*) again illustrate these qualities, and his easy command of the whole field of Greek art. He did not, however, love all its manifestations equally, and the chapters on Hellenistic art were written by Ashmole.

Greek Vases in Poland appeared in 1928. It is similar to *Vases in America*, except that South Italian, and Attic black-figure as well as red-figure are included. In the two-year interval he had also produced a fascicule of the *Corpus Vasorum*, his chapters for the *Cambridge Ancient History*, a number of reviews, an elegant translation of E. Pfuhl's *Masterpieces of Greek Drawing and Painting*, and an article on the Antimenes Painter, an important master of Attic black-figure. In 1931 he co-operated with his friend L. D. Caskey, Curator of the Department of Classical Art in the Boston Museum, to produce Part I of the catalogue of *Attic Vase-Paintings in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*. (Parts II and III were completed after Caskey's death by Beazley alone in 1954 and 1963.) In the meantime he had found time to write two

admirable monographs on the Berlin Painter and the Pan Painter in a series *Bilder Griechischer Vasen* which he and his friend Paul Jacobsthal had initiated. To these he added a third, on the Kleophrades Painter, in 1933.

Campana fragments in Florence, published in the same year, mostly at his own expense, is an extraordinary production. Thousands of fragments of Greek vases from Campana's 'Collection' had been acquired by the Museum in Florence in 1871 and had lain unheeded in boxes for forty years, after which there had been one or two half-hearted attempts at publication. Beazley worked through them all and joined what could be joined among them, but his unique knowledge enabled him to make joins also with vases in other collections, and the frontispiece of the book shows a cup by Oltos which is put together from sherds in Rome, Florence, Heidelberg, Brunswick, Baltimore, and Bowdoin College. At first sight this looks like a jig-saw puzzle miraculously completed, and so it is, but the miracle consists, not so much in remembering the shape of the gaps to be filled, as in being able to recognize an individual artist in even the smallest fragment. The illustrations consist mainly of seventeen large sheets of thin paper, bearing diagrams of the fragments that join each other, and Beazley writes 'seventeen flimsies are an austere mode of illustration. I have mitigated them by the addition of three collotype plates, but even so I doubt whether my book will ever be really popular.' And he mocks not unkindly at a scholar who previously worked on the fragments, and who gives only four numbers on a plate illustrating a hundred and six of them: 'he has been extraordinarily economical of numbers: and yet they are so cheap! and mathematicians tell us that there is an almost inexhaustible supply of them!'

To most people the name Beazley immediately suggests Athenian vases, and they are apt to ignore his other interests, which were wide. He had constantly been concerned with Etruscan art, and in 1947 published *Etruscan Vase-Painting* in the series of Oxford Monographs in Classical Archaeology which he had started with Paul Jacobsthal and of which they were joint editors. It is, and will continue to be, the standard work on the subject. He followed it in 1950 with a delightful and vastly illuminating essay on 'The World of the Etruscan Mirror'.

The Sather Lectures on 'The Development of Attic Black-Figure' made a profound impression on those who heard them at Berkeley. Their publication in 1951 was a disaster, chiefly because Beazley was travelling at the time, and the Press

concerned printed them without his seeing the proofs, and with the illustrations trimmed and doctored in a way that he would never have permitted. His ferocious comments on these procedures, though amusing, were tokens of real distress, and he continued to be unhappy about it until a corrected edition was published thirteen years later.

Attische Vasenmaler of 1925 seemed at the time, and was, a gigantic achievement, but it was dwarfed in 1942 by *Attic Red-Figure Vase-Painters* (universally known as ARV) which identified no less than three hundred new painters and gave detailed lists of their vases. The second edition, of 1963, dealt with more than seven hundred painters. 'It need hardly be said that the difference between this edition and the last is not in numbers only; every piece has been reconsidered many times.' The magnitude of this achievement and its value cannot be enhanced by words, or even adequately described, but every student of Greek art is aware of them, and the further and deeper he goes the more he realizes his debt. In the meantime there had appeared, in 1956, with a dedication to the memory of his mother, *Attic Black-Figure Vase-Painters* (ABV), which treated the black-figured on the same system as the red-figured, identified five hundred potters and painters, and attributed to them some ten thousand vases. As if this were not enough, Beazley continued to keep a list of every new vase that came into his ken, fitted it into the framework of ARV and ABV, and with characteristic generosity lodged copies of the list with the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, and the Agora Museum in Athens. These *Paralipomena* continued to be gathered to within a few months of his death, and by the devoted labours of Dietrich von Bothmer and Martin Robertson have now been published; the volume is not much smaller than ABV in size, of comparable value, and equally indispensable.

The occasional shafts of wit that lighten the two or three thousand pages of these great works of reference are not always easy to find among the lists of vases, but the 'Instructions for Use' which appear after the preface in both ARV and ABV give a reader yield: 'My attributions have often been misquoted. In the *Corpus Vasorum*, for example, misquotation appears to be the rule, although I do not know that it has been anywhere prescribed in black and white.' Another passage displays perfectly the balance of his mind and the delicacy of his scholarship.

I may perhaps be allowed to point out that I make a distinction between a vase by a painter and a vase in his manner; and that 'manner',

'imitation', 'following', 'school', 'circle', 'group', 'influence', 'kinship' are not, in my vocabulary, synonyms. The phrase 'in the style of' is used by some where I should write 'in the manner of': this has warrant, but I was brought up to think of 'style' as a sacred thing, as the man himself. I am conscious that the vases placed under the heading 'manner of' an artist are not always in the same category: the list may include (1) vases which are like the painter's work but can safely be said not to be from his hand, (2) vases which are like the painter's work but about which I do not know enough to say that they are not from his hand, (3) vases which are like the painter's work, but of which, although I know them well, I cannot say whether they are from his hand or not. Sometimes I make the situation clear, but more often I do not, for the reason that it would be long and tedious to explain just how much I know about each piece, even if I always knew how much I know and do not know.

His writings are full of profound and memorable thoughts; a single example of light but penetrating wit will be appreciated by everyone who has worked on Greek vases and is aware of the tiresome little problem of nomenclature: 'I have used the word "pot" to signify a vase which is not a cup; a better word can be easier imagined than discovered.'

In conversation also his wit was dry, and could be devastating, perhaps the more so because he spoke sincerely but without passion; many will remember, at meetings, some single sentence that put an end to debate. He was scrupulously fair in his judgement of people; and his remark on a colleague notable for a handsome head and a small mouth—'from his little mouth drop little adders', was intended as a simple observation. He was not without strong dislikes; among them were coloured illustrations of antiquities, and anything that distorted or misrepresented the true appearance of ancient art; even prejudices—against most of the pre-Raphaelites for instance—and when repairs in the Ashmolean compelled him to pass through the Oriental galleries in order to reach the Library, his haste was evident.

His linguistic abilities were amazing. French, German, Spanish, and Italian he spoke fluently; Danish, Dutch, and modern Greek moderately, and he had a reading knowledge of Turkish and Russian. During the First War, when he was asked at a naval interviewing board whether he knew Serbian, he replied that he would need a fortnight to learn it; this was no boast, merely a statement of fact. When convalescing in his seventies from an attack of pneumonia, he was sitting up in bed reading through Lewis and Short's Latin Dictionary. He explained that he had never had time to do so systematically before; that his tutor at Balliol had once recommended it, but at that time he

had managed only to read through Liddell and Scott. 'It is amazing', he added, 'how much one doesn't know.' Dietrich von Bothmer also recalls finding him, late in life, when he thought of going back to Russia, working steadily through a Russian dictionary and making a note of every word with which he was not acquainted. His memory often seemed incredible because it was not the mechanical memory of a prodigy, but ruminative—the memory of a humanist. He could quote, and quote with relevance and scholarly accuracy, much of the world's great poetry in many languages, and there was no subject, except perhaps music, which he could not illuminate.

He was an admirer of French tragedy, and enjoyed the light-hearted farces of Labiche and Courteline, but he had besides a taste for robust, simple humour, and Surtees was an author he enjoyed; he called the classical text he usually kept beside him to read at odd moments his 'Mogg', in reference to 'Mogg's ten thousand Cab Fares' carried for reading-matter on fox-hunting visits by Mr. Soapey Sponge.

His industry and power of concentration, like his memory, verged on the incredible. When a young graduate, he enjoyed the cinema—silent in those days—, watching cricket, or even walking about Oxford—though not so much in the country, where he seemed uneasy—and these would give him an hour or two's respite from work. Later on he would be at his desk from morning to night, day after day, either at home or in the library of the Ashmolean; yet however much absorbed, he would always set aside a little period in the evening to spend with his wife.

He was of medium height, of slight and elegant build, with handsome, sensitive features, rather deep-set blue eyes, and a delicate, almost translucent complexion. He had fine hands, and his way of handling an antiquity was a lesson not only in manners, but in attitude to life. He was gentle and courteous, and although, like many deaf people, he suffered both from the disability and from a series of ineffectual appliances intended to relieve it, he never complained. In youth he could be very gay, and until his hearing failed was the best of company; to the end he was always alert and friendly when greeted; otherwise his look was usually thoughtful and, when he became completely deaf, remote.

His integrity was complete; he always had a clear feeling of what was right, and would speak for it fearlessly. He was without doubt a genius, but a genius whose dominant motive was a sense

of duty; he seemed always to be conscious of the need to make the fullest use of time, and of his talents, in the pursuit of truth. Never a finer scholar, or a truer man.

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