

# Early Bronze Age funerary pots in Wales

Beliefs and rituals surrounding death changed from around 2250BCE. The dead were buried with special objects to take with them including beautifully decorated pots.

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**Beaker**  
2250 – 1700 BCE

Often intricately decorated, these pots are emblematic of the earliest part of the Bronze Age.

They usually accompany crouched burials, laid on their sides as if sleeping, but are sometimes found with cremations.

Other objects made of gold, bronze, jet, flint and stone are sometimes also placed in the grave.



**Cup**  
2100-1700 BCE

These enigmatic little cups seem to become intimately associated with the funeral rituals as cremation became more common.

The decoration is similar to Beakers and they often have sun-like motifs on their bases.

Most have at least one perforation in the body and have been burnt on the pyre.



**Vase urn**  
2150 – 1700 BCE

Vase urns illustrate the close connection between Wales and Ireland, where they are more frequently found.

They are typically buried next to, or containing, cremated human bones.

Usually highly decorative, they have horizontal bands of incised or impressed decorations covering at least the top third of the pot.



**Collared urn**  
2050 – 1550 BCE

Rather than containing cremated bone, collared urns are usually placed upside-down over the remains. Many in the museum collection are missing their bases as they have been hit during ploughing!

They are named for the heavy 'collar' that creates a wide flat band around the neck of the pot which is often decorated with geometric designs.



**Encrusted urn**  
2100 – 1750 BCE

Encrusted urns have similar shapes to vase urns but have thin strips of clay applied to their surface to create a 3-dimensional design.

The design usually covers the entire surface of the pot.

They are uncommon in Wales and are usually found containing cremated bones.