

“London ... in reality the capital of Europe” P.O. Brøndsted’s dealings with the British Museum

by *Bodil Bundgaard Rasmussen*

Throughout his life P.O. Brøndsted was a great admirer of all things English, he had many English friends and enjoyed staying in London, attending meetings in the House of Commons and following the political life. In his own words: “Such a school, such a theatre for education and reflexion ... London is the true centre of the modern civilization with all its virtues and flaws. The true place in our time for exchange of all ideas, inventions and products, and as such ... in reality the capital of Europe.”¹

This paper concentrates on the long periods P.O. Brøndsted spent in London engaging himself in various activities involving the Department of Antiquities in the British Museum, his several attempts to sell his archaeological collections, his study of the Parthenon sculptures, and his pursuing of another of his great interests – Greek vases.²

“A fine collection”

In the autumn of 1824 Brøndsted went to London to prepare for the planned English edition of “*Voyages dans la Grèce*”. After the publication of the French and German edition he found himself in severe financial difficulties but was still adamant that an English edi-

tion should be published. In order to raise the money for it he tried to sell a collection of antiquities, amassed during his years in Italy and Greece. He had a special interest in coins but otherwise he did not in his collecting concentrate on any particular type of objects or on specific periods. He seems to have more or less picked up various objects as he came upon them. Brøndsted made the offer through an agent, Adolphus Richter, and the collection in question consisted of five cases listed in a handwritten catalogue attached to Richter’s letter: “Being of opinion that a fine collection of ancient greek sculptured marbles and also a certain quantity of ancient sculptured terra-cottas in my possession would form a valuable acquisition for the British Museum, I have the honor to offer those remarkable objects to the Trustees of that Institution for the very moderate prizes mentioned in the following catalogue.”³

“In the case that the Trustees intend to purchase this interesting collection, I only take the liberty to observe, that, my affairs obliging me to leave London on the 18th of Novemb. next, it is my wish and respectful proposition that this little affair might be settled, and the consignment of the five cases containing those grecian marbles and antiquities might take place before the 17th of November”.⁴

1. Brøndsted 1844, 55.

2. I want to extend my warm thanks to Bikubenfonden for their generous support, which enabled me to likewise experience London in the autumn of 2005 and study the papers related to Brøndsted’s activities in the archives of the British Museum (BM). I also want to thank Gary Thorn, Museum Archivist, Dr. Dyfri Williams, Keeper, Ian Jenkins, curator, Paul Roberts, cu-

rator and other staff members in the Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities for their great patience and valuable help. All letters and documents are transcribed as written as to misspellings and inconsequent use of capitals.

3. Handwritten catalogue attached to the letter. See Appendix I.

4. BMA (British Museum Archives), OP (Original Papers), V, No.1958, the 18th of October 1824.

The offer was recommended to the Trustees of the Museum in a report read at their meeting on the 13th of November: “Mr. Adolphus Richter, of No. 30 Soho Square, offers for sale to the trustees a small collection of ancient Marbles, Terra-cottas, bronzes, etc, the price of each article is marked in the catalogue which accompanies the offer, the whole amounting to £ 890. Mr. Combe has inspected this collection and begs to say that he thinks it would prove a desirable acquisition to the British Museum; he is also of opinion that the price asked for it, is not beyond its value.”⁵

The Trustees, however, postponed the decision, and Brøndsted himself withdrew his offer in a letter to Henry Ellis, secretary to the Trustees: “I am particular obliged to You for Your kindness to communicate me, by Your letter of yesterday, the result of a general meeting of the Trustees of the British Museum, concerning a fine collection of ancient greek marbles and terracottas which are in my possession and have been offered, according to my wish, by Mr. Richter, to the British Museum, for the sum of 890 £.

You state, Sir, in your kind letter, that, the decision of the Trustees is referred to the Committee meeting “of the next month”.

My affairs obliging me to leave London at the end of this week and to shut up previously the five heavy cases containing the abovementioned collection I must beg You to consider this business as postponed till some future epoch, when I probably shall return to London and have the honor to inform you accordingly.”⁶

Brøndsted returned to London in spring of 1826 and renewed his offer to the British Museum in April even offering to wait for payment until the following year – adding that if he were rich enough he should not require any payment at all: “I request You also kindly to

observe that, in the case that the Trustees wish to purchase my collection of Greek marbles &, it will suit me even as well to receive the amount in January 1827 as to be paid immediately. My proposal is any thing but a mercantile speculation; I wish that some little results of my researches in Greece may be deemed worth entering the British Museum, and I should have presented them as a gift to that noble institution, if I were rich enough to do so.” Reflecting on the wishes of the Trustees he went on to recommend certain objects: “I shall venture to observe confidently, that those architectural parts and the beautiful torso quoted under *statues, Case No.2* (now engraved in my work “*Voyages et recherches en Grèce*”, 1^{ère} livraison, Paris 1828 in fol. Plate IX) would form, in my opinion, the most interesting objects of the present collection, with regard to the contents hitherto exposed of the British Museum. In my collection of Terra cottas there are many fine pieces, but You have already even as good specimens, except three or four pieces in my collection which I believe to be of superior kind.”⁷

Apart from the torso from his excavations on Kea, which Brøndsted singles out,⁸ the collection comprised a young male figure, named Hymen, of Greek workmanship found 1819 at the Via Appia, a Doric capital and a front tile from the temple on Aigina, front tiles from the Apollo temple at Phigaleia, and 48 ornamental terracottas from Greece and Italy. Despite Brøndsted’s very eloquent letter and imploring words the Trustees were not moved, and on a meeting on April 8th resolved “that the Purchase of the collection be declined.”⁹

But Brøndsted did not give up so easily, and years later, in April 1840, he made a final effort and offered the collection to the British Museum – but again to no avail.¹⁰ In this final offer there is no mentioning of ei-

5. BMA, OR (Officers’ Report), vol. 8, No. 1799.

6. BMA, OP, V, No. 1982.

7. BMA, OP, VI, No. 2143, the 6th of April 1826. See also Appendix I.

8. See the article by John Lund in this publication.

9. BMA, Index CE 3/10/2957.

10. BMA OP, the 2nd of April 1840. The offer was declined in a meeting of a Standing Committee the 11th of April. BMA, OP, XVIII-XX, No. 5355.



Fig. 1. Fragment of an architectural ornament, a sima, with volute-palmette decoration. From the Apollo temple in Phigaleia. 5th century BC. The National Museum, Collection of Classical and Near Eastern Antiquities.

ther the torso from his excavations on Kea or the torso of a young male, Hymen.

The British Museum not having acquired any of the objects offered by Brøndsted the question arises as to what happened to them. The capital from Aigina and the architectural ornaments from Aigina and Phigalia

entered the Royal Cabinet of Antiquities in Copenhagen after Brøndsted's death and are now in the National Museum (fig.1).¹¹ There is a slight possibility that the torso from Kea may yet be traceable,¹² but of the other objects there seems to be no trace.

However, a close scrutiny of the index to minutes of

11. Capital from Aigina inv.no. ABb 193. Antefix from Aigina inv.no. ABb 194, antefixes from Phigalia inv.no. ABb 195 and ABb 196, sima from Phigaleia inv.no. ABb 197. Christiansen 2000, 71-73.

12. See the article by John Lund in this publication.

meetings of the board of Trustees and its subcommittees for 1831 revealed a peculiar entry: “Pedestal ordered for statue purchased from Chev. Brøndsted.”¹³ The subcommittee in question ordered that – not just any pedestal – but a *revolving pedestal* be made for the statue recently purchased by the Trustees from the Chev. Brøndsted.¹⁴ And an entry in the register of the Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities in the British Museum reads: “Marble. Statue of Hymen. Purchased of the Chev. Brøndsted. £ 30. NO. 1703. This statue had already been offered in 1819, found in the ruins of an ancient Roman House on the Via Appia, near Rome.”¹⁵ The British Museum archives do not yield a letter of thanks from Brøndsted after the acquisition – so when exactly it was made remains an open question.

The statue of Hymen

The statue, made of Carrara marble, shows a youth resting on his right leg (fig. 2).¹⁶ The head has been reattached to the body and joins the neck on the right. The hair falls in long tresses over the shoulders and he wears a wreath around his head. The nose is a modern addition and the surface has been cleaned. The deep drilling in the eyes and the hair places the statue in the time of Hadrian.

Today we may not regard this as a very important ancient sculpture but the treatment of it in the British Museum – the ordering of a “revolving pedestal” – speaks another language. The statue can be traced in the various editions of “Synopsis of the Contents of the British Museum”. The “Synopsis” from 1832 shows the statue placed in Group IV among the Townley Sculptures, “Finest statues of the Roman Period. From Augustus to Hadrian” and states the year of acquisition as 1831.¹⁷ Later it could be seen in the Third Graeco-Roman Room, which contained “demigods, heroes and others associated with religion, poetry, or mysticism in the Greek and Roman creed”.¹⁸ The Illustrated London News, which recorded the opening of this room published also an engraving, which shows the arrangement (fig. 3).¹⁹ A photograph from 1875 shows the statue in the Graeco-Roman basement²⁰ and another from 1890 also has it in this basement²¹. It is a kind of sculpture that was very popular in the 19th century and can be found in many collections, though today mostly in their storerooms.²² Brøndsted’s naming the statue Hymen, a kind of god of weddings, of which there are no known representations in sculpture, can perhaps be put down to his mainly philological approach to antiquity.²³

13. BMA, Index to Minutes, vol. II, S.C. 44, the 16th of July 1831.
14. BMA, Minutes of Sub Committees, vol. I, CE 7/1/44, the 16th of July 1831.
15. BM, Greek and Roman, Register of Antiquities II, no. 1703. Brøndsted had originally offered the statue at a price of 130 £.
16. British Museum, inv. no. 1703. I thank the staff of the Department of Greek and Roman for locating the statue in the basement and taking me to see it.
17. Synopsis 1832, 152, no. 25, group IV: Finest statues of the Roman Period. Fragment of a Statue, probably Hymen, the head encircled by a wreath of flowers. Purchased in the year 1831. (This is one of the few entries in a Synopsis that gives a year for the acquisition). The Synopsis from 1876 has a handwritten note next to the entry of the statue which reads: “This appears to be the statue offered to the Museum by Mr. Adolphus Richter in 1824”. Vaux 1851, 220.
18. Synopsis 1855, 95: “Mutilated statue of a youth, small-life-size, commonly described as Hymen, on the head is a wreath of flo-

wers. Found on the Via Appia near Rome, in 1817, and purchased of the Chevalier Brøndsted, 1831.

19. Illustrated London News, the 7th of April 1855, 324; Jenkins 1990, fig. 281.
20. Photo F.York, The Graeco-Roman Basement looking east, c. 1875. Jenkins 1990, fig. 54.
21. Photo, The London Stereoscopic and Photographic Company, 1890. Jenkins 1990, fig. 155.
22. Reinach 1904, III, 24, 6 places the statue in the type: “Apollon, type viril achaïque”
23. OCD describes Hymen or Hymenaeus in this way: it was customary at Greek Weddings to cry “Hymen Hymenai o or o Hymen Hymanai. Rightly or wrongly this was understood as an invocation of a being called Hymen or Hymenaeus, and various stories were invented of him, all to the effect that he was a very handsome young man who either married happily or had something happen to him on his wedding day.



Fig. 2. The statue of Hymen acquired from P.O. Brøndsted by the British Museum 1831. Photo, Courtesy of the British Museum.

24. Letter to Professor Nyerup in KB (The Royal Library/Det Kongelige Bibliotek, Copenhagen), NKS (New Royal Collection/Ny kongelig Samling), 2400 of the 18th of January 1827. A German art historian and critic, K. von Rumohr was the first to publish the heads as belonging to the Parthenon, see Rumohr 1825. See also the article by Jan Zahle in this publication. The National

The Parthenon

While in London Brøndsted started working seriously on the Parthenon sculptures and he changed his original plan for the content of the second volume of “Voyages” and made the Parthenon metopes the subject. During a visit to Copenhagen in 1827 he had realised that two heads in the Royal Kunstmuseum belonged to the Parthenon – heads that he had hitherto believed to represent a male and a female probably belonging to a temple in Athens – not committing himself to which.²⁴

In 1828 he brought casts of the heads to London and presented them to the British Museum: “Having recognised last year when I was at Copenhagen, that two very fine heads of Pentelic marble, which were sent from Athens in the year 1688 by Captain Hartmand and presented to H.M. the King of Denmark’s Museum, belonged originally to the exterior frieze on the southern side of the temple (now in the British Museum, marked No.4), I suppose it to be of some interest to those who study the Athenian marbles in the B.M., to compare the Copenhagen fragments with the remaining metope.”²⁵

In this letter Brøndsted suggests that the heads belong to the eight metope, which was numbered as “four” in the museum display. Unfortunately neither he himself nor the British Museum followed his recommendation – “to compare the Copenhagen fragments with the remaining metope”. Had this been done right away – and had the heads been tried matched with other metopes – it might have been realized that they did not belong to the eight but to the fourth metope and Brøndsted could have avoided the wrongful publication of the heads made in the second volume of “Voyages” in 1830.²⁶ In the British Museum the match was not made until 1831 as Edward Hawkins’ report to the Trustees demonstrates: “Mr. Hawkins has the honour of reporting to the Trustees that having attentively examined the two casts, some time

Museum of Denmark, Department of Classical and Near Eastern Antiquities, Inv.nos. Abb 13 (centaur) and Abb 14a (lapith). Rasmussen 2000, 89. Christiansen 2000, 71.

25. BMA, OP, the 26th of July 1828.

26. Brøndsted 1826-1830a, 200-202.

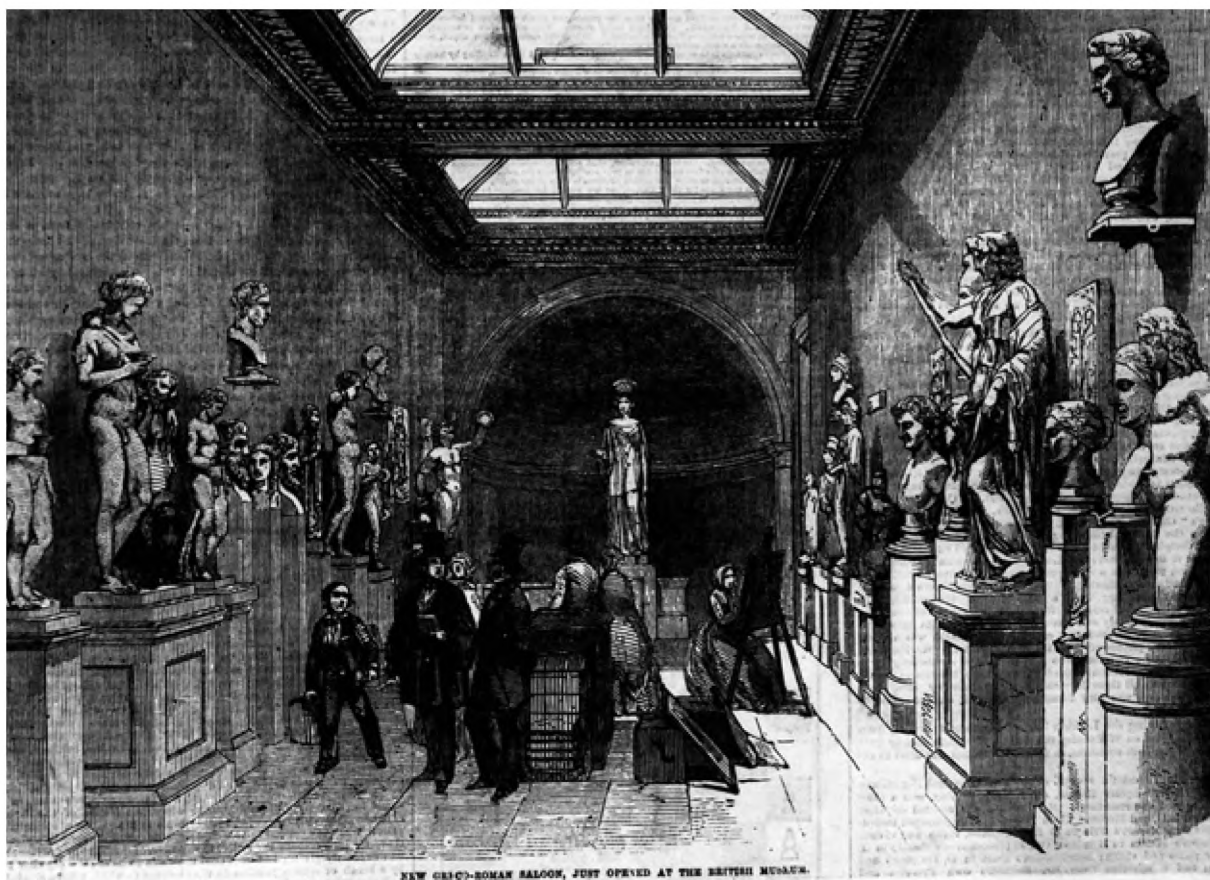


Fig. 3. The Third Graeco-Roman Room, which opened in 1855. The statue of Hymen stands at the right wall. Illustrated London News, 7th of April 1855. Photo, Courtesy of the British Museum.

since presented to the Museum by the Chev. Brøndstedt, he was induced to believe that they had belonged to the eighth museum Metope. Having requested the assistance of Mr. R. Westmacott and the conjecture having been found correct, the two heads are at present attached to the Metope.²⁷

Evidently it had been forgotten that Brøndsted had suggested that the heads belonged to the eight metope on the temple not the one labelled eight in the display,

so when Hawkins and Westmacott years later tried them on the metope labelled eight in the museum display they happened on the right metope – number four on the temple – and made the match of heads to bodies.²⁸

Hawkins' report continues: "The original heads are now in the Royal Museum at Copenhagen, and Mr. Hawkins has some reason to believe that they might be transferred to this Museum in exchange for a set of the

27. BMA, OR, vol. 14A, CE 5/14/2862, April 1831

28. Description 1830, 43, Contents and additional plate (XVII).

Here is given another account stating that "The officers of the

Museum hesitated to assent to the Chevalier's opinion" and "that it was found that the heads precisely adapted themselves to the figures of the Third Metope"



Fig. 4. The west pediment and the metopes from the south side of the Parthenon. South metope IV on the left has plaster casts of the heads attached. Photo, Courtesy of the British Museum.

casts of the Metopes, and as Mr. Hawkins considers they would be a most interesting and desirable acquisition he requests permission to communicate upon the subject with the Director of the Copenhagen Museum.” There can be little doubt that it was Brøndsted who had given Hawkins “some reason to believe...” as he himself had broached the same idea already in 1830

in a letter to Prince Christian Frederik.²⁹ The permission was duly given,³⁰ but nothing came of it.

While studying the Parthenon sculptures Brøndsted worked and corresponded intensively with Charles Robert Cockerell.³¹ In several letters to Brøndsted Cockerell demonstrates a great respect for his work:³² “...I can never doubt that it (your valuable memoir)

29. The article by Jan Zahle in this publication.

30. BMA, Index to Minutes, the 16th of April 1831, CE 3/12/3348.

In 1819 Count Forbin, director of the Museum at Paris made an offer of the metope bought at the Choiseul Gouffier sale for the Louvre in exchange for “certain Casts of the Elgin and other marbles”, but nothing came of that either. BMA, CE 3/12/2731, the 10th of July 1819.

31. A large correspondence with Cockerell preserved among Brøndsted’s papers in KB testifies to his great commitment to the Englishman’s work and to Cockerell’s great respect for Brøndsted’s work.

32. KB, NKS, 1546, the 1st of December 1829.

will supersede all that has been said or written on the subject and be the only standard of authority on the Parthenon Marbles. I consider that no man has ever had or can again have the united advantages of learning, leisure to study exclusively and means and opportunity of travel and reflexion on these materials, which you have had". He appealed several times to the Trustees to be allowed to postpone the publication of his own work on the sculptures in order to benefit from the observations of Brøndsted³³ – but the Trustees were not so inclined and it was ordered "that he should strictly confine himself to a mere description of the Marbles themselves, and that he should avoid all speculative discussion, and, so far as is possible every statement liable to controversy."

Over the next decade Brøndsted continued his studies on the pediment sculptures of the Parthenon and in 1840 he tried to obtain prints of the plates made for the museum's own publication.³⁴ Not having any luck with this he offered the manuscript to the Trustees of the British Museum for publishing.³⁵ His offer was declined and the manuscript was never published.³⁶

The Siris bronzes

During his stay in Italy Brøndsted had made a splendid acquisition in Naples, two bronze ornaments that cover the shoulder clasps of a cuirass, decorated in high relief. They both show the combat between a Greek warrior and an Amazon. They were allegedly found at Garmantum near the Siris river in South Italy and were among his most cherished possessions. In the original plan for "Voyages" the Siris bronzes were the subject of the second volume³⁷ and he was already working on them in 1822 when he wrote his friend Jens Møller, "I am for the time writing on my unrivalled bronzes from Garmantum and I hope it shall be good".³⁸ When he made the metopes of the Parthenon the subject of the second volume of "Voyages" his intention was to publish the bronzes in the third volume³⁹ but nothing ever came of this.

The cherished bronzes were not part of the collection offered the British Museum in 1824 or 1826. But in 1831, still faced with financial difficulties, he offered the Siris bronzes to the museum at a price of 1000 pounds. The offer was duly presented to the Trustees but this offer also was declined.⁴⁰

But even though Brøndsted had no luck in 1831 with the British Museum the Siris bronzes eventually did end up in the museum. In 1833 Brøndsted's friend William Richard Hamilton persuaded the Society of

33. BMA, General Meeting, vol. V, CE/1/6/1352, the 12th of December 1829: "A letter from Mr. Cockerell dated Dec. 1 was read, stating, that he had suspended the proposed corrections of his Description of the Athenian Marbles from a wish to take advantage of a work upon the same subject by The Chevalier Brøndsted (sic), now nearly ready for the press..."

34. BMA, MSC (Minutes of Standing Committee), the 25th of January 1840.

35. BMA, MSC, the 8th of February 1840: "The Chevalier offered the Trustees the Manuscript of his Dissertation on the Pediments of the Parthenon on condition that the Trustees would print the Manuscript either at the chevalier's cost or at their own, as a supplementary volume to the Museum work on the Athenian Marbles and embellish it with good impressions of the plates."

36. The manuscript is kept with Brøndsted's papers in KB.

37. Rasmussen 2000, 87; The article by Niels Henrik Holmqvist-Larsen in this publication.

38. Brøndsted 1926, 147: "Jeg skriver I denne sidste Tid over mine uforlignelige Bronzer fra Garmantum og jeg haaber det skal blive godt".

39. Rasmussen, 2000, 90.

40. BMA, CE 3/12/3338: "Mr. Bankes laid before The Board a Letter from The Chevalier Brøndsted dat. 9th Mar. 1831 offering to the Trustees two very beautiful specimens of Greek art designated by the Chevalier The Bronzes of Siris at the price of £ 1.000 and three other Bronzes at the price of £ 600." The Trustees resolved "That Mr. Bankes be requested to thank The Chevalier Brøndsted for his offer and to acquaint him that The Trustees are under the necessity of declining the purchase of these bronzes."



Fig. 5. The Siris bronzes. Shoulder clasps from a cuirass. 5th century BC. The British Museum. Photo, Courtesy of the British Museum.

Dilettanti to set up a subscription with the intention of presenting the bronzes to the British Museum. He also tried to persuade the museum into contributing: “A letter from Mr. W.R. Hamilton addressed to The Principal Librarian was read, dated 14 may stating that the Soc. of Dilettanti had taken steps to collect a subscription towards the purchase of The bronzes of Siris with the aim of presenting them to The British Museum, and that the Committee of the Society for effecting this object was anxious that the Trustees should be apprised of the circumstance in order that they might judge of

the expediency of contributing on the part of the Museum towards completing the Subscription.”⁴¹ The Trustees did not act immediately, and Hamilton went to great lengths to secure the bronzes for the museum, writing to several members of the Board of Trustees ensuring their support and keeping the Trustees informed on the progress of the subscription.⁴² In September 1833, Hamilton could at last write J. Forshall: “I have the pleasure to acquaint you that the whole of the monies subscribed towards the purchase of the Bronzes of Siris having now, within a few pounds ex-

41. BMA, General Meeting, the 23rd of May 1833.

42. BMA, OP, vol. X, the 15th of April 1833, letter Alexander Baring, Trustee. The 14th of May 1833, letter to Henry Ellis. The 11th

of July 1833, letter to Mr. Bankes, Trustee. The 19th of July 1833, letter to J. Forshall, secretary to the Trustees acknowledging the resolve of the Trustees to contribute 200 £.

clusive of the 200 £ told for that purpose by the Trustees of the British Museum, been paid into the Bankers' Hands, I am ready at any time to take them to the Museum, and give them in charge to such Person as the Trustees may think proper ..."⁴³ Brøndsted was pleased and later presented the Trustees with his "Memoir on the Bronzes of Siris" published by the Society of Dilettanti.⁴⁴

Brøndsted's work on Greek vases

The year of 1831 was a busy year in London for Brøndsted. Apparently he sold the statue of Hymen to the British Museum, he approached the museum with the offer of the Siris bronzes and later that year made the museum yet another offer of antiquities but he also found time to pursue another of his great interests, Greek vases.

An Italian dealer, Signor Campanari, had come to London and exhibited his collection of Greek vases with the intention of selling them to the British Museum. Campanari offered the vases to the museum,⁴⁵ and asked Brøndsted to work out a catalogue of the collection. While engaged in this work Brøndsted himself made the museum an offer, writing to the Trustees: "I take the liberty to offer to the British Museum for very moderate prices, a beautiful collection of ancient Greek bronzes and terra-cotta Vases found in my excavations or purchased during my travels in Greece and Sicily. I enclose a summary catalogue, of which more copies may be had, if desired. Every number of this classical collection may be purchased separately, except no. 13, 14 & 15 which belong together."⁴⁶

The report to the Trustees by Edward Hawkins, head of Antiquities, stated that the collection of Brøndsted contained many objects "Which are highly valuable and interesting; those more peculiarly so to a Museum are, No. 10 consisting of various ornamental fragments of an ancient Etruscan chariot. No.12. Specimens of Greek armour from Marathon. No. 13. A circular chest decorated externally with engraved figures of Adrastes and his seven chiefs preparing to depart for the siege of Thebes. No. 14 & 15 the various contents found in the above chest. The above enumerated articles are offered at the price of £ 450 but if they could be obtained at a more moderate sum, the acquisition would be very desirable, as they possess much archaeological value."⁴⁷

While Brøndsted waited for the decision of the Trustees on his own offer he worked on the catalogue of the Campanari collection. Edward Hawkins also studied the Campanari collection and warmly recommended that the Trustees acquired it: "Mr. Hawkins has also examined the ancient vases of Sig. Campanari, from whom I expected to have received a descriptive catalogue, which however is not yet finished. These vases as well as those lately exhibited in Regent St. are of exceedingly great interest and historical value; they are more ancient than the Hamilton Vases and as the inscriptions which appear upon them certify the subjects of the paintings, they will probably enhance greatly the historical value of the Hamilton collections, and the purchase of a selection of them would be exceedingly desirable for the Museum which scarcely possess any of the same age and character."⁴⁸ Campanari almost lost patience with Brøndsted and in January made excuses to Mr. Hawkins for not being able to produce the catalogue – but Brøndsted had ex-

43. BMA, OP, vol. X, the 3rd of September 1833.

44. BMA, MSC, the 9th of July 1836; Brøndsted 1836.

45. BMA, OP, vol. XI, the 18th of December 1831. The Trustees had already in a General Meeting on the 10th of December ordered that Edward Hawkins should report as to the importance of these Vases to the museum "taking care not to give the Proprietor the least Encouragement to expect that the Trustees will purchase them", BMA, CE 1/6/1404.

46. BMA, OP, vol. XI, the 7th of December 1831. The printed cata-

logue entitled "A Classical Collection of Ancient Greek Bronzes and Terracotta Vases" listing 21 entries is inserted in the back of volume XI of OP, but not marked as belonging to Brøndsted's letter of the 7th of December. Only a comparison of the entries with the report on the collection laid before the Trustees by Edward Hawkins show that this is indeed the catalogue of his collection. See Appendix II.

47. BMA, OR, vol. 14B, 3008, January 1832.

48. See note 47.



Fig. 6. Lekythos from Campanari's collection. Presented to Prince Christian Frederik in 1832. The National Museum, inv.no. Chr. VIII 375.

plained to him that he wanted to produce “un opera classica.”⁴⁹

Early in 1832 the catalogue of the Campanari collection was published entitled “A brief Description of Thirty-two Ancient Greek Painted Vases, lately found in excavations made at Vulci in the Roman Territory, by Mr. Campanari and now exhibited by him in London, no. 15. Leicester Square”.⁵⁰ But neither Hawkins' enthusiasm nor Brøndsted's excellent catalogue could



persuade the Trustees and purchases were made from neither Campanari nor Brøndsted.⁵¹ Brøndsted, however, acquired a couple of the Campanari vases himself: he requested one as payment for the catalogue and bought another. The latter was a vase of a very special shape and function – a wine cooler – a so-called psykter, the other a fairly large black-figure lekythos showing the birth of the Greek goddess Athena (fig. 6-7).⁵² He would have liked to acquire still more, but

49. BMA, OP, vol. IX, the 13th of January 1832.

50. Brøndsted 1832.

51. The Trustees declined both offers in February 1832. BMA, CE 3/12/3448 “The Secretary was directed to acquaint Messrs. Brøndsted and Campanari that the Trustees declined any purchase from their collections.” Brøndsted had in 1831 in Paris staged a small exhibition of his collection of bronzes and in 1833

he managed to sell some of the objects in this collection to the Louvre, see Rasmussen 2000, 94-95 and Christiansen 2000, 74.

52. Brøndsted later presented Prince Christian Frederik with both vases and they are now in the National Museum of Denmark, the psykter inv.no. Chr.VIII 837, Rasmussen 2000b, 34-35; the lekythos inv.no.Chr.VIII 375, Rasmussen 2006, 213-215.

when he returned to London in 1832 he found that they were all sold, and in a letter to Prince Christian Frederik he complained: "I had hoped to find still the ugly Roman and at least some of his beautiful Greek vases; I had even brought a little money hoping to obtain at least one more of these splendid vases, but my hope was unfulfilled. Both Campanari and his vases were gone when I came here in November. My writing about it (the Campanari collection) induced (I regret to say) the rich brothers, the Bankers Rogers, Colonel Leake, and a couple of other amateurs here to buy at once 13 or 14 of the 32 in my little catalogue and at my latest arrival here I learned that Durand from Paris came shortly after my departure for Denmark in spring and bought the remaining 17 or 18 – they are gone, gone for ever. My Gracious Lord knows my salarium: the peculiar vase with Minerva's birth. It is well worth having but still (as a friend of mine has expressed it) it is one of this world's many strange moral discrepancies that another man's talent has filled Mr. Campanari's pocket with 1500 pounds Sterling."⁵³

In December of 1831 Brøndsted wrote a paper on the so-called Panathenaic vases to his learned friend Sir William Richard Hamilton. This paper – or letter as it was described – was published the following year in the Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature in London.⁵⁴ The main vase treated was the so-called Burgon amphora found in 1813 in Athens by Mr. Thomas Burgon and two others on exhibit in London from excavations in Etruria. Brøndsted is very thorough in his description of the circumstances around the find of the Burgon amphora, as well as of his descrip-

tion of the motifs, the inscriptions and the content of the vases, and he treats the trade in oil as well as the ancient measures of capacity compared to the vases' capacity and discusses the age of the vases. A comparison of Brøndsted's paper with the latest scholarly work on Panathenaic vases⁵⁵ shows that both treat the exact same aspects. Only with regard to the dating is Brøndsted off the mark placing both the Burgon amphora and the others 100 years too late.

After having finished the Campanari catalogue in 1832, Brøndsted took up another challenge – the publication of a very special Greek object which he had seen in London and which he also mentions in the letter to Christian Frederik.⁵⁶ The peculiar object – a box formed as an astragalos – fascinates Brøndsted and he interprets it as a box for astragaloi, the sheep's bones used for the Greek game of Knucklebone⁵⁷. He writes excitedly about it asking the Prince to take the drawing he encloses with the letter to the Royal Academy of Art and ask for the members' opinion – in case they could come up with some other explanation for its use than he himself had suggested. The paper was intended for publication at first by the Royal Society of Literature but later in the same letter he states that he has decided to submit it to the Royal Irish Academy in Dublin of which he had just been made an honorary member.

This long letter to the Prince also contained another valuable piece of information. He informs the Prince that the Royal Society's special commission engaged in the publishing of the series of guides to the collections of the British Museum "Useful and entertaining knowledge" at their recent meeting had voted which

53. Letter to Prince Christian Frederik dated the 16th of December 1832 in the Danish National Archives (Copenhagen), archive no. 202: Christian the 8th, letters from different persons, P.O. Brøndsted: "Jeg havde haabet at finde endnu her den grimme Romer og i det mindste nogle af hans skjøne græske Vaser (han forekom mig omtrent som de *sorte* Slavehandlere, vi stundom mødte i Levanten og som bragte dejlige Cinasserinder til torvs); jeg havde endog medbragt lidt Penge for om muligt at faa fat paa en eeneste endnu af de herlige Vaser – men dette Haab slog fejl; Både Campanari og alle hans Vaser vare borte da jeg kom her i Novemb. Mit Skrivt over denne Gjenstand forarsagede (jeg må næsten sige *desværre!*) at de rige Brødre Banquiererne Rogers, Colonel Leake og et Paar andre Amateurs her strax købte 13 el-

ler 14 af de 32 beskrevne i min lille Bog, og ved min sidste Ankomst her erfoer jeg at Durand fra Paris kom hid kort efter min afrejse til Danmark i Foraaret, og *kjøbte alle de øvrige 17 eller 18* – they are gone, gone, gone for ever. – Min nådige Herre kjender mit Salarium: den mærkelige gamle Vase med Minervas Fødsel; den er nok værd at have; imidlertid er det dog (som en af mine Venner her rigtigheden bemærkede) et af denne Verdens mange *moralske Misforhold* at *et andet Menneskes Talent* har fyldt hr. Campanaris' Lomme med 1500 Pd. Sterling."

54. Brøndsted 1831.

55. Bentz 1998.

56. See note 53.

57. British Museum, inv. no. E 804.

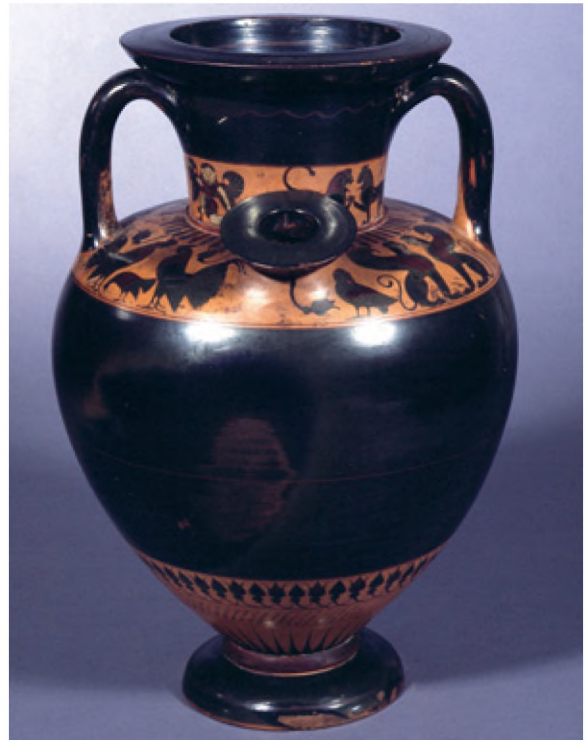


Fig. 7. Psykter from Campanari's collection. The National Museum, inv.no. Chr. VIII 326.

scholar should be offered to publish the collection of Greek vases in the British Museum – and the majority of the votes fell to Brøndsted. The offer included the right to have drawings made of as many vases as he liked at the commission's cost and the offer of a payment of 12 pounds for every printed sheet. Brøndsted did not commit himself as yet – he thought it prudent to await permission from the Prince.⁵⁸ But his hesitations were quickly put at ease, as Adler wrote him that he might as well accept the offer right a way as it was

a great honour and that travelling to London to inspect the work on the drawings should not constitute a problem.

Whether he ever even began this project remains an open question – as a letter from his friend Hamilton from the following year shows: “Mr. Long often asks me whether you are making any progress in your history and description of the fictile vases of the same establishment (the BM) Of course I answer in the affirmative – but whether truly or not, Apollo has not yet

58. ”Det vil maaske interessere D. kongel Højhed at erfare at da Commissionen her til Fortsættelsen af det vidtløftige Værk til “useful and entertaining Knowledge” nyligen var forsamlet til Bestemmelse af det Spørgsmaal: hvilken Videnskabsmand det skulde tilbydes først at udgive den græske Vasesamling i det Britiske Museum? faldt de fleste Stemmer paa mig; jeg fik strax derom, paa officiel Maade en skriftlig Meddelelse; de tvende Hovedpunkter i Forslaget, nemlig en Fuldmagt til at lade tegne

(paa Commissionens Bekostning) saa mange vaser som jeg vil, og Bestemmelse af et Salarium paa 12 Pd. Sterling for hvert (trykte) Ark, ere vistnok meget tillokkende; imidlertid har jeg forbeholdt mig ikke afgjørende at besvare Forslaget inden i Februar maaned fra Kiøbenhavn. Commissionen selv tilstod mig denne Latitude da Værkets Udgivelse er bestemt at begynde med Aaret 1834”.

told me.” – And again in June of the next year, 1834: “I have mentioned to Mr. Long the prospect you had of being in London in July or August next. He is very anxious that your manuscript on the vases which was to have been ready by the end of last year should not be delayed and he will probably write to you...”⁵⁹

Most likely Brøndsted never took up the offer – the department of Greek and Roman Antiquities at the British Museum have no record of his doing so, and likewise, he never published the paper on the astragalos. As in so many other instances he got sidetracked on the way.

The Durand vases

Even though Brøndsted seems to have disappointed his friend Hamilton by not getting the job done on the manuscript for the publication in the series “Entertaining and Useful Knowledge”, Hamilton bore him no grudge – rather the contrary. So when in 1836 the French collector Edmé Durand set up for sale his excellent collection of Greek vases⁶⁰, Hamilton at once wrote Hawkins at the British Museum and suggested that Brøndsted be engaged as an agent for the museum at the auction:⁶¹ “Pray excuse this hasty work – I feel there is no time to loose. Should the Trustees have made up their minds to lay out a sum of money (it ought not to be less than 2000 or 3000£) and if you are unable to go to Paris for the purpose – Why I would ask the Chevalier Brøndsted be sounded? He is I know going there very shortly. He is one of the best judges of these objects – he knows fully well their market value, and from a long and intimate acquaintance with him, I am convinced that the interest of the public might be safely entrusted in his hands.” Other mem-

bers of the Trustees supported Hamilton’s suggestion and Brøndsted was indeed sounded. He made his comments in a long letter to Josiah Forshall, not being particularly subtle: “As to the question which You also put to me whether the very lamentable deficiencies in the Series of Greek Vases in the British Museum might not be best remedied by making purchases at once, on a large scale, at the approaching sale, I have no hesitation in saying that I look upon the Cabinet of greek Vases in the Br. Mus. as the very weakest of all the departments; and regarding it, not as a mere object of curiosity, but as a systematic and useful series of specimens in that branch of ancient monuments, You want almost everything.”⁶²

As a result of the efforts of Hamilton and others Brøndsted was engaged as the museum’s agent.⁶³ He prepared meticulously for the auction; drawing up lists of the vases he thought would enhance the collection in the best way. In Paris he not only made the successful bids for the vases, he also ordered the crates, and oversaw the packing and shipping of the about 400 vases he acquired. During the auction he wrote to J. Forshall keeping him abreast of the progress he made:⁶⁴ “The sale goes on very well indeed and we have got most beautiful specimens of all kinds of Greek vases, of which I shall send you the list, with an exact indication of the prizes, on Monday next, and also the necessary information concerning the conveyance which causes me a good deal of trouble (much more than the sale itself) but which is now arranged, I believe in the best possible way ... It is of the greatest importance that the sum to be granted for that purpose should be raised at least to £ 4000; if not, we shall be paralysed in the midst of the sale and the object for which Mr. Hawkins and myself have been sent hither

59. KB, NKS, 1546 2°, letters to P.O. Brøndsted from foreigners.

60. Durand 1836.

61. BMA, OP, vol. XIV, the 15th of April 1836.

62. BMA, OP, vol. XIV, the 17th of April 1836

63. One Trustee, Samuel Rogers, suggested Mr. Millingen as the agent: “He is well acquainted, not only with their intrinsic, but their market value”, BMA, OP, vol. XIV, the 21st of April 1836.

64. BMA, OP, vol. XV, the 30th of April 1836.



Fig. 8. P.O.Brøndsted, painting, oil on canvass, by C.A. Jensen, 1837. The painting was exhibited this year in both London (Royal Academy of Arts) and Copenhagen (Art Society) and remains in family possession. (Mikala Brøndsted, cat.no.11).

will not be fully attained.” And a few days later he continues:⁶⁵ “I have the honor to inform you that the results of the first three days sale containing all ninety lots, each of them bearing the original ticket of the sale, with my seal and signature, and most carefully packed up in six large cases have been forwarded this day on the “roulage ordinaire ...” ending the letter on an imploring note: “Pray let us have the full sum of £ 4000. We can absolutely not do without it.”

Although Brøndsted was happy and flattered by the

65. BMA, OP, vol. XV, the 5th of May 1836. Further letters from Paris reporting on the sale the 14th and 26th of May.

commission from the British Museum his thoughts also went to Copenhagen and the Vasecabinet there, which sadly enough did not benefit from the sale. After the sale Brøndsted wrote Prince Christian Frederik: “... how often I thought of your collection, my Lord! Oh, I sighed at times, if only I could have acquired these wonderful objects for my Prince”.⁶⁶ But there was no money to be had from the Prince to acquire vases at the sale. Brøndsted did buy some coins for the Royal Coin Cabinet and for himself a pair of

66. Letter in RA, 28th June 1836: “Hvor ofte tænkte jeg ikke paa Deres Samling, naadigste Herre! ak, sukkede jeg stundom, gid jeg kunde anskaffe disse herlige ting for *min* Prinds”. See details in chapter by C. Gottlieb in this book, ref. 3.

gold earrings, which he later presented to the Prince.⁶⁷

Back in London Brøndsted made a final report, meticulously drawing up accounts of the purchases, the packing and other expenses.⁶⁸ So when Hawkins made his report to the Trustees he was full of praise for Brøndsted.⁶⁹ “The Chevalier Brondsted did not allow any thing to interfere with the due execution of the commission entrusted to him; and the judgement with which he made his selection of objects, and the combined spirit and discretion with which he conducted his biddings are universally acknowledged by the archaeologists of France. Mr. Hawkins feels confident that the objects purchased will satisfy the Trustees that they could not have entrusted the interest of the museum to any one more competent or conscientious.”

The Trustees were pleased, but Hamilton was a little disappointed:⁷⁰ “For myself I rather regret that you have bought so many of moderate prices which are to be picked up every day – I would have preferred none but real important chef d’œuvres.” Hamilton might have directed this criticism elsewhere because as Hawkins stated in his report “the limited means placed at the disposal of the Trustees did not allow of the purchase of any of those few which were the most celebrated and gave the loudest reputation to the collection.”⁷¹

Naturally 400 vases cannot all be called masterpieces, but among the Durand vases was the amphora by Exekias, the celebrated black-figure painter of the 6th century BC, showing the Greek hero Achilles and the Amazon queen Penthesileia – now almost an em-

blem of the vase collection in the British Museum⁷². The acquisition also comprised some of the vases, which had been part of the Campanari collection the acquisition of which the Trustees had declined only five years earlier.⁷³ As a token of their gratitude the Trustees presented Brøndsted with a gift of 200 guineas⁷⁴ – a gesture he greatly appreciated – although he had not expected any – but as he wrote in his thank you note, “I do not however affect to say that I am above it” – travelling and staying in Paris had been expensive.

But although the enterprise on the whole was successful it did have a rather unfortunate *Nachspiel* as an entry in an Index to minutes of meetings of the Trustees show: “Correspondance with respect to silk stockings found in cases of antiquities at the custom house.” Apparently a packet of silk stockings had been found in the last box with vases from Paris and both Hawkins and Brøndsted are called upon to explain themselves. During a meeting of the board in late July the matter was discussed and their letters presented.⁷⁵ At last, with the support of Sir William Richard Hamilton, Brøndsted refuted all accusations from the custom officers and the issue seems to have been dropped:⁷⁶ “I enclose a letter (which you will be kind enough to send me back) from the Duke of Hamilton. I got it yesterday in the evening. It proves at least to those confounded customhousespiders who wanted to entangle me in their most infamous cob-webs, that Ch. Bröndsted is neither a lyer nor a smuggler – shame upon them!”

67. Durand 1836, no. 1984, 2175, 2182-3, 2190, 2193; Rasmussen 2000, 94, fig. 8 (inv.no. ChrVIII 768)

68. BMA, OP, vol. XV, the 10th of June 1836 “With a paper enclosed and containing nine original and official receipts”.

69. BMA, OR, June 1836.

70. Letter to Brøndsted, the 18th of May 1836 in KB, NKS.

71. See note 69.

72. See the article by Ian Jenkins in this publication.

73. See the article by Ian Jenkins in this publication; Rasmussen 2006, 217, fig. 11.

74. BMA, Minutes of Committee, the 25th of June 1836. C 4305.

75. BMA, MSC, the 23rd of July 1836, C 4338-4339. “In reference to the packet of stockings there were laid before the Board the letters to the secretary from Mr. Hawkins of the 13th June and from the Chevalier Brøndsted of the same date; a letter from the Chevalier Brøndsted of the 29th June and the secretary’s reply of the same date with an answer from the Chevalier of the same evening.” These letters are not to be found in Original Papers in the archive.

76. BMA, OP, the 12th of July 1836.

Appendix I

Catalogue of the offer made in 1824 by Adolphus Richter

Statues

Case N^o. 1 The greater part of a young male figure, probably representing a Hymen, of greek workmanship (parian marble) found in 1819 in the ruins of an ancient Roman house on the *via Appia* near Rome.

Pound sterling 130

Case N^o. 2 Female torso of the most exquisite greek style and workmanship, probably of a statue representing Diana (Artemis) found in 1812 by excavation in the ruins of the ancient city of Carthoia on the island of Ceos near Attica in Greece.

Pound sterg. 450

II ARCHITECTURE

Case N^o. 3 **A** One of the capitals on the interior pillars in the temple of Panhellenian Giove on the island of Egina in Greece.

P^a sterg. 100

B One of the painted marble fleurons which surrounded the roof of that temple.

Pound sterling 20

Case N^o. 4 **C** Fragment of the ornament upon the pediment of the temple of Apollo Epicurias near Phigalia in Peloponnesos.

P^a sterg. 60

D&E: Two marble fleurons of those which surrounded the roof of that temple.

P^a sterg. 40

F Fragment of a fine ornament of the temple of Minerva Polias on the Acropolis at Athens.

P^a sterg. 10

III TERRACOTTAS

Case N^o. 5 Forty eight pieces of ornamental Terracottas; three of them purchased in Greece and forty five found by excavation (in the year 1822) at Palostrina (ancient Proneste) near Rome

P^a sterg. 80

Total sum P^a sterg. 890-

Appendix II

Printed catalogue of the offer made in 1831: Original Letters and Papers. Vol. IX. July 1831 – Dec. 1832. Mounted in the back of the volume of letters with no reference to Brøndsted's letter of 7 Dec. 1831.

A CLASSICAL COLLECTION OF ANCIENT GREEK BRONZE AND TERRA-COTTA VASES

I: ANCIENT GREEK BRONZES

1. An elegant Greek Lamp, the handle forming a mask; in excellent preservation. – Elevation over the handle, 8 inches.
2. A round Tripod with lion's feet; in high preservation. – Height, 5 inches; diameter, 5¹/₄ inches.
3. A very elegant Lamp, chiselled in imitation of a palm-branch. – Height, 16 1/2 inches.
4. A remarkably fine specimen of Greek plated work, in silver, (consisting of oakwood covered in silver), probably the fragment of a candelabrum, or the foot of a chair; found near Taranto in Apuglia. – Height, 11 inches.
5. A whole Figure, representing a young Bacchus, holding up a cluster of grapes in his left hand; found in 1820, near Syracuse, in Sicily. – Height, nearly 8 inches.

6. Two Fragments (the handle and cover) of a large Vase, found, by excavation, in the year 1823, in the neighbourhood of Volterra. The extremities of the handle are chiselled like two heads, with two satyrs over them in a kneeling position, and supporting the upper part. – Diameter from one head to the other, 12 inches.
 7. A Greek helmet of extraordinary preservation, and with elegant ornaments, partly of inlaid work on the forehead. – Height, 9 inches, diameter, 10 inches.
 8. The Bit of a Horse, found some years ago, in the neighbourhood of Larissa, in Thessaly; in high preservation.
 9. Several ancient Greek Utensils, viz. a beautiful patera; five peronæ or fibulæ, of various forms and magnitude; a scraper (to be used after the bath); an elegant architectural ornament; a handle or button shaped as a lion's head (probably destined as the ornament of a door); a beautiful little female figure with Cupid at her side and a small dog – all found by excavation in a ruin at Palæstrina (ancient Præneste).
 10. Two Caryatides, the handles and several pieces of the bas-reliefs and the pole-ornament shaped as a lion's head, parts of a triumphal car, found by excavation in the year 1819, at Rieti (in ancient Etruria). The two Caryatides are perhaps the most remarkable specimens hitherto discovered of Etruscan workmanship in bronze. – Height, 10 inches.
 11. Fragment of a Greek Cuirass, with two shoulder-hinges. – Breadth, 15 inches.
 12. Some beautiful specimens of Greek Arms, viz. a, the bronze covering of a warrior's belt; b, two greaves; c, two spears (of which the larger one was found in 1812 at Marathon, in Attica); and d, the covering of a horse's forehead.
 13. A Dressing-box, ornamented with figures delineated on the outside, and representing warriors preparing to leave home. – Thirteen figures; 10 1/2 inches high: diameter nearly 10 inches, found by excavation in the year 1822, at Palæstrina.
 14. The Handle and the three Feet, in the shape of lions' feet, belonging to the preceding No. 13, together with a collection of the articles which were found in the above-mentioned box, viz. a small earthen Vase for ointment, an alabaster Lechytyos, or oil-vase &c, which, united to No. 15, prove that No. 13 was a dressing-box destined for common use in the bath, or in the palæstra.
 15. A very fine Mirror, with ornamental figures on the reverse, representing Aurora rising in her car, leaving the symbols of darkness (the dog and the helmet of Aïs), and meeting with a Genius who offers her a wreath as vanquisher of the night.
- II: ANCIENT GREEK VASES IN TERRA COTTA
16. A very elegant Vase, found in a tomb near Athens, representing preparations for matrimonial ceremonies, in two groups, containing four figures on one, and three on the opposite side. – Height, without the cover, 6 inches; with the cover, 9 1/2 inches.
 17. A very old Sicilian Vase, found perfect in a tomb near Agrigentum, representing (in black figures on yellow ground) a young hero, with his horse and two dogs, addressed by two females, one on each side. The names appear to be written near each of the three human figures. – Height, nearly 10 inches.
 18. A painted Female Figure, covered with a full and beautiful drapery; the head uncommonly well preserved; found in a tomb near Megara in Greece. – Height, about 9 inches.

19. A painted Head, 3 inches high, of some Greek hero, with a wreath of laurel leaves; found at Tyndaris, in Sicily.
20. A remarkably fine Female Head, of some mythological figure, having blue horns and wings projecting from the forehead, with golden hair and blue ear-rings; found near Tyndaris, in Sicily. – Height, 3 1/2 inches.
21. A beautiful Fragment, found near the Temple of Theseus at Athens, of a large Vase, with figures in relief, representing a young Bacchus, conducted by Cupid and a Faun to Ariadne. – Height, 4 1/2 inches.

London:

J.Moyes, Castle Street, Leicester Square.