

I.

NOTES ON A HOARD OF PERSONAL ORNAMENTS, IMPLEMENTS,
AND ANGLO-SAXON AND NORTHUMBRIAN COINS FROM TAL-
NOTRIE, KIRKCUDBRIGHTSHIRE. BY THE RIGHT HON. SIR
HERBERT MAXWELL, BART., LL.D., D.C.L., *President.*

Talnotrie is a tract of wild ground on the north-western flank of Cairnsmore o' Fleet (2300 feet). It was formerly a sheep farm, but is now reserved for game by the Duke of Bedford. The ground is very rocky, steep in places, and the dwellers in a solitary house beside the road to New Galloway rely for fuel on deposits of peat which occur in small patches among the rocks.

Mrs Gordon, wife of the cottar, in putting peats on the hearth, noticed a metal object drop out of one of them. This led her to examine some of the other peats, with the result that several small coins and other manufactured articles were recovered. Others had already been melted, as shown by the little mass of molten silver preserved with the rest of the find. Provost M'Cormick of Newton Stewart, having heard of the discovery, informed me about it, and we drove up together on 24th May 1912 to ascertain more about it.

Mr Gordon, a most intelligent man, took us to the place where the objects had been exhumed. It was on a steep hillside, across one part of which had been built a fence of turf and stones. The purpose of

this fence is not apparent : it is about 40 yards long, and the ends are free ; but the result has been to dam up the moisture trickling over the rock surface, which has caused the formation of peat to a depth of two or three feet.

The metal objects seem to have been lying on the glacial clay below the peat, for Mr Gordon says that all that he recovered were at the lower end of the peats which he cast. He is going to make a thorough examination of the place, so as to lay bare the whole of the subsoil in the small area of peat.

On rocky knolls in the immediate neighbourhood of this little

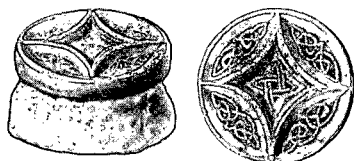


Fig. 1. Leaden Weight with ornamented top from Talnotrie. (3.)

peat moss, I noticed two hut circles and the fallen walls of a small rectangular dwelling.

Dr Anderson supplies the following description of the objects :—

(1) Leaden weight with brass top (fig. 1), ornamented with interlaced work. The form of the weight is cylindrical, 1 inch in diameter and $\frac{5}{8}$ inch in depth, of which the lower half-inch is lead. The brass top, which is fastened to the lead by pins $\frac{1}{4}$ inch in length, has a raised rim round the circumference, on the inner side of which are four sunk and pointed oval panels with a quadrant having concave sides in the centre. The quadrant is filled by two pointed ovals interlaced, and the four oval spaces round it are filled, two and two, by corresponding patterns of interlaced knot-work. It now weighs 1360 grains, or 80 grains less than 3 oz.—or a quarter of a pound troy.

(2) Globular head of a pin (fig. 2), 1 inch in diameter, perforated for the pin-shank above and below by circular apertures $\frac{1}{8}$ inch in diameter. It is hollow, and consists of two skins, the outer one of thin brass or bronze. It is divided horizontally into two hemispheres, each of which is subdivided into quadrants by raised vertical ridges, and the quadrants filled with triquetra scrolls of filagree

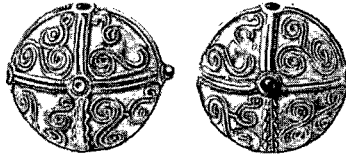


Fig. 2. Head of Pin from Talnotrie. ($\frac{3}{4}$.)

work. At the intersections of the dividing ridges there have been four settings, only one of which now remains, a globular setting of a dark red colour.

(3) A strap-tag of silver (fig. 3), $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length and a long oval in shape, with two rivet-holes at one end, where it is $\frac{3}{8}$ of an inch in breadth, widening to rather more than half an inch in the middle



Fig. 3. Strap-tag of Silver from Talnotrie. ($\frac{1}{4}$.)

and tapering thence to a blunt, rounded point, worked into the similitude of a conventional head of an animal. It is ornamental on the obverse, by a panel of niello work within a beaded border representing a nondescript beast couchant, having its head and tail turned backwards and forwards over its back, and from its open mouth a long tongue protruding obliquely across the body to its hind leg.

(4) A pair of pins of silver (fig. 4), 3 inches in length, with circular flat heads $\frac{3}{4}$ inch in diameter. They are similar in every respect, except that the one has a small perforation on the right side of the head and the other on the left side, evidently for attachment of a chain to be worn between them. The heads, which have their circular flat faces in the plane of the length of the pin, are ornamented on the obverse with a beaded margin round a plain circle, enclosing a pattern formed by four pointed ovals placed end to end around the inner circumference, their inner outlines forming a quadrant with concave sides, having a dot and small circle in the centre.

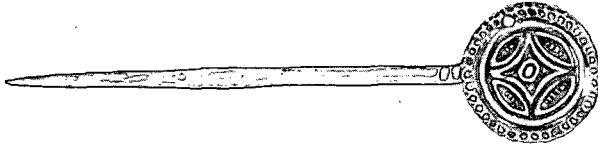


Fig. 4. One of the Silver Pins from Talnotrie. (†.)

(5) A pair of oval loops of silver wire about $\frac{3}{4}$ inch in the longest diameter with the free end of the wire bent into a hook.

(6) A plain gold finger-ring, $\frac{3}{4}$ inch in diameter, the hoop flat on both sides and on the inner face, while the outer or convex side is slightly raised in the middle line.

(7) Object of thin bronze (fig. 5), shaped like an incomplete cross, of which the centre is occupied by an oval setting nearly $\frac{1}{2}$ inch in its longest diameter, in which part of a semi-transparent stone still remains. One of the arms terminates in a triangular expansion; the others are broken off unequally.

(8) Piece of greenish glass with slightly convex faces, $\frac{5}{8}$ inch in length, possibly a part of an oval setting.

(9) Three whorls of claystone, $1\frac{3}{4}$, $1\frac{3}{8}$, and $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches in diameter,

the first two quite plain, the third, which is dome-shaped, having six concentric circles at equal distances round its convexity.

(10) Circular piece of jet or lignite, 2 inches in diameter, with a roughly cut hole $\frac{3}{4}$ inch in diameter in the centre. The exterior edges of the piece have been smoothly rounded, though now much broken, and the appearance of the whole is that of the concave footstand of a vase.

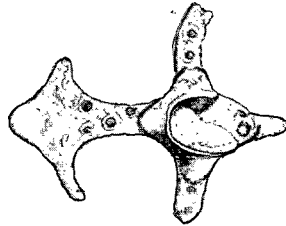


Fig. 5. Object of Thin Bronze from Talnotrie. (†.)

(11) An agate in its rough natural state, a flattened ovoid in shape, measuring $1\frac{1}{2} \times 1\frac{1}{4} \times \frac{3}{4}$ inches.

(12) Part of a cake of some substance like beeswax.

Besides these objects there were twelve coins, which have been identified by Dr George Macdonald as six Northumbrian stycas: including one of Wulfhere, Archbishop of York, A.D. 854-910, and one of Osberht, King of Northumbria, A.D. 845-867; four of Burgred, King of Mercia, A.D. 853-874; one fragmentary coin, French, apparently of the Carolingian period; and one Cufic coin, broken, probably of the period of the Abbaside Caliphs.