

V.

BATTLE SITE IN GORTEN BAY, KENTRA, ARDNAMURCHAN.

BY THOMAS C. LETHBRIDGE.

The sandy bays between Gortenfern and Sgeir a Chaolais are held by the crofters of Kentra, Acharacle, etc., to be the traditional sites of at least two battles. One of these battles, which is referred to in this note, is variously described as "between Scandinavians and Scots," or "Och, it was about the time of the Danes"; the other was much later.

The bay known as Cul na Croise (not shown by name on the 1-inch map), between Sgeir a Chaolais and Sgeir nam Meann, is ideal for beaching a long ship or landing from ships' boats, and is certainly the best site for this purpose from Ardnamurchan Point to Kyle Akin—that is, from Skye to Mull. Ships can also be watered from a good burn in this bay. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that this spot has been the site of more than one bloody encounter.

Sandy Cameron of Gortenfern, whose ancestors have lived for generations in the same spot, remembers being told by his father as a boy that the "Red Rover" had fought a battle there (Cul na Croise), and

that an Irishman named Duing or Dewing ("The Brown") had fought nearby. Cameron had spent much time himself searching amongst the sand-dunes in the bay, and he showed me a silver penny of Edward I. minted at London, and a fine eight-spoked bronze brooch (fig. 1), mediæval in form and possibly fourteenth century. Cameron also had various copper coins, buckles, buttons, and other relics of a much more recent date.

Various other objects have been found from time to time in Cul na Croise with the shifting of the sand (no other bay of the series has yielded relics). Here the sand-dunes have, in recent times, encroached on older dunes upon which vegetation had gained a firm hold. The ancient surface, on which the remains occur, consists of dark peaty soil with rootlets and remains of small trees; this surface is here and there exposed among the dunes at a height of from 35 to 40 feet above sea-level. The best find of recent times was made by John Cameron of Acharracle, now a man of ninety, who, landing one stormy evening after fishing, found on a space cleared of sand by the wind four or five daggers, two or three spears, one still with traces of its wooden shaft, and several glass beads. I have also heard of a large penannular brooch and a blue and white glass bead found there, but now lost.

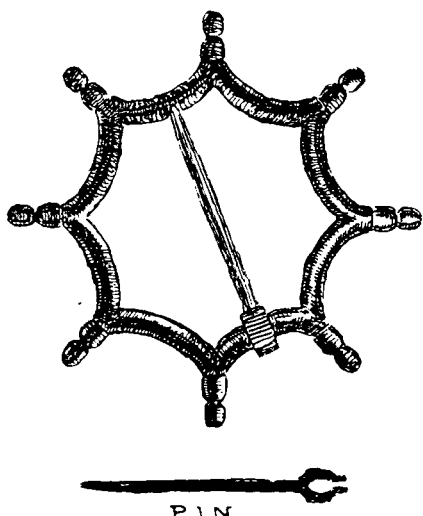


Fig. 1. Bronze Brooch from Gortena Bay. (†)

The result of about ten days' search by myself in August 1924 was:—

1. Numerous relics of prehistoric man: flint arrow-heads, scrapers, potsherds, etc., some probably of Bronze Age date.
2. Nearly one hundred clinch-nails of the typical Viking type (Du Chailu's *Viking Age*, figs. 996 and 997), also numerous iron nails, square in section.
3. Portions of six small daggers or knives, one nearly perfect (fig. 2).
4. Portions of six barbed and socketed iron arrow-heads (fig. 3).
5. Four glass beads (fig. 4, Nos. 1, 4, 5, and 6). No. 1 is of yellow glass, and is ornamented with knobs resembling grapes. Also a small white glass knob like the glass inlays on some Viking disc fibulæ (fig. 4, No. 7).

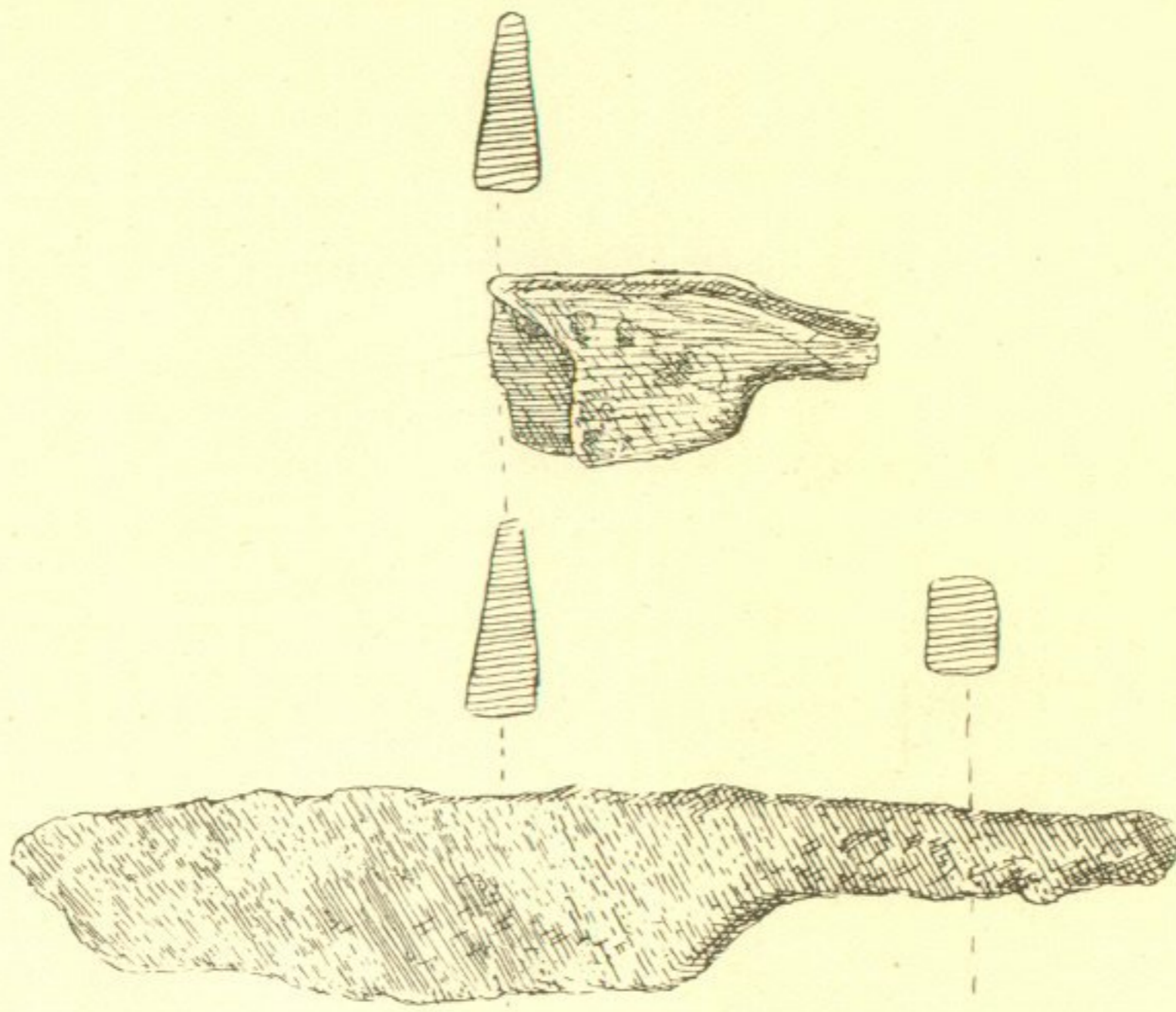


Fig. 2. Iron Knives from Gortén Bay. (†.)

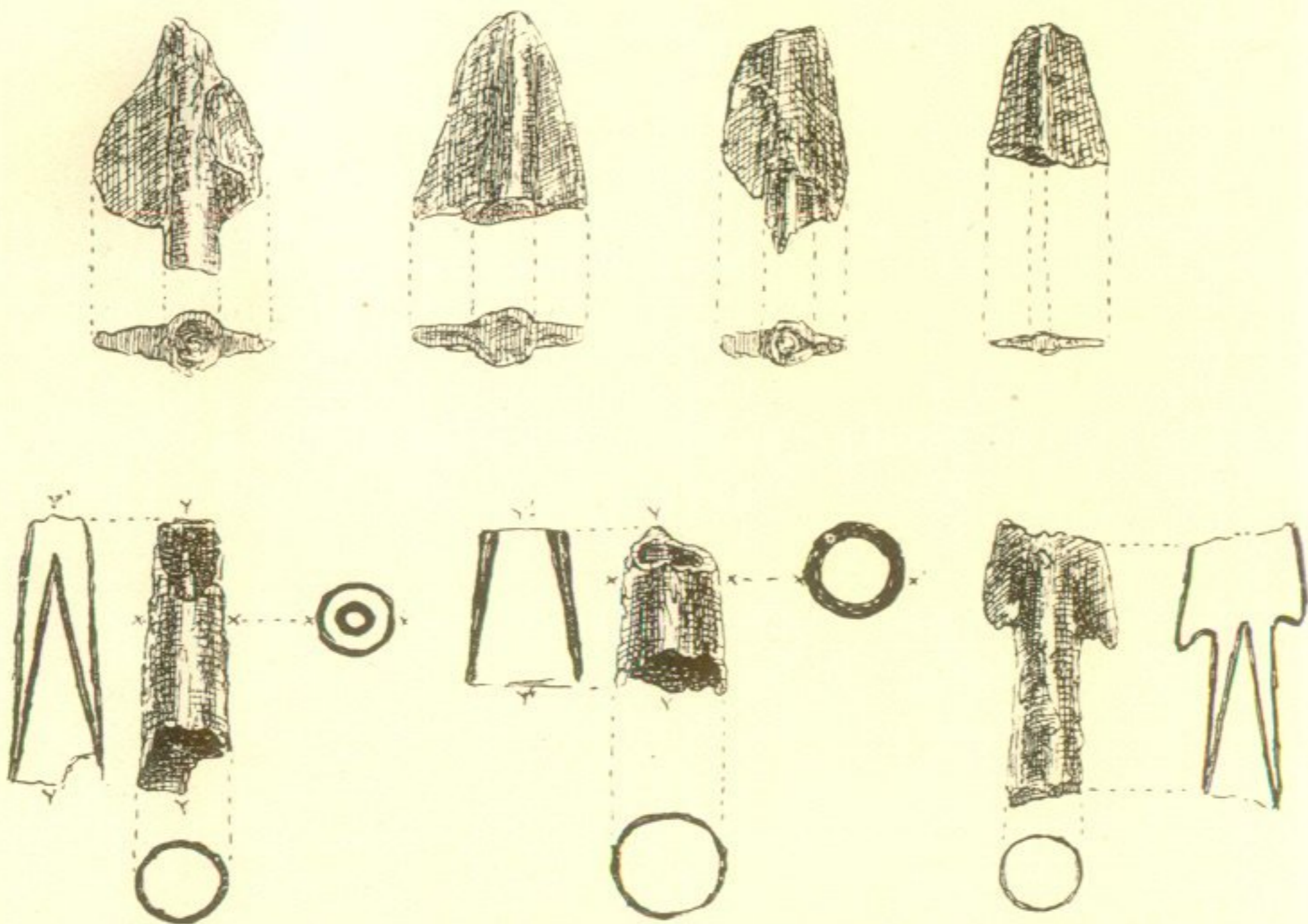


Fig. 3. Iron Arrow-heads from Gortén Bay. (†.)

6. Large quantities of vitrified material, possibly due to the lighting of extensive fires, it may be to the burning of ships, on the sand.

7. A small piece of iron chain; its links are parallel sided, about 1 inch in length.

8. Numerous relics possibly of a later fight: a coin of Charles II., musket-balls, a brass pin with twisted wire head of the type common before industrial revolution, and other objects.

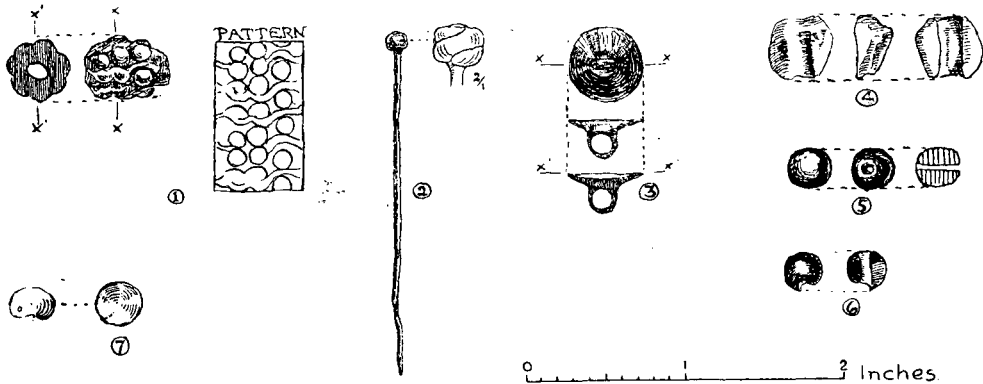


Fig. 4. Glass Beads and other Objects from Gortan Bay.

In conclusion, it appears that the spears, daggers, arrow-heads of iron, beads, and coin of Edward may be all included in one series of late thirteenth-century date. It is known that in A.D. 1297, Roderick of Bute and Lachlan MacRuari of Garmoran ravished Skye and Lewis, and burnt ships of Edward I. commanded by Alexander of Islay, Edward's Admiral of the Isles (Anderson's *Historical Documents of Scotland*, vol. ii. p. 187). It is possible that some of this fighting occurred at Cul na Croise. Of course other coin finds may fix a later date than this, but with the facts at my disposal I find agreement of dates tempting.

MONDAY, 9th February 1925.

SIR ANDREW N. AGNEW, BART., Vice-President,
in the Chair.

A Ballot having been taken, the following were elected Fellows:—

JAMES BEVERIDGE, M.A., Rector of Linlithgow Academy, Wellbank,
Linlithgow.
JOHN DOUGLAS-BOSWELL CAMPBELL, 25 Ainslie Place.
Mrs FRANK DALZIEL, Streatham, Canaan Lane.
GEORGE EYRE-TODD, J.P., Auchenlarich, by Balloch.
JAMES HAMILTON, Mossbank School, Glasgow.
WILLIAM GEMMILL CHALMERS HANNA, O.B.E., C.A., 6 Lennox Street.
ALEXANDER LAUDER, D.Sc., F.R.S.E., 13 George Square.
ROBERT MURDOCH LAWRANCE, "Cairnchina," 23 Ashley Road, Aberdeen.
FRANK MILLER, Cumberland House, Annan, Dumfriesshire.
RICHARD FERRAR PATTERSON, M.A.(Cantab.), D.Litt.(Glas.), 10 Dunure
Street, Maryhill, Glasgow.
JAMES RUSSELL, Town Clerk of Linlithgow, 51 High Street, Linlithgow.
Major ARCHIBALD STIRLING, Garden, Bucklyvie, Stirlingshire.
JAMES TULLOCH, M.A., 28 Wilton Gardens, Glasgow, N.W.
JAMES MULLO WEIR, S.S.C., 21 Mayfield Terrace.

The following Donations to the Museum were intimated and thanks voted to the Donors:—

(1) By J. TAYLOR GIBB, F.S.A.Scot.

Four examples of Mauchline fancy goods, made by "Smith, Mauchline, Manufacturers to His Majesty" (William IV.), comprising a Snuff Box with rounded ends, measuring 4 inches by $1\frac{3}{8}$ inch by 1 inch, the exterior painted in "Prince Charlie" tartan colours, with a group of red deer in gilding on the top of the lid; a Wafer Box, measuring $1\frac{3}{8}$ inch by $1\frac{1}{8}$ inch by $\frac{7}{16}$ inch, the exterior painted in "Rob Roy" tartan colours; a small Strop in sheath, painted in "M'Pherson" tartan colours; and a small papier-mâché Plate or Tray, measuring $6\frac{3}{8}$ inches in diameter, painted in "Stuart" tartan colours.

(2) By J. G. PATTERSON, 12 Inverleith Row.

Pan-pipes, consisting of eleven reeds, from the Black Isle, Ross-shire, said to have belonged to Mackenzie, a shepherd, who played them in the presence of Prince Charlie.

(3) By Rev. WILLIAM A. GILLIES, B.D., F.S.A.Scot.

Relics taken out of the Holy Well at Inshadney, Kenmore, Perthshire:—A rude Stone Cup, measuring 7 inches in diameter and $2\frac{7}{8}$ inches in height, the cavity $3\frac{1}{8}$ inches in diameter and $1\frac{1}{8}$ inch deep; three small Copper Coins, one a farthing of George III., dated 1806, the others unidentifiable; three small Metal Buttons; a small flattened, spheroidal Bead, measuring $\frac{3}{8}$ inch by $\frac{1}{4}$ inch, of opalescent glass; and six small Wire-headed Pins. (See previous communication by Mr Gillies.)

(4) By JAMES S. RICHARDSON, F.S.A.Scot.

Part of Deer-horn Pick, from a kitchen-midden at North Berwick Law.

(5) By JOHN R. W. CLARK, F.S.A.Scot.

Mug of dark stoneware, with an upright wall, contracting slightly in diameter from the base to the lip, and a small, broad lug on each side, measuring $2\frac{7}{8}$ inches in height, $3\frac{1}{8}$ inches in diameter at the base, and 3 inches at the rim. Below the lip it is encircled by two incised parallel lines, and the interior is covered with yellow glaze, found about April 1910 while peats were being dug in Dilty Moss, Carmyllie, Forfarshire.

Rude home-made Dice Box and three Dice of wood; the box measures $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches in length and $2\frac{1}{8}$ inches in diameter, and is of cylindrical form, the outside being turned and the interior dug out with a chisel, from Arbroath.

Rudely made joiner's Compasses, of wood, from Forfarshire.

(6) By WILLIAM HUTCHISON, 88 Craighouse Road.

Fragment (about half) of a Jet Button; the surface of the conical top has crumbled away, and it is broken across the V-shaped perforation underneath, exposing the method of boring, found by the donor, before 1878, in a stone cist containing unburnt human bones, on Holmains, Dalton, Dumfriesshire.

(7) By GEORGE MACDONALD, C.B., F.B.A., LL.D., D.Litt., F.S.A.Scot.

Two rim fragments of a wheel-turned Vessel of thin, hard red ware, with an upright wall, and a projecting rim which is concave on the top; and a basal fragment of a wheel-turned Vessel of thin, hard dark ware; both from the potter's kiln at Mumrills Roman Fort. (See *Proceedings*, vol. xlix. p. 127.)

Fragment of a Tile, measuring $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches by 3 inches, with a lozenge design on the exterior, from Mumrills.

(8) By G. G. SINCLAIR, 39 Buckingham Terrace.

Collection of fragments of Neolithic and Bronze Age Pottery, a Loom Weight, and four Flint Implements, from various sites in Malta.

The following purchases for the Museum were announced:—

Carved Stone Ball with eight projecting bosses, measuring 3 inches in diameter and weighing $16\frac{1}{4}$ oz., found on the farm of Balnasume, west of Lawers, Perthshire.

Two Badges of the Edinburgh Skating Society and a Pass to the Edinburgh Amphitheatre, all of silver, which belonged to James Dewar of Vogrie. The first badge is oval, with a free ring for suspension at the top, measuring $1\frac{3}{4}$ inch by $1\frac{5}{8}$ inch, and bearing on the obverse a crest (an arm in armour, the hand grasping a dagger) with the motto *Quid non pro patriu* at the top, and EDINBURGH | SKATING | SOCIETY | JAMES DEWAR | ESQ^r, below; on the reverse is a pair of skates crossed, with the motto *Ocior euro* above. The second badge is oval, with a fixed ring for suspension at the top, measuring $2\frac{1}{8}$ inches by $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch, bearing on the obverse EDINBURGH | SKATING | SOCIETY | JAMES DEWAR | 1801, and on the reverse a design and motto similar to those on the first. The Pass is vesica-shaped, with a perforation at the top, measuring $2\frac{1}{8}$ inches by $1\frac{3}{8}$ inch, and bearing on the obverse the inscription EDINBURGH AMPHITHEATRE along the sides, and JANUARY 1790 in the centre; on the reverse JAMES DEWAR | ESQ OF VOGRIE.

Horn Salt Spoon, $4\frac{3}{8}$ inches long, from Perth.

The following Donations of Books to the Library were intimated:—

(1) By Major-General GRANVILLE EGERTON, Geddington Priory, Kettering.

List of Members of the Wig Club, with the Rules abridged, December 1827.

(2) By GEORGE F. BLACK, D.Ph., Corresponding Member.

The Romantic School in American Archæology. By Adolphe F. Bandelier. 14 pp.

Transformations and Migrations of Certain Statues in the Cesnola Collection. By Clarence Cook.

Answer of Gaston L. Feuardent to L. P. Cesnola. New York, 1881.

Opere e Memorie di Giuseppe Sergi. Rome, 1916.

A Study in the Commerce of Latium, from the Early Iron Age through the Sixth Century B.C. By Louise E. W. Adams, Ph.D.

Ancient Mexican Feather Work at the Columbian Historical Exposition at Madrid. By Zelia Nuttall. Washington, 1895.

The Eastern Iron Trade of the Roman Empire. By Wilfred H. Schoff. 17 pp.

The New York Public Library. List of Works relating to Numismatics. 1914.

The Stone Idols of New Mexico.

The Stone Lions of Cochiti. By L. Bradford Prince, LL.D.

(3) By R. REITZENSTEIN, Dahlmannstr. 16, Göttingen, the Author.
Weltuntergangan-Vorstellungen. Uppsala, 1924.

(4) By JOHN A. STEWART, F.S.A.Scot., the Author.
Stewart Arms: Recent Matriculations and Grants.

(5) By The BIBLIOTHÈQUE DE L'UNIVERSITÉ ROYALE, Oslo, Norway.
Norges Indskrifter med de aeldre Runer. 3die Bind, ved Magnus Olsen. 3die Hefte.

Lærde Brev fraa og til P. A. Munch ved Gustav Indrebø og Oluf Kølrsrud. Fyrste Bandet, 1832-50.

(6) By Professor E. RITTERLING, Honorary Fellow, the Compiler.
Legio Bestand, Verteilung und kriegerische Betätigung der Legionen von Augustus bis Diocletian. Stuttgart, 1924.

(7) By The INSTITUT DE PALÉONTOLOGIE HUMAINE.
Les Combarelles aux Eyzies (Dordogne), par Le Dr L. Capitan, l'Abbé H. Breuil, et D. Peyrony.

(8) By J. BOYD JAMIESON, M.D., F.R.C.S.E., F.S.A.Scot.
Historical Memoir of the Family of Eglinton and Winton. By John Fullarton. Ardrossan, 1864.

(9) By ANDREW FORGAN, F.S.A.Scot.
The Story of the Old Time Communion Service and Worship, also the Metallic Communion Token of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, 1772. By Rev. George A. MacLennan, B.A., Montreal.

(10) By WALTER J. KAYE, M.A., F.S.A., F.S.A.Scot.
The Parish Register of Eston, 1590-1812. Privately printed for the Yorkshire Parish Register Society, 1924.

BRONZE OBJECTS FROM WESTER ORD, ROSS-SHIRE. 113

The purchase of the following books for the Library was intimated:—

Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (England). An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in London. Vol. I.—Westminster Abbey.

Dictionnaire d'Archéologie Chrétienne et de Liturgie. Cabrol. Vol. VI. Part I. G—Gotha. Paris, 1924.

The following Communications were read:—