

## ‘Danes ... in this Country’: discovering the Vikings in Scotland

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### ABSTRACT

*The Rhind Lectures for 1995–6, on ‘Death and Wealth in Viking Scotland’, commenced with a review of the earliest known records pertaining to the discovery of the Vikings in Scotland, beginning in the 16th century. This paper expands on the lectures, surveying the development of our knowledge and understanding of Scandinavian settlement in Scotland, from an archaeological perspective, down to the opening years of the 20th century. Particular attention is given to the publications by J J A Worsaae and Daniel Wilson, in the mid-19th century, given their fundamental impetus towards the replacement of ‘antiquarian speculation’ by ‘scientific archaeology’ in Scotland. The latter part of the paper is devoted to a description and discussion of the outstanding contribution made by Joseph Anderson to Scottish Viking studies, during the second half of the 19th century.*

### THE SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES OF SCOTLAND AND OTHER EARLY ANTIQUARIANS

The 14 gentlemen who gathered, on 14 November 1780, at the Edinburgh house of the eleventh Earl of Buchan were there to hear him deliver a ‘Preliminary discourse unfolding the nature of the Society, and the objects of its pursuit’. This meeting was followed by two more and at the second of these, held on 18 December 1780, ‘The Society of the Antiquaries of Scotland’ was officially constituted, with Buchan subsequently donating £20 for the establishment of a Museum (Smellie 1782; Cant 1981, 9, 12–13). At that first meeting, Buchan surveyed the story of Scotland’s past, dividing it into periods, of which:

The *third* period may be taken from the junction of the Scottish and Pictish dominions, until the accession of Malcolm III. And here the monuments, rude as they are, lead us to correct

the uncertain accounts which have been handed down by the Monkish writers of those times (1780; quoted from Smellie 1782, 8).

In Buchan’s scheme, this period of Scottish history ran from the mid-9th to the mid-11th century, thus more or less corresponding to what is now called the Viking Age, although this term had not been coined in Buchan’s day. He went on to observe of his ‘third period’ that: ‘There are also many Danish remains of this aera [sic], some of which have not been well described, or represented by drawings’ (ibid, 8).

Buchan must have felt that the nature of these ‘Danish remains’ was sufficiently familiar to his audience not to require description on this occasion, but it is clear from other contemporary writers that it was primarily brochs and duns that were attributed to ‘Danish’ construction, when ‘Danish’ was the term applied to anything in Scotland thought to be of Scandinavian origin. It appears all the more notable therefore that, in the very first volume of the *Transactions of the*

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*Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* (subsequently *Archaeologia Scotica*), Colin McKenzie wrote of the ‘Round Forts, or Duns’ of Lewis (1792, 287) that ‘these are universally agreed on to have been built by Norwegians: the Lewis traditions confirm this’. However, there is seemingly little real significance in this, given that he had written, on the previous page, ‘At what period the Danes first settled here is not known, but their piratical expeditions to the coasts were very early, and long before their settlement’ (ibid, 286), adding that ‘Borch signifies a Fort, in Danish’ (ibid, 289, n).

A principal exponent of the Danish hypothesis was the Welsh squire and traveller, Thomas Pennant. For instance, during his *Tour in Scotland and Voyage to the Hebrides* in 1772, Pennant visited a so-called ‘Danish fort’ in Islay, commenting:

Three of these forts are generally within sight, so that in case of any attempt made on any one, a speedy alarm might be given to the others. Each was the centre of a small district; and to them the inhabitants might repair for shelter in case of any attack by the enemy; the notice was given from the fort, at night by the light of a torch, in the day by the sound of trumpet: an instrument celebrated amongst the *Danes*, sometimes made of brass, sometimes of horn (1790, 251).

In fact, Pennant was inclined to attribute bronze artefacts to the Danes, for he reported of his visit to Skye that:

Col. *Macleod* favors me with a weapon, common to the *Romans*, *Scandinavians*, and *Britons*. It is a brazen sword ... found in *Skie*. The same kind is met with in many parts of *Scotland* and of *Wales*, which the *Danes* have visited; and they have frequently been discovered in *tumuli*, and other sepulchres, in *Denmark* and *Holsace*, deposited there with the urns in honor of the deceased. Others, similar, have been found in *Sweden* (ibid, 334).

His ‘brazen sword’ is of course recognizable today as a Bronze Age weapon, if only from his illustration of it (illus 4).

Although Pennant was convinced that duns were Danish forts, he was more sceptical when it came to brochs. After visiting Glenelg, and what he called the ‘celebrated edifices attributed to the Danes’, he commented that ‘these were in all probability places of defence; but it is difficult to say anything on the subject of their origin, or by what nation they were erected’ (ibid, 391–4). This belief that the Danes had been responsible for building fortifications in Scotland is one that goes back much further; for instance, the Rev James Wallace, who died in 1688, wrote of Orkney that:

Moreover in many places of this Country, are to be seen the ruins and vestiges of great but antique buildings: most of them now covered over with Earth; and called *Pights* Houses, some of which its like have been the Forts and residences of the *Pights* or *Danes* when they possessed this Country (1693; quoted from Small (ed), 1883, 31).

#### THE EARLIEST DISCOVERY OF NORSE SETTLEMENTS IN SCOTLAND

The notion that Scandinavians were responsible for the construction of duns and/or brochs was to remain popular with some in Scotland for much of the 19th century, despite heroic efforts to establish the contrary by Daniel Wilson (1851) and J J A Worsaae (1852), in their respective books, followed by Joseph Anderson who devoted a paper specifically to the subject, in 1877, entitled, ‘Notes on the structure, distribution, and contents of the brochs, with special reference to the question of their Celtic or Norwegian origin’. In this, ‘one of a pair of tortoise brooches, found with a skeleton buried on the ruin of a Broch at Castletown, Caithness’ was illustrated and discussed by him in order to demonstrate that these standard Viking-age brooches (illus 8) had been ‘found along with a skeleton buried on top of the mound which covered the ruins, and consequently were

not contemporary with the occupancy of the building as a residence of the living' (Anderson 1878, 329–30). Nevertheless, James Fergusson was quick to respond, in 1878, to what on Anderson's part had arisen as a critique of his publications on the subject (1878, 319, n 2), with a lengthy rejoinder entitled, 'On the Norwegian origin of the Scottish brochs', but his cause was already a lost one (MacKie 2002, 31–4).

The consequence of brochs and duns being rightfully reclaimed for their native builders was that Scotland was left without any obvious Norse dwellings and, by 1928, it had been concluded that, 'The Norsemen of the Viking period were essentially builders in wood' (RCAMS 1928, xxiii). The result was that when the Danish archaeologist, Aage Roussell, travelled in Scotland, in 1931, to research 'remains of Scandinavian building customs preserved in more recent vernacular architecture' (Stummann Hansen 2000, 87–8), he met with a degree of scepticism, commenting that, 'in archaeological circles in Scotland it was the view that the Norseman always used wood as a building material, and as every relic in Scotland is of stone and earth, it cannot be of Norse origin' (Roussell 1934, 8).

One orthodoxy was thus replaced by another, although this in turn was subject to revision when the first Norse settlement sites in Scotland began to be excavated during the mid-1930s. Indeed, as Haakon Shetelig wrote (1954, 10), 'The first Viking settlement in the British Isles was discovered by A O Curle in 1934 during his excavations at Jarlshof in Shetland' (as reported in Curle 1935 & 1936). In 1937, Curle went on to dig further Norse buildings at Freswick, Caithness (1939). Meanwhile, in Orkney, J S Richardson had commenced the excavation of Norse dwellings on the Brough of Birsay, in 1936 (Curle 1982, 13), and he subsequently interpreted three of the buildings excavated under his direction at the Broch of Gurness, Aikerness, as being of Viking-age date, including a 'long-house'

(RCAMS 1946, 78–9), although John Hedges has since expressed some doubts concerning his dating of these structures (1987, 64–71). During the late 1930s, Walter Grant partially exposed the walls of a Late Norse hall during an unpublished excavation, undertaken with Gordon Childe, beside the bay of Swandro, at Westness on Rousay (Stevenson 1968, 25; Kaland 1993, 308–11), when a silver finger-ring was discovered (Graham-Campbell 1995, 161, no S17).

The walls of these excavated buildings were constructed of turf and stone in an architectural tradition that demonstrably spans the North Atlantic, even if it was one that involved internally, at any rate, a considerable consumption of timber (Stummann Hansen 2000). On the other hand, Olwyn Owen (2002) has recently suggested 'that the earliest Viking houses [in Scotland] may have been "kit" houses of wood, imported wholesale from Norway' (ibid, 521), thus revisiting (in part, at any rate) the earlier position, noted above.<sup>1</sup>

There remains to mention the vague accounts of the discovery of what has been identified, from *Orkneyinga Saga*, as the remains of the Earl of Orkney's drinking-hall at Orphir. These commence with the Rev Alexander Pope's report (after visiting the site in 1758) that 'large foundations ... laid very deep, which must have supported great buildings' had been found 'on digging earth for the Bow or farm of Orphir, and near the round house [Round Church] called the Gerth-House of Orphir' (1866, 107). A century later, according to George Petrie:

During some excavations, which were made about 1859, close to the outside of the churchyard wall, great quantities of bones of various domestic animals were found, and amongst them were jawbones of dogs and cats in great abundance. The farmer who is tenant of the farm adjoining the churchyard, and his servants, who had made the excavations, informed me that they had found some hundred or more jawbones of dogs and cats (1861, 226).

These remains had in fact been subject to some further investigation by Petrie himself, when visiting the site in August 1859 with George Dasent, for they:

succeeded in tracing numerous massive walls adjacent to the ruins of the Girth House, and running in various directions, and we picked up among the debris large quantities of bones of the domestic animals, such as the horse, ox, sheep, swine, dog and cat, but the remains of the two latter animals, especially the dog, were by far the most abundant (Petrie 1927, 28; dated 'December, 1859').

It was subsequently noted by Joseph Anderson, in the introduction to his edition of the English translation of *The Orkneyinga Saga* (1873, xcv), that, 'Indications of these [foundations], and of an extensive refuse-heap, are still to be seen'. Finally, further digging, by Alfred Johnston, took place on the site between 1899 and 1901, which resulted in a published plan of some walls, but 'the only relics found' were two bone or antler objects, one being a fragmentary comb-case from the 'first step of Apse of the Round Church' (Johnston 1903a; 1903b); these are both now in the Museum of Scotland (Grieg 1940, 148, fig 66).<sup>2</sup>

Be these walls (even in part) the remains of a 12th-century earl's drinking-hall, it has to be said that settlement archaeology contributed nothing of any significance to the study of Viking-age and Late Norse Scotland until the 1930s, and even then little enough until the publication of J R C Hamilton's final report on the *Excavations at Jarlshof, Shetland*, in 1956. It was therefore only during the second half of the 20th century that the assemblages excavated from settlement sites began to build a more comprehensive picture of Norse material culture and economy than that presented by the contents of graves and hoards by themselves, to which we must perforce return for the period under study (after mention of the early interpretations advanced for some pieces of early medieval stone sculpture).

## CONCERNING SOME SCULPTURED STONE MONUMENTS

### HOGBACKS

The earliest documentary reference so far encountered to supposed Scandinavian (or rather 'Danish') graves in Scotland is contained in the early 16th-century *Chronicles of Scotland* compiled, and published in Latin, by Hector Boece, with Bellenden's Scots translation being published in 1531 (Batho & Husbands (eds) 1941). More specific detail is provided in William Stewart's metrical version of Boece (Turnbull (ed) 1858) where, as related by Prof J Y Simpson:

There is a description of the Danish monument on Inchcolm from the personal observation of the translator; and we know that this metrical translation was finished by the year 1535. The description is interesting, not only from being in this way a personal observation, but also as showing that, at the above date, the recumbent sculptured 'greit stane', mentioned in the text, was regarded as a monument of the Danish leader, and that there stood beside it a Stone Cross, which has since unfortunately disappeared (1857, 496, n 2).

This mid-10th-century hogback (Lang 1974, 227) was described and illustrated, for the first time, by Sir Robert Sibbald (1710, 35); it was subsequently noted by Pennant during his tour of 1772 (1776, II, 209) and was of interest to Francis Grose (1797, II, 135). For once, however, Joseph Anderson was mistaken when he rejected a 'Danish' connection for this stone (cf Lang 1974, 209, 211), believing it to be 'a good example' of a class of monument 'of twelfth-century type' (Anderson 1881a, 72, fig 44), which was to be discussed more fully for the first time, a few years later, by J Russell Walker (1885).

The only other hogbacks to have received attention in print before the mid-19th century were a couple on Orkney seen by the Rev George Low in 1774, only one of which survives (Lang

1974, 232), but he had no idea as to their date. Of that then in Skail churchyard, Low wrote:

Tradition is silent to whom it belonged, but there is another of the very same dimensions, and carved with the same figures; the latter goes by the name of the Queen of Morocco's grave stone, anent whose arrival and death they here tell us a long apocryphal story not worth repeating (1774; Anderson (ed) 1879, 54–5).

#### SUENO'S STONE

When first recorded and depicted in the 18th century, by Alexander Gordon (1726, 158), the well-known cross-slab that stands near Forres, in Moray, was said to be called 'King Sueno's Stone', named for Sweyn Forkbeard of Denmark and England, not of course as his own memorial, but to commemorate a great Scottish victory over the Danes. Such an iconographic idea was not new, however, for a couple of centuries earlier Boece had viewed the Pictish cross-slab in Aberlemno churchyard as an advertisement 'of the ancient and illustre dedis done by our eldaris aganis the Danis' (Bellenden trans 1531; quoted from Batho & Husbands (eds) 1941, 247), an interpretation maintained by Gordon (1726, 151). Despite William Skene's alternative suggestion (1876, I, 337–8, n 3) that Sueno's Stone commemorates the death of Earl Sigurd (c 892), it is today recognized as a late Pictish monument (Henderson & Henderson 2004, 135), whether or not it depicts a Viking attack on the nearby fort at Burghead, as has sometimes been suggested (see Sellar 1993).

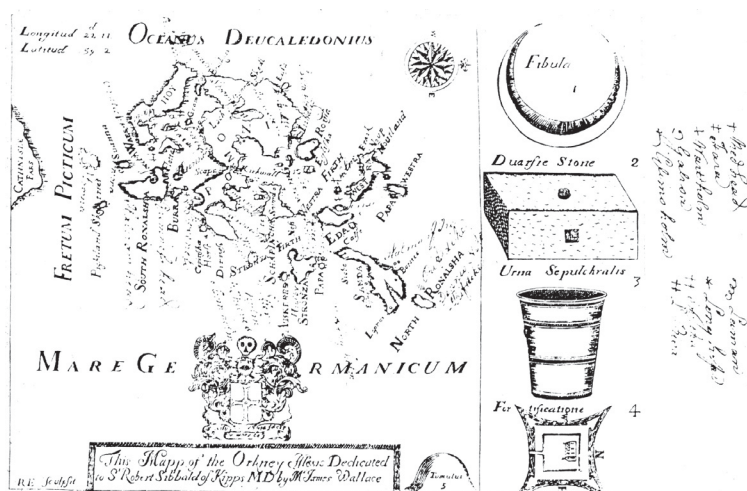
#### SOME 17TH-CENTURY DISCOVERIES OF GRAVES IN ORKNEY

The earliest printed record of what can be considered to be definite pagan Norse graves being found in Scotland appears to be that by the Rev James Wallace, published posthumously in 1693, in his book, *A Description of the Isles of Orkney*:

Likewise in the links of *Tranabie* in *Westra*, have been found graves in the sand (after the sand hath been blown away with the wind) in one of which was seen a man lying with his sword on the one hand, and a *Daneish* ax on the other, and others that have had dogs, and combs and knives buried with them, which seems to be an instance of the way how the *Danes* (when they were in this Country) buried their dead (1693; quoted from Small (ed) 1883, 30).

There can be no doubt that this is a description of pagan Norse burials, all the more so because others have been discovered subsequently on the Links of Trenabie, or the Links of Pierowall as they are more often known (Graham-Campbell & Batey 1998, 129–35). Wallace's identification of them as 'Danish' is all the more noteworthy for the fact that, a century later, the Rev George Low was interpreting a second group of Trenabie graves as those of 'Western Highlanders', by which he meant the *native* inhabitants of the Western Isles (1778; Goudie (ed) 1915, 148).<sup>3</sup> This curious hypothesis was the result of his endeavouring to interpret the archaeology on the basis of Ossian, but Low was not alone in failing to identify such finds of iron weapons with the presence of 'Danes in this Country'.

The above quotation is taken from the first edition of Wallace's book, published in Edinburgh in 1693 (five years after his death); it was edited by his eldest son, also named James, who was a doctor of medicine. Little is known of Wallace senior, whose first post was as 'appointed minister of Ladykirk in Orkney, from which parish he was translated to Kirkwall in 1672' (Small (ed) 1883, v-vi). Dr Wallace stated that the materials for his father's book had been collected at the request of Sir Robert Sibbald, who had been knighted in 1682 on his appointment as Physician and Geographer in Scotland to King Charles II. It was certainly to Sir Robert that Wallace dedicated his 'Mapp of the Orkney Isles', beside which were engraved the following five figures (illus 1):



ILLUS 1 'Mapp of the Orkney Isles', with five figures, by James Wallace (as posthumously published in 1693)

*The Fibula or Ancient clasp or buckle.*

1. *The Dwarfie stone ironically so called,*
2. *The Sepulchral Urn,*
3. *The Fortification that defendeth the Harbour of Kirkwal, called the Mount,*
5. *Little Hillocks dispersed through the Countrey.*

The 'Little Hillocks' are further identified as 'the Sepulchres of the ancient *Pights*', especially those 'called by the name of *Brogh*', for Wallace believed that 'the word *Brogh* in the *Teutonick* Language signifies a burying place'. It was:

In one of these *Hillocks* near the Circle of high stones at the North end of the Bridge of *Stennis*, there were found nine *Fibulae* of silver, of the shape of a Horse shoe, but round, the figure of which we have given (1693; quoted from Small (ed) 1883, 31).

Martin Martin, who travelled the Western Isles collecting information for Sir Robert Sibbald, learnt of these Orkney rings in the 1690s (or thereabouts), most probably with Wallace as his source. He described them likewise as 'Fibulae', but did not hazard an opinion as to their age (Martin 1716, 365), although Sibbald himself

had illustrated one in his (1707) volume on *Roman Monuments and Antiquities in the North-Part of Britain called Scotland*, with the caption 'Found in a Grave in Orkeny', in the mistaken belief that it was indeed a 'Roman Fibula' (ibid, 51).

## THE EARLIEST RECORDED SILVER HOARDS

### RING OF BRODGAR (PRE-1688)

Today, Wallace's 'clasps' or 'buckles' can be recognized as penannular silver arm-rings, or so-called 'ring-money', of Viking-age date. Given that this lost Orkney hoard, from an unidentified mound beside the Ring of Brodgar, was found sometime before 1688, it should have come first in the catalogue of Viking silver, as the oldest known Viking hoard from Scotland, but the fact that it was placed second (Graham-Campbell 1995, 95–6, no 2) arose from a piece of skulduggery on the part of Wallace's son that went unrecognized at the time.

A second edition of Wallace's book followed soon after the first had been published in

Edinburgh in 1693. This appeared in London in 1700, with the title slightly modified to *An Account of the Islands of Orkney* and with the son's name substituted as author, easily enough done, given that both were named James Wallace (Small (ed) 1883, viii-ix), but also with all reference removed to the book having been his father's work (and its dedication suppressed in favour of one of his own to the Earl of Dorset). The London edition thus gives every appearance of being a new work, with even the plates re-engraved for the occasion – the 'Fibula' finding a new place for itself alongside a Loon, amongst Molucca beans and much else besides (Graham-Campbell 1995, pl 2). Not knowing of the first edition, the Ring of Brodgar hoard slipped into second place in the catalogue behind that found near Port Glasgow at the end of the 17th century (ibid, 95, no 1). The time has come for Brodgar to be restored to the head of Scotland's list of Viking hoards and Wallace senior to the rightful place from which his devious son tried to displace him – as first amongst the Viking antiquaries of Scotland.

PORT GLASGOW (PRE-1699) AND SKYE  
(PRE-1781)

The Port Glasgow hoard does, however, still represent the oldest surviving find of Viking silver from Scotland – in the form of two penannular arm-rings, said to have been 'found with a great number of Saxon Coyns near New-Port-Glasgow'. In the late 17th century these belonged to James Sutherland, the botanist and head of the Edinburgh Physic Garden, who was also a coin collector. He is known to have visited Glasgow in 1699 in quest of coins of Eadgar – a somewhat unlikely trip for him to have undertaken if such had not recently been found in the vicinity. This information (located by Hugh Pagan; Graham-Campbell 1995, 95) provides some support for Robert Stevenson's suggestion (1966, x, xv) that it was the Eadgar coins in Sutherland's collection that represented those found with the Port Glasgow rings.

Sutherland's manuscript catalogue of his collection describes both of these rings, in turn, as 'a Silver Fibula in shape of a half Moon', and thus their function continued to be interpreted as that of a dress-fastener (Stevenson 1966, xxvii). This was also the case with the first examples to be acquired by the Society's new Museum, in July 1781, when the Rev Donald McQueen, who features prominently in Boswell and Johnson's *Tour of the Hebrides*, presented a miscellaneous collection of items from Skye (no 67, in the first 'List of Donations'; Smellie 1782, 55), including shells, petrifications and Molucca beans, as well as a couple of flint arrow-heads and 'two fibulae of white metal, with which the sagum was fastened'. No date was attributed to them, but they are in fact further examples of standard Viking-age 'ring-money' (Graham-Campbell 1995, 98, no 6).

Although the Port Glasgow rings were actually datable by their association with 'Saxon Coyns', this fact did not become general knowledge, and they had lost their provenance by the time that they were exhibited, in 1856, on the occasion of the Archaeological Institute's meeting in Edinburgh (Way 1859, 128). The Sutherland collection was purchased by the Faculty of Advocates in 1705, so that the rings only reached the Museum when the Advocates' collection was purchased from them in 1873. It is to Robert Stevenson that we owe the rediscovery of their provenance, as to so much else in the study of the Viking hoards of Scotland (1966, xv, xxvii).

CALDALE (1774)

By default therefore, the first published examples of 'ring-money' to be dated were those found in the summer of 1774, at Caldale in Orkney (Graham-Campbell 1995, 96–7, no 3), together with a pair of cow's horns containing hack-silver and over 300 coins of Cnut (deposited c 1032–40). Although some of the coins survive, the 'ring-money' and hack-silver is lost, in part because the finder



ILLUS 2 'Ring-money' and a coin of Cnut from the (1774) hoard found, in a pair of horns, at Caldale, Orkney (as published by Richard Gough in 1778)

disposed of much of the treasure before the proprietor, William Lindsay, was informed. Fortunately, however, the antiquary Richard Gough published an account of the hoard in 1778, as the basis for his *Catalogue of the Coins of Canute, King of Denmark and England*, which includes an illustration of two of the rings (illus 2). These examples, also identified as 'silver fibulae', were drawn from the three presented to Thomas Dundas of Castlecary, together with coins and 'the two horns' (ibid, 4); Gough also states that another 'fibula' was given to Mr George Ross of Pitkerry, with 12 coins (ibid, 3). So where are these horns and arm-rings now?

Since the (1995) account of the Caldale hoard was published, a couple of additional references to its dispersal have come to light, the first being a letter located by Professor Lawrence Keppie in the Mitchell Library, Glasgow (ref no: SR 167). This is from George Paton (an Edinburgh antiquary), to Richard Gough, dated 6 August 1776, telling him of William Lindsay's distribution of the hoard:

78 coins, one silver piece and one of the horns to Mr Dundas of Castlecary

12 coins and one silver piece to Mr George Ross of Pitkerry

6 coins to Mr Pennant

3 to Mr Dalton for his Majesty's collection

200 and the other horn, and 2 silver pieces to Mr Thomas Lindsay, brother of the proprietor, and to Sir John Pringle President of the Royal Society.

There is an obvious discrepancy therefore between this account and that published by Gough two years later, although a possible explanation would be that Thomas Lindsay had, in the meantime, passed on his 'horn, and 2 silver pieces' to Dundas, whom Gough said had been presented with 'the two horns' and 'three of the fibulae' (1778, 3).

The second piece of information is provided by the Rev George Low, who toured Shetland in 1774, on behalf of Pennant whose own tour of 1769 had not reached so far north. Pennant wrote to Paton, their mutual friend, on 16 August, expressing the hope that Low might



be able 'to see the coins, and perhaps to obtain a few' (Anderson 1879, xlvii). Indeed, both Paton (as above) and Gough record Pennant as having 'obtained six of the coins' (1778, 3), but of particular interest is an undated letter from Low to Paton (Anderson 1879, xlvi) stating that, 'I have sent a fibula, the last of the Caldale collection I have'. This too is missing.

Most of the surviving Caldale coins have ended up in the British Museum, but a coin of Cnut 'found in Orkney' is listed amongst the first day's donations made to institute the Society's Museum, in January 1781 (Smellie 1782, 39, no 6). This was presented by Mr John Dundas, Writer to the Signet, and there can be little doubt that it derived from the (1774) Caldale hoard, given the date and the Dundas connection.

#### LIEUTENANT THOMAS AND THE BRODGAR RINGS

In 1851, Lieutenant (later Capt) Thomas, RN, read a paper to the Society of Antiquaries of London, entitled, 'Account of some of the Celtic Antiquities of Orkney, including the Stones of Stenness, Tumuli, Picts-houses, &c., with Plans' (1852). Thomas had been in command of HM Surveying Vessel *Woodlark* and is best remembered in archaeological circles for his excellent topographical map of Stenness, but he was also wont to take his ship's crew mound-digging, as 'excavation' was becoming a popular pastime in Orkney in the mid-19th century (Renfrew 1985, 4).<sup>4</sup>

In his discussion of 'Tumuli', Thomas argued ingeniously, if mistakenly, that there existed in Orkney a type of 'early Scandinavian tomb', which he christened 'the Conoid Tumuli' (1852, 106–7). These, he stated, 'are few in number; but six exist at Stenness, where they are readily distinguished by their greater height in proportion to their base' (ibid, 107). He went on to point out that, whereas 'bowl-barrows' contained cremations, the 'conoid barrows' contained flexed inhumations, before concluding that:

This alone shows a difference of race, although both might be living (or rather dead) at the same epoch; but the argument having most weight with the critical antiquary is this, that *silver* ornaments have been found in the tombs (ibid, 107).

However, as described above, only one such find of silver rings is known, that from one of the mounds beside the Ring of Brodgar, and nowhere else is it stated to have been from the 'tomb' itself. It need come as no surprise therefore that no one was to follow Thomas in supposing his 'Conoid Tumuli' to be pagan Norse graves.

#### FURTHER DISCOVERIES OF PAGAN NORSE GRAVES

After Wallace, the next published reference to the discovery of what seems to have been a Viking burial is by Martin Martin, factor to the Laird of Macleod. During his late 17th-century travels in the Western Isles, Martin learnt that:

Between *Bernara* and the main Land of *Harries* lies the Island *Ensay* ... and there was lately discover'd a Grave in the West end of the Island, in which was found a pair of Scales made of Brass, and a little Hammer, both of which were finely polish'd (1716, 50).

What (if anything) Martin made of this is not recorded, but it is presumably the same (lost) grave-find as that known to Alexander Carmichael, two centuries later, for he mentioned in the 'Notes' to *Carmina Gadelica* that a skeleton with 'a small hammer, and a pair of scales' had been exposed in Cladh Aruinn, an ancient burial-plot in the small island of Keilligrey, in the Sound of Harris (1928, 242). Killigrey is the adjacent small island to Ensay, but in whichever of the two the grave was actually found, the mention of 'a small hammer' that was 'finely polish'd' suggests that the deceased may have been buried wearing a Thor's hammer pendant.

On leaving the 17th century behind, a major hiatus is encountered in new discoveries – or, at

any rate, in information. In fact, it is necessary to proceed directly to the second half of the 18th century during which, in contrast, up to 11 burials are known to have been found on some nine or ten sites.

The earliest of these discoveries is from Orkney and was mentioned in passing by Richard Gough (1778, 8), who wrote that, ‘In a sandy hillock in *Sanday* island, were found, about thirty years ago, a battle-ax, and spear-head, with a human body’. That would have been in about 1750, only shortly before the discovery of one of the more problematic finds known from mainland Scotland. In 1756, a cremation was encountered during the removal of a cairn at Blackerne, in Kirkcudbright, at the same time as a fragment of a silver arm-ring and a solitary amber bead. Whether this find represents buried treasure in a mound or actual grave-goods has perforce to remain a matter of opinion (Graham-Campbell 1995, 153, no S1; 2001, 16–17).

The Blackerne artefacts were donated to the Museum in 1782 (Smellie 1782, 55, no 298), five years before the first definite grave-goods from a pagan Norse burial entered the collection in February 1787, in the form of a pair of Scandinavian oval brooches (cf *illus* 8), a lignite arm-ring, and a plain bone pin, which has since become known as a ‘bodkin’ (Grieg 1940, 24, *figs* 7–8; Batey 1993, 148–51, *fig* 6.1; 2002, 188–90, *fig* 60). The ‘List of Donations’ (*Archaeologia Scotica*, 3 (1831), 61) records that, in September 1786, they had been ‘dug out of the top of the ruins of a Pictish house in Caithness, lying beside a skeleton, buried under a flat stone with a very little earth above it’. The entry also states that both brooches were ‘each surrounded with a double row of silver cord near the edge’, but this embellishment survives only on the brooch now in the National Museum in Copenhagen, for one of this pair was presented to J J A Worsaae following his visit to Scotland in 1846 (see below; cf *illus* 8).

The next donation of Viking antiquities to the Museum was made the following year, in May 1788, when a pair of oval brooches

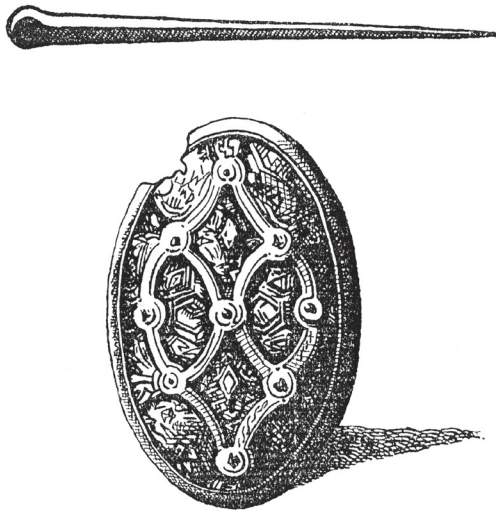
was presented by Colin Campbell of Islay (*Archaeologia Scotica*, 3 (1831), 68; Grieg 1940, 41–2, *fig* 22); these were said to have been found ‘under a large standing stone’ at Ballinaby. They complete the pitifully small corpus of artefacts from pagan Norse burials that had entered the Museum by the end of the 18th century, although other and earlier finds of both oval brooches and weapons are known.

Confusion surrounds the provenance of the pair of oval brooches now in Perth Museum, but one version is that they were found at Errol in 1785 (Grieg 1940, 100–1, *fig* 56; Stevenson, R B K *in* Shetelig (ed) 1954, 238; Shetelig 1954, 72, 108, n 17; Graham-Campbell 1976, 132, n 7). However, 1785 is the year in which the Perth Literary and Antiquarian Society established their museum, and (if this date is to be attached to them at all) it might be suggested that they were not actually ‘found’ in that year, but are simply to be counted amongst Perth Museum’s earliest acquisitions, given that there is no published record of their existence before 1888 (Anderson & Black 1888, 340, *fig* 8).

In 1760, Richard Pococke (then Bishop of Meath), undertook a well-documented journey to Scotland. While staying in Argyll with Campbell of Airds, Bishop Pococke was presented with a couple of auroch’s bones and also, in the words of the letter written to his sister, on 12 June:

an ornament of Brass in an oval shape adorned with Mosaic Embosements in several compartments; there was one on each side of the breast of the skeleton, and they are supposed to have been ornaments on each side of the shield, for the irons to fix it remain in part – a Drawing of it is here given; with this skeleton was found a pin about four inches long, and a brass needle two inches long, which, ’tis supposed fastened some parts of the garment. It was found in the Isle of Sangay between Wist and Harris a place much frequented by the Danes (1760; Kemp (ed) 1887, 91).

This letter and its accompanying drawing (*ibid.*, 92) were not published until 1887 (*illus* 3) when



ILLUS 3 Bishop Pococke's (1760) oval brooch and pin, supposedly 'found in the Isle of Sangay' (as published in 1887)

the editor, Daniel Kemp, correctly identified Pococke's 'shield' ornament as a Scandinavian oval brooch. He further recognized it as that illustrated in *Vetusta Monumenta*, 2 (1789), pl 20, figs 9–10, after it had been exhibited to the Society of Antiquaries of London in January 1761. The Society's *Minutes Book* describes it (in part) as 'an oval Ornament of Brass like the Embossment of a Horse-Bit, & of the Size of a small Land Tortoise'. Is this, perhaps, the first occasion on which an oval brooch assumed the guise of a 'tortoise'?

This engraving of Bishop Pococke's antiquities, by James Basire, is dated 1763, although the volume of *Vetusta Monumenta* in question did not appear until 1789. Pococke's oval brooch therefore provides the earliest known 'publication' of an artefact from a pagan Norse grave in Scotland, even if beaten into print in 1774, by the depiction of a fragmentary iron sword from Islay (illus 4), which Pennant learnt about during his 1772 voyage to the Hebrides. However, neither of these objects is known to survive and, in both cases, their exact provenance is in doubt. In the case of Pococke's

female grave, there is no 'Isle of Sangay' in the Sound of Harris so that Kemp proposed that this was 'doubtless Lingay Island, and the MS. might be read Langay' (1887, 92, n). Both these islands are, however, small and barren – and Ensay suggests itself as the more probable location (Graham-Campbell & Batey 1998, 76).

Pennant's only reference to the Islay sword is contained in the caption to his plate xlv (1790, 410). This engraving, by R Murray (illus 4), is after Moses Griffith who had accompanied Pennant on the 1772 tour as his illustrator; its caption reads, 'The ivory image. No. I. a military scythe. II. a *Danish* sword. III. part of a rude iron sword, found in Ilay.' The 'Danish sword' is the Bronze Age weapon from Skye mentioned above, and it is therefore the remains of the 'rude iron sword', which is of Viking-age type, that are of concern here.

During his visit to Islay in 1772, Pennant only mentions having been given a couple of amulets and some Molucca beans, but he did 'Dine at Mr *Campbel's*, of *Balnabbi*' (1790, 256–7, 266–7), and it is quite likely that the sword had been found there, given that a few years later, in 1788 or 1789, the nearby sandhill was being dug into by Captain Burgess and the crew of his 'sloop of war', the *Savage* (RCAHMS 1984, 149, no 293, 4), when they are reported as having found 'one or two swords a pike-head and many human bones' (*New Stat Acct*, 7, 650). Alas, 'they carried away' the weapons in their ship, never to be heard of again, but a pair of oval brooches from Ballinaby was presented to the Museum in 1788 (as noted above), and further definite Viking graves, to be described below, were discovered there in the 19th century (Graham-Campbell & Batey 1998, 122–5).

Even greater uncertainty surrounds a lost find of supposed Viking-age weapons from Haimar in the neighbourhood of Thurso, Caithness. The only record of these is contained in a note by the Rev Alexander Pope, minister of Reay, who died in 1782, in his translation of Torfaeus (unpublished until 1866). He states that, 'Some



ILLUS 4 'Part of a rude iron sword, found in Ilay', and other objects, drawn by Moses Griffith in 1772 (as published by Thomas Pennant in 1790)

of the weapons used in that battel were found in a peat bank, near the House of Hemer. They were odd machines, resembling plough-shares, all iron'. These, Pope believed, had been used in the 'Battel of Claredon', so named (according to him) 'from the words "clear the Dane," which was the common cry amongst the Scots' (1866, 168–9).

Whatever one may wish to make of this, it was Anderson's judgement (1874, 563) that 'a remarkable find of Scandinavian weapons' had been made on this occasion – and such it has remained in the literature ever since (eg Grieg 1940, 25; Batey 1993, 151–2), except that Shetelig himself was rightly sceptical of this 'old report' commenting that it 'is too vague

to be accepted as reliable evidence of a Norse burial' (1954, 107, n 12).

#### THE STATISTICAL ACCOUNT OF SCOTLAND (1791–9)

Antiquarian research in Scotland took a turn for the better at the end of the 18th century with the compilation of the *Statistical Account of Scotland*, between 1791 and 1799. The questionnaire sent to all local ministers contained five archaeological questions, the last three of which might well have elicited information about Viking-age remains (Graham 1975, 185). These enquired about, 'Roman, Saxon, Danish or Pictish castles, camps, altars, roads, forts or other remains of antiquity', together with any associated local traditions; and also about finds of coins, etc, and tumuli, together with the contents of any of those that had been 'opened'.

Many ministers, in fact, ignored the antiquarian questions and, inevitably, amongst the positive replies there are many 'Danish' camps and forts, but then, in Angus Graham's felicitous words (ibid, 188), the 'Picts and Danes, in combination, seem to have provided a pool of plausible answers to a variety of historical and antiquarian problems' faced by them. In fact, there appear to be only two references to what most probably will have been the discovery of pagan Norse graves, although neither was identified as such by the minister in question. However, the most important was duly recognized by Anderson (1874, 555), and is worth quoting here as evidence for there having been a Viking-age cemetery at Cornaigbeg on Tiree:<sup>5</sup>

In digging pits in sandy ground to secure potatoes during winter and spring, there were found at different times human skeletons, and nigh them the skeletons of horses. They seemed to have been compleatly armed, according to the times. Two handed swords were found diminished with rust; silver work preserved the handles; there were also shields and helmets with a brass spear. Nigh

this was discovered another skeleton holding the skeleton of an infant in its arms (*Stat Acct*, 10 (1794), 402).

The other apparent mention of pagan Norse burials in the *Statistical Account* is to further graves eroding out on Westray, on the Links of Trenabie (*Stat Acct*, 16 (1795), 263), but these are described in greater detail by the Rev George Low in a manuscript account of his *Tour through the North Isles and part of the Mainland of Orkney in the year 1778*. The whereabouts of this manuscript was unknown to Anderson when he published an edition, in 1879, of Low's previously mentioned *Tour through the Islands of Orkney and Schetland*, which he had undertaken for Pennant in 1774. The relevant passage had, however, previously been paraphrased in print by the Rev James Douglas, in his *Nenia Britannica* (1793, 76), a reference noted by Daniel Wilson (1851, 325).

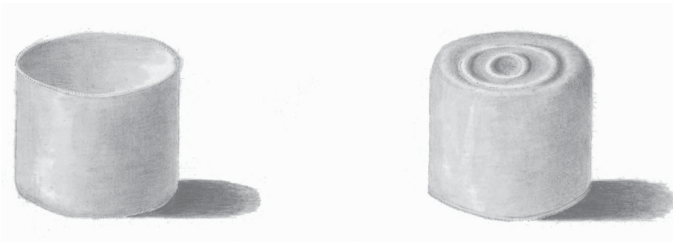
Low's manuscript was, however, safely in private hands when Anderson was writing, for it had been discovered, in 1837, on a bookstall in Leeds; it passed eventually into the possession of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland (SAS MS 539), after which it was edited for publication by Gilbert Goudie (1915, 132–3). Low's own account of, what were then (in 1778), some recently uncovered burials on the Links of Trenabie states, in part:

In examining these we find besides the bones of Men, those of Cows, Horses, Dogs and Sheep; besides warlike instruments of all kinds then in use, as Battle Axes, Two-handed Swords, broad Swords, Helmets, Swords made of the jaw bone of a whale, daggers, &c. Also instruments in use for the common necessities of life, as Knives and Combs. Likewise matter of ornament as beads, broches, chains, &c. Also many particulars the use of which is now totally lost, as a round flat piece of marble about 2½ inches in diameter, several stones like whetstones but seeminly never have been used, a very small iron vessell like a head piece only 4½ Inches in the hollow, much wounded as if with the Stroke of a Sword or Ax. In one was found a metal Spoon, and a neat

Glass Cup which may contain about two Gills Scottish measure. In another a great number of Stones formed into such whirls as in Scotland were formerly in use to turn a Spindle. In one was found a Gold ring encircling a thigh bone. [Quare. How was it put on?] (SAS MS 539; Goudie 1915, 147).

If true, how indeed? But leaving aside this particular problem, this find should at least have appeared in Graham-Campbell's (1995) catalogue as a possible Viking-age gold ring from Scotland, for this is otherwise a convincing account of an array of what, for the most part, must be pagan Norse grave-goods, if not always correctly identified. There are swords, axes and spears (for Low would doubtless have mistaken spear-heads for 'daggers'); there are also brooches and beads, combs, knives and whetstones, with spindle-whorls and what must have been whalebone weaving-swords. Low's supposed 'helmets' and 'vessell' are doubtless to be interpreted as shield-bosses, as Douglas himself supposed (1793, 76), 'The *iron vessel* is doubtless the *umbo* of a shield ... They have frequently been taken for helmets, though much too small.' No matter then (as noted earlier) that Low did not identify these relics as 'Danish', believing them to be those of 'Western Highlanders' as a result of his having overdosed on Ossian (Goudie 1915, 158).

As chance would have it, during the preparation of the Rhind Lectures on which this paper is based, the Museum acquired a pair of late 18th-century (but not more precisely dated) albums of watercolours by Adam de Cardonnel, entitled *Relicta Antiqua*, which were brought to my attention by Trevor Cowie (NMS MS 137483). As an antiquary residing in Edinburgh, until c 1790, Cardonnel is best known as the author of Scotland's first excavation report (contributed in 1783), on Roman military baths found at Inveresk, and for his *Numismata Scotiae* (published in 1786). In his 'Introduction' to the albums (I, xxii), he states that, 'In Westra, one of the Orkney Islands was found some years



ILLUS 5 Roman glass cup from Westray, illustrated by A M L Dé Cardonnel (1790) as having been 'found in a Danish Grave in Orkney'

ago, a Glass Cup, supposed to be of very great Antiquity in many places the metal is eaten through by the Damp'. In the second volume, there are painted two views (II, pl 2 fig 1) of, 'A Glass Cup found in a Danish Grave in Orkney. 2½ Inches deep and 3 Inches Diameter'. This is signed and dated 1790 (illus 5).

With the help of this illustration, it was not difficult to establish that two of these 18th-century finds from Westray have survived (*Catalogue* 1892, 188, 67): the glass vessel itself, which was donated to the Museum in 1827 by the Rev Dr Brunton (EQ 97); and the marble disc, which only entered the Museum in 1870, as part of the Traill collection, when it was stated to have been 'found in a tumulus in the island of Westray, Orkney, in which were also found pieces of armour and portions of a glass cup, with bones apparently burnt' (AV 1). Although the glass vessel was considered by Anderson to be a 'Norse relic' (1874, 586–7), it had earlier been identified correctly by Daniel Wilson as being 'not improbably of Roman manufacture' (1851, 307). Given that polished stone discs are Iron Age artefacts, it is evident that not all the burials to have eroded out of the Links are, in fact, of Viking-age date.

#### FURTHER 18TH-CENTURY FINDS OF GOLD AND SILVER

In addition to the above-mentioned gold ring from Westray, there are two further 18th-century omissions from the (1995) catalogue, both also

now lost: one is a poorly-documented coin-hoard found on St Kilda, as reported in the *Scots Magazine*, for June 1767; and the other is a gold finger-ring from an Orkney souterrain, in Shapinsay, first recorded in 1796, by the Rev George Barry, in the *Statistical Account of Scotland*, 17, 237 (Kirkness 1928, 160). The latter survived for maybe a century, or more, for it was exhibited to the Society on 9 May 1870 (*Proc Soc Antiq Scot*, 8 (1868–70), 391), 'Gold ring of twisted wires found in excavating an ancient ruin in Shapinsay Orkney (132 grains). Exhibited by D Balfour Esq of Balfour and Trenaby'.

Next for mention is the coin of Æthelred II that Lord Macdonald donated to the Museum in 1781, from an otherwise lost hoard found in North Uist (Smellie 1782, 67, no 101,10); this one remaining coin is seemingly included in a list from 1831, after which it disappears from view (Graham-Campbell 1995, 98, no 5). From the same period, there are either one or two 10th-century coin-hoards known from Tiree, possibly found two years apart (in 1780 and 1782), as listed separately by Michael Metcalf and Graham-Campbell (*ibid*, 97–8, no 4; 99, no 7). However, this division into two of what was previously thought to be a single hoard has not found universal acceptance, having been rejected by Mark Blackburn (in a review published in the *Numismatic Circular*, 104.3 (April 1996), 87–8). Coins from the 1780 hoard were donated to the British Museum by the Duke of Argyll in 1789, followed by an ingot



ILLUS 6 Gold ring found about 1790 at Braidwood Fort, Midlothian (as illustrated by Daniel Wilson in 1851)

in 1807, whereas coins from the supposed 1782 hoard were donated that year to the Museum in Edinburgh by the Glasgow jewellers, Messrs Brydon and Baillie. These coins were contained 'in a handsome silver casket with various emblematic devices', which has apparently gone missing. It is, however, a sign of the times that, in the 'List of Donations' (Smellie 1784, 67, no 354), the hoard itself merited only just over a line of description whereas the new casket with its elaborate 'allegorical representation' was accorded more like 14.

One must, however, be grateful for even the partial survival of such finds of precious metal made during the 18th century, for much was melted down, including the great gold ring discovered in Braidwood Fort, Midlothian, about 1790. This was first described as a Roman 'girdle', before becoming a Bronze Age 'torc', when Daniel Wilson published an engraving of it (1851, 318) (illus 6). It was subsequently re-dated to the Iron Age by MacGregor (1976, 94, 113, no 190), since when it has been re-assigned to the Viking Age (Graham-Campbell 1995, 153–4, no S2). Its weight is unknown, but the jeweller who purchased it is said to have paid the finder 28 guineas which, given that London gold prices averaged £4 per ounce during the 18th century, would suggest that it weighed

about 200gm – a neck-ring of some considerable importance, if much less massive than some that have survived.

#### A SWEDISH RUNE-STONE AND AN ICELANDIC VISITOR (1787)

##### 'RUNICK MONUMENT'

In 1787, the Museum acquired its first (and largest) Scandinavian Viking-age artefact, listed in 'Donations' as 'An ancient Runick Monument, of very hard grey granite ...' (*Archaeologia Scotica*, 3 (1831), 61); so hard, in fact, that Council had to abandon a plan to slice off its face for display purposes (Stevenson 1981, 49). One gets the impression that this great boulder, from Uppland in Sweden, which was donated by Alexander Seton (the heir to a Stockholm merchant), was something of an embarrassment, until it found its current home in Princes Street Gardens. It is, however, to be noted that it was the first Viking artefact to be illustrated in one of the Society's publications (*Archaeologia Scotica*, 2 (1822), pl xvi) to accompany an anonymous account of its inscription, combined with a comparative study of Manx rune-stones, which is in fact the report of a paper read by John Dillon and the Rev Dr John Jamieson during the 1821–2 winter session (Anon 1822).

##### GRÍMUR THORKELÍN

Seton's rune-stone was not all that arrived in Edinburgh from Scandinavia in 1787, for that year saw a visit to the Society from Grímur Thorkelín, the first Scandinavian to be elected to the Fellowship, in 1783 (Ash 1981, 93). In fact, Thorkelín, a distinguished Icelandic scholar who was Assistant Keeper of the Royal Archives in Copenhagen, was then resident in London in pursuit of 'documents relating to Danish, Norwegian and Icelandic "antiquities" in British repositories' (Cant 1981, 23). To this end, he spent 'many months' in Scotland collecting

‘accounts of all the Norwegian and Danish remains to be found’ and discovering, in the process, ‘several hitherto undescribed Danish forts’ (Stevenson 1981, 49).

The truth is that there was little in the way of Viking antiquities to look at in Scotland in the late 18th century. Even by 1800, the sum total of such material in the Museum (and not all of it was even recognized as Viking) amounted to the one Swedish rune-stone, the contents of two female graves (those from Caithness and Islay), the Blackerne find, the Skye ‘ring-money’ hoard and some coins from three 10th- and 11th-century hoards (Caldale, North Uist and Tiree).

#### TO THE MID-19TH CENTURY: WORSAAE’S TOUR (1846)

##### A FEW ACQUISITIONS

Even 50 years later, the situation with regard to the Museum was unchanged, apart from the addition of some coins from the Inch Kenneth hoard, found in about 1830 (Graham-Campbell 1995, 100, no 10); on the other hand, information exists for eight or nine other Viking-age hoards discovered between 1814 and 1844, no part of which reached the Museum (*ibid.*, 99–104). However, this period did see a modest increase in the Museum’s holdings of non-Scottish Viking antiquities, in the form of two oval brooches (*Catalogue* 1892, 280): one of a pair found in a grave at Northallerton, Yorkshire (in 1836), and the other from Denmark (in 1849; see below); and of two swords (*ibid.*, 303), both from the Isle of Man (in 1824).

##### J J A WORSAAE’S TOUR OF SCOTLAND (1846)

The Museum’s oval brooch from Denmark was part of a donation, in 1849, from the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries in Copenhagen, by way of exchange for artefacts given to the Danish archaeologist, J J A Worsaae, following

his visit to Scotland in 1846. As reported by him in a letter to C J Thomsen, written from Dublin on 8 January 1847:

A couple of days ago I received information from Edinburgh that the following had been sent to me in London (Adr: Ch Roach Smith) from the Society of Antiquaries collection: 1 Bronze sword, 2 Bronze palstaves, and a *bowl-formed brooch*, found with a skeleton in Caithness (Hermansen (ed) 1934; trans Åse Goldsmith, quoted from Henry (ed) 1995, 12).

Thus one of the pair of fine oval brooches from Castletown, Caithness (Batey 2002, fig 60; cf *illus* 8), is today in the Comparative Collection of the National Museum in Copenhagen (no 10521); it was the only Viking-age artefact from Scotland to be illustrated by Worsaae in his book, *An Account of the Danes and Norwegians in England, Scotland and Ireland*, the first rational account of this subject (1852, 255).<sup>6</sup>

As has been demonstrated, there were few Viking antiquities for Worsaae to examine in Edinburgh during his study-tour of Britain and Ireland. He was, however, not confined to the contents of the Society’s Museum for his knowledge of Viking-age artefacts from Scotland. In particular, while staying at Dunrobin Castle as the guest of the Duke of Sutherland, Worsaae learnt that ‘Norwegian antiquities, like those discovered in Caithness, are found in graves near Dunrobin, particularly the well-known bowl-formed brooches or buckles’ (*ibid.*, 259). Indeed, the Dunrobin Castle Museum contains the remains of a pair of oval brooches to this day (Grieg 1940, 15, 17).

In a letter to his mother, begun on 12 September 1846, Worsaae mentioned that, ‘On one of our outings I found a good many Norse burial mounds in one place; and I am planning to open and examine those the day after tomorrow, if possible’. But come 15 September, he finished this letter home by reporting only that he had spent the previous day ‘riding almost 6 Danish miles on an antiquarian trip’ (Hermansen (ed) 1934; trans Åse Goldsmith).<sup>7</sup> There is in fact



no record of Worsaae having undertaken any such archaeological investigations himself while staying at Dunrobin, perhaps because his interests became absorbed by the Duke's excavation of 'the ruins of a strange round tower or so-called Pictish house' that he seems to have laid on for his visitor's benefit (Backies broch: Joass 1873, 106–7; MacKie 2002, 31, fig 3.7).<sup>8</sup> Or maybe it was the arrival of the Duchess, with 'her daughters, sons and suite', that necessitated a change in his plans.

Later on during his tour, while visiting Glasgow and the Andersonian Museum, Worsaae was shown one of a pair of oval brooches that had been found on St Kilda (1852, 271). This he was to illustrate 26 years later in an article published in Denmark (Worsaae 1872, 420, fig 3), thus providing us with the only known record of this now lost find (Anderson 1874, 555–6; Taylor 1968, 133–5, pl 2).

AN ACCOUNT OF THE DANES AND  
NORWEGIANS IN ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, AND  
IRELAND (1852)<sup>9</sup>

Worsaae properly entitled the relevant chapters of his pioneering book (which had been published first in Danish, in 1851), 'The Norwegians in Scotland', thus acknowledging the 'fact that the Norwegians were the most numerous of all the Scandinavian colonists in Scotland' (1852, 199). Nevertheless, he found himself unable to abandon the Danish label altogether, for elsewhere there are references to such as 'Danish fortifications', along the coast of Caithness. He was, however, adamant that 'the numerous round towers ... called by many "Danish burghs", are ... of Pictish or Celtic origin', on the grounds that 'they have no resemblance whatever to the old fortresses in the Scandinavian North', whereas similar structures 'are to be found in the Celtic Highlands of Scotland, and on the coasts of Ireland' (ibid, 233).

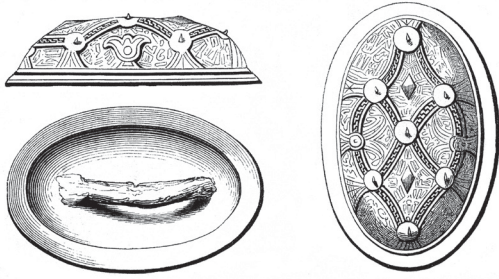
It is worth noting that Worsaae felt it necessary to offer some explanations for 'the

preponderance of the Danish name' in Scotland (ibid, 199). These are: 'the long dominion of Denmark over Norway'; the existence of superior communications between Scotland and Denmark; and 'the reciprocal marriages between the ancient Scotch and Danish royal families'. He concluded by stating that:

the preponderance of the Danish name must also be attributed to the pre-eminent power of the Danes in ancient times, and in the early middle ages; and, of course, more particularly to that supreme dominion which they had so gloriously won for themselves in the neighbouring country – England (ibid, 199).

Worsaae's fundamental contribution to the development of 'scientific archaeology' in Scotland resulted from his propagation of C J Thomsen's 'Three-Age System', given its adoption by Daniel Wilson in 1851 (Wilkins 1961, 216–17; see below), following the publication of his book, *The Primeval Antiquities of Denmark* (Worsaae 1849). This was originally published in Danish in 1843, as *Danmarks oldtid oplyst ved oldsager og gravhøie* ('Ancient Denmark in the light of antiquities and grave-mounds'), and then in a German translation the following year. Worsaae 'corrected and enlarged' his text for the English edition (1849, v); in addition, his self-appointed translator, William Thoms, did more than just that, for he 'applied' Worsaae's survey 'to the illustration of similar remains in England', by means of extensive notes of his own and extra woodcuts. As for Scotland, Thoms chose to illustrate Crofton Croker's oval brooch from Pierowall (1847, 331; this paper, illus 7), by way of comparison with that illustrated by Worsaae from Denmark (1849, 53–4).

Equally important in the present context is, however, the fact that the informed identification of Scandinavian antiquities in Britain and Ireland, by comparative means, began with Worsaae himself. During his tour of these islands (Wilkins 1961), he lectured twice to the Royal Irish Academy in Dublin, in December 1846;



ILLUS 7 Oval brooch discovered at Pierowall, Westray, in 1839 (first published by T Crofton Croker in 1847)

his two papers were published first in January 1847, but then also as part of the Academy's *Proceedings* (1847; reprinted in Henry (ed) 1995, 23–32).<sup>10</sup> The second took the form of 'a short comparison between the antiquities in the Irish and Danish collections' and is notable for his identification and discussion of the Viking-age grave-goods (swords, gaming pieces and oval brooches) that had been 'found, a short time ago, in cutting the railway at Kilmainham' (ibid, 25). These papers were much quoted by Wilson, as on the subject of swords (1851, 356–7; see below), but it may be noted that Crofton Croker's paper, on 'Antiquities discovered in Orkney, the Hebrides, and Ireland, compared', concerning 'the Danes or northmen', also appeared in print in 1847, although he had himself no knowledge of Scandinavian material.

#### 'VIKINGS'

It is also of some interest that, on occasion, Worsaae chose to use the term 'Vikings', in the sense of 'pirates' (1849, 47; 1852, xiv). In fact, by the mid-19th century, the Vikings (as such) had become a well-established part of the scene from which they had been completely absent throughout the 17th and 18th centuries – and to Scotland goes the credit, if such it be. The *Oxford English Dictionary* offers 1807 as the first use of 'viking' in modern English, with George Chalmers as the source, the Edinburgh

antiquary whose great work, *Caledonia*, appeared in four volumes between 1807 and 1824. The paper by Christine Fell (1987) on the 'Modern English *Viking*' traces the manner and history of the word's adoption, but one should note her observation that Walter Scott was 'one of the earliest modern users of the word "viking" in any form' (ibid, 117, 121–2, n 17), from its single appearance in *The Pirate*, which was first published in 1821. Scott's interest in the (1830) Viking silver hoard found at Quendale in Shetland, about which he added a note to the second edition (published in 1831), has been described elsewhere (Graham-Campbell 1976, 128, n (iv); 1995, 101).

#### THE MID-19TH CENTURY: DANIEL WILSON

##### FURTHER ACQUISITIONS

The Museum's rate of acquisition of Viking-age hoards and grave-goods speeded up considerably during the second half of the 19th century, and the discovery in 1858 of the 10th-century silver treasure at Skail, Orkney, is an obvious highlight (Anderson 1874, 575–84; 1881b; Graham-Campbell 1995, 108–27, no 24), but the years around 1850 were something of a turning-point. First, during the 1840s, a further group of pagan Norse graves eroded out of the Links of Pierowall, in Westray. These were investigated by William Rendall, an Orkney surgeon, who gave some of the artefacts to the Museum in 1851 (*Catalogue* 1892, 276), although most were dispersed (for an account of Rendall's activities, see Thorsteinsson 1968); he had earlier recorded the discovery (in 1839) of five such graves at Pierowall, an account of which was published by T Crofton Croker (1847), illustrated with engravings of an oval brooch, comb and ringed pin, which had by then come into his possession (illus 7).

Secondly, a 10th-century silver hoard was found at Machrie on Islay, in 1850, which

became the first such Viking find to be acquired by the Museum (in part at any rate) as Treasure Trove; this was in 1852, when its coins were also distributed to 12 other institutions (Graham-Campbell 1995, 104, no 18); the Museum has, however, lost the four pieces of hack-silver that also formed part of its allocation. A full report on the hoard was published by W H Scott in the first volume of the Society's *Proceedings* (for 1851–4), which also contains an account of the discovery, in 1851, of a pagan Norse grave or cenotaph, in the top of a mound at Boiden by Loch Lomond, although this was not recognized at the time as being of Viking-age date – simply that of 'some mighty chieftain of old' (Stewart 1854).

In fact, when Daniel Wilson finished his comprehensive study of *The Archaeology and Prehistoric Annals of Scotland*, in January 1851, the Boiden discovery still lay just in the future, but he had received what must have been a garbled account of the Machrie hoard, for although he makes no mention of a hoard having recently been found on Islay, he describes one from Skye instead (1851, 521), for which there is no other evidence for it ever having existed (Metcalf in Graham-Campbell 1995, 20).

#### DANIEL WILSON AND THE WRITING OF 'PREHISTORIC ANNALS'

This minor confusion aside, Daniel Wilson made an immense contribution to the study of Viking archaeology in Scotland, alongside its prehistory in general, for, as Colin Renfrew has observed, *The Archaeology and Prehistoric Annals of Scotland* (1851) is 'one of the most important, and today underestimated, archaeological works of the nineteenth century' (1985, 3). To a great extent its significance derives from the fact that Wilson explicitly modelled his book on C J Thomsen's 'Three-age System', which had recently been disseminated by the appearance in English, in 1849, of J J A Worsaae's *Primeval Antiquities of Denmark*. Wilson went on to produce 'a revised and much improved version',

under the shortened title of *The Prehistoric Annals of Scotland*, in 1863, a decade after he had left Scotland for Canada, and the Chair of History and English Literature at the University of Toronto (Ash 1985; Hulse 1999).

Wilson set about the data-collection for the original edition in a highly systematic way, having realized that he would be unable to rely solely on the limited resources of the Society's Museum, although he was effusive in his thanks to Council for unrestricted access to 'the extensive correspondence preserved in the Library', and to his 'fellow Associates in the Society' for their 'most hearty sympathy and cooperation' (1851, xxiii). Given the lack of a national collection, Wilson found it necessary to correspond with private collectors in order to 'add a few more to the rescued waifs of Scottish national antiquities' (ibid, xxi).

In fact, this statement belies the thoroughness with which he undertook his research, as is shown by the following passage from his 'Preface':

the result of an extensive correspondence carried on with a view to obtain the necessary facts which no books at present supply, has forced on me the conviction that, even within the last dozen years, such a number of valuable objects have been destroyed as would alone have formed an important nucleus for a complete Archaeological Museum. The new Statistical Accounts, along with some periodicals and other recently published works, contain references to discoveries made within that period in nearly every district of Scotland. From these I selected upwards of two hundred of the most interesting and valuable examples, and the result of the laborious correspondence is, the establishment of the fact that scarcely five per cent. of the whole can now be ascertained to be in existence ... Of the few that remain, the jealous fear which the operation of the present law of treasure-trove excites has rendered a portion inaccessible, so that a sufficiently meagre handful of so prominent a harvest was left to be reaped (ibid, xxi).

The assiduous manner in which Wilson conducted his research is thus readily apparent,

and such also serves to explain why those who have come after have had relatively little success in tracking down missing material recorded in the 19th century, even if manuscript sources unknown to him have continued to reap rewards for the modern antiquary.

#### DANIEL WILSON AND THE VIKINGS IN SCOTLAND (1851)

Daniel Wilson's landmark contribution to the study of the Viking archaeology of Scotland, in *The Archaeology and Prehistoric Annals of Scotland* (1851), takes two forms. First, there is a damning indictment of the sloppy thinking about this period in his 'Preface', followed by his presentation of the archaeological evidence itself, with the Vikings being encountered throughout the various parts of his main text.

In Part I, on 'The Primeval or Stone Period', Wilson described how there had come about 'an almost universal abandonment of a Druidical for a Scandinavian origin of the great Temple of Stennis, and the numerous other corresponding structures in the north of Scotland and the Western Isles' (ibid, 109). But this hypothesis was mentioned by him only so that he might demolish it, even if he believed himself that the Stones of Stenness had been used as a pagan temple by the Vikings, delivering himself of the memorable statement that:

the rude Norsemen who possessed themselves of the Orkney Islands in the ninth century, found far less difficulty in adapting the Temple of Stennis to the shrine of Thor, than the Protestants of the sixteenth century had to contend with when they appropriated the old Cathedral of St Magnus to the rites of Presbyterian worship (ibid, 111–12).

Wilson's chapter on 'Sepulchral Memorials' contains the suggestion that oblong mounds 'of larger size than the primitive long barrow, and terminating in a point at both ends' were the 'ship barrows' of Vikings (ibid, 57). His proposed examples of this class of monument

(being located in Dumfriesshire, Iona and Perthshire) do not, however, inspire much confidence in this interpretation (cf Graham-Campbell 2001, 17).

In Part II, on 'The Archaic or Bronze Period', Wilson mounted a vigorous attack on those who assigned 'the relics of the Archaic Period of British art' (such as gold torcs) to the 'Scandinavian Vikings' rather than 'to an era long prior' (1851, 322); and then, in Part III, on 'The Teutonic or Iron Period', the Vikings make several appearances. They enter first as bearers of iron swords, but in order to justify this point Wilson (ibid, 356–7) quoted Worsaae's discussion of those recently found at Kilmainham in Ireland, in his 1846 lecture to the Royal Irish Academy (1847). Later, in the chapter on 'Strongholds', writers (like Sir Walter Scott) who took for granted a Scandinavian origin for brochs are given short shrift (ibid, 420, n 1, where Worsaae is thanked for his advice that 'nothing at all resembling them is to be found in any of the Scandinavian countries'). Wilson himself, however, supposed them to have been erected as defences against 'the rude Norse Vikings' (ibid, 429).

Wilson's account of the Quendale and Caldale silver hoards (together with the Blackerne arm-ring) is somewhat curiously placed at the beginning of his chapter on Iron Age 'Personal Ornaments' (ibid, 442–3). Here, what he calls 'the lunar ornaments of silver' from the Ring of Brodgar also find a place (ibid, 444), but it is not at all clear what Wilson really made of this material.

In Part IV, on 'The Christian Period', a chapter on 'The Norrie's Law Relics', the largest known Pictish silver hoard (Graham-Campbell 1991), ends with a brief account of several coin hoards, including some of Viking-age date (Wilson 1851, 521). This is followed by one entitled 'Scoto-Scandinavian Relics' (ibid, 522–61), of which more than half is devoted to runic inscriptions, commencing with a detailed discussion of that on the Hunterston brooch (ibid, 524–30), but most of Wilson's



ILLUS 8 One of the pair of oval brooches found, in 1786, with a skeleton at Castletown, Caithness (as illustrated by Daniel Wilson in 1851)

runic review is concerned with the Isle of Man in connection with which he was 'fortunate in having obtained the assistance of Professor P A Munch' (ibid, 537–42), before turning his attention to the Northumbrian cross at Ruthwell (ibid, 543–9).<sup>11</sup>

In fact, the whole of this chapter is somewhat miscellaneous in its content, with the actual Viking antiquities from Scotland being essentially confined to 'the shell-shaped brooch' (ibid, 522–4), illustrated by the Caithness oval brooch, as 'surpassing in beauty of design and intricacy of ornament, any other example of which I am aware' (illus 8), and the contents of the recently discovered graves at Pierowall on Westray (ibid, 551–5), illustrated by means of Crofton Croker's (1847) previously published engravings (illus 7).

In his 'Preface' to *Prehistoric Annals*, Wilson laid down the necessity for rigorous investigation into theories concerning origins, given that 'nearly the whole of our native relics have latterly been assigned to a Scandinavian origin'. The full force of his onslaught on antiquarians and *literati* alike may be appreciated from the following quotation:

The invariable adoption of the latter term [Danes] in preference to that of Norwegians or Norsemen, shews how completely Scottish and Irish antiquaries have abandoned themselves to

the influence of English literature, even where the appropriation of its dogmas was opposed to well-known historical facts. The name of Dane has in fact for centuries been one of those convenient words which so often take the place of ideas and save the trouble and inconvenience of reasoning. Yet this theory of a Danish origin for nearly all native arts, though adopted without investigation, and fostered in defiance of evidence, has long ceased to be mere popular error (1851, xiv-xv).

Thus it was that Wilson expelled the 'Danes from this Country', urged to the purge by the Norwegian historian and philologist, Professor Peder Andreas Munch, who had visited Scotland in 1849, when they struck up a lasting friendship. As Marinell Ash observed:

Like modern Scots who resent being called English, Munch abhorred the general use of the term 'Danish' to describe any field monument of the Viking period. The term might be exact, but it was misleading in Scotland. As a patriotic Norwegian Munch deprecated its general use by his Copenhagen colleagues, but even more he disliked it because it was inaccurate (1981, 109).

Daniel Wilson may be best remembered in Britain as the man who invented 'prehistory' (eg Ash 1985), but it must not be forgotten that he also laid down the outlines of the Viking-age archaeology of Scotland (even if with Danish assistance). It was Wilson who threw out the Danes (even if on Norwegian advice), and Wilson who dismissed the numerous antiquarian fantasies concerning the supposed Scandinavian origins of much that has, ever since, been rightly accepted as of native construction or manufacture. But, with so few Viking antiquities available to Wilson, it is not surprising that it was to be Joseph Anderson, of the next generation of scholars, who would bring about the fundamental transformation in our factual knowledge, given the wider range and greater quantity of Viking-age material that was then at his disposal.

SIR WALTER SCOTT AND THE FUNERAL  
OF THE EARL OF BUCHAN (1829)

The antiquarians of the 17th and 18th centuries, through their passion for collecting, had laid the foundation for the emergence of scientific archaeology in the 19th. If an antiquary was, in Daniel Wilson's words, 'the mere gatherer of shreds from the tattered and waste leaves of the past', it had become the job of the archaeologist to piece 'these same shreds' together and to read them 'anew'. And where should one look for the birth of this 'transition from profitless dilettantism to the intelligent spirit of scientific investigation'? To Scotland, of course; and to Abbotsford, in particular (1851, xi; see now Brown (ed) 2003). Wilson was firmly of the opinion that the impulse 'to the intelligent spirit of scientific investigation' proceeded from Sir Walter Scott, as the first modern writer to have taught the truth that, in the words of Carlyle, 'the bygone ages of the world were actually filled with living men' (1851, xi).

In 1829, after attending the funeral of the Society's founder, Scott wrote in his diary that, 'Lord Buchan is dead, a person whose immense vanity, bordering on insanity, obscured, or rather eclipsed, very considerable talents' (quoted from Cant 1981, 26). Those talents had, however, been put to the best possible use in 1780, and it is worth recalling in this context another passage from Buchan's 'Preliminary discourse' to appreciate Wilson's contribution the more:

The most unpopular studies, when under the auspices of philosophy and philanthropy, become interesting and useful to all, and are pleasing even to the fluttering sons and daughters of dissipation. I do not expect that we shall be able to introduce antiquities with the Morning Post at breakfast, or to make them light summer reading; but a great point would be gained, if they could be rendered interesting amusement for a long winter night (1780; quoted from Smellie 1782, 14).

JOSEPH ANDERSON

KEEPER OF THE MUSEUM OF NATIONAL  
ANTIQUITIES OF SCOTLAND, 1869–1913

By the time of Joseph Anderson's keepership, the Museum had become a very different institution to that referred to by Daniel Wilson in his 'Preface':

In Scotland no national collection exists, though a small body of zealous men have struggled to maintain an Archaeological Museum in the Scottish capital for the last seventy years, in defiance of obstacles of the most harassing nature. Not the least of these is the enforcement of the law of treasure-trove, by which all objects of the precious metals are held to be the property of the Crown (1851, xviii-xix).

Later that year (1851), the Government agreed, in principle at least, to the Society's repeated requests for free accommodation and funding for the Museum, which was proving to be a considerable drain on their limited resources. In fact, seven years passed before the move finally took place from rented rooms in George Street to the Royal Institution, at the Mound, where the Museum re-opened in 1859, with W T McCulloch in post as the first paid Keeper (Stevenson 1981, 80–5, 142–6). At the same time, there was a re-enactment – and broadening – of the treasure-trove law, with the added benefit that the new status accorded to the Museum meant that it was normally given first choice of new finds. The next 20 years, in particular, saw a massive increase in its collections and most of this great expansion was overseen by Joseph Anderson (Graham 1976), who in 1869 was appointed Keeper, on the death of McCulloch, a post that he was to hold until his retirement in 1913, aged 81.

Three years after Anderson became Keeper, he went on a study-tour of the national museums of Scandinavia. Thus, in 1872, he visited Copenhagen, Stockholm and Oslo (or rather, Christiania, as it was still called), with the aid

of a £10 travel grant from the Society. One of the first uses that he made of his newly-acquired knowledge of Scandinavian Viking-age antiquities was in the long introduction that he contributed to his (1873) edition of the pioneer English translation of *The Orkneyinga Saga*, by Jon Hjaltalín and Gilbert Goudie. This concludes with a section on the 'Remains of the Northmen' (ibid, cxi-cxxiii), illustrated with some previously published woodcuts of Viking antiquities taken from Daniel Wilson (1851) and elsewhere.

These illustrations include the Caithness oval brooch (Anderson 1873, cxxi) (illus 8) and finds from the Pierowall, Westray, cemetery (ibid, cxvii, cxxii) (illus 7), together with the sword from Gorton, in Morayshire (ibid, cxvi), which had been presented to the Museum, as Treasure Trove, in 1864. The latter is remarkable also as being the only Viking antiquity known to have been discovered as a result of the mid-19th-century railway boom, for it was found in making a cutting on the Strathspey line (Grieg 1940, 159, fig 74).

In this 'Introduction', Anderson quoted at length (1873, cxvii-cxx) from his first publication on a Northern subject, which had appeared the year before, in 1872 (the same year as his Scandinavian tour). This is a translation into English from a Danish version of Ibn Fadlan's, now well-known, account of the Rus boat burial (a cremation, with human sacrifice) witnessed by him on the Volga in AD 922 (Foote & Wilson 1970, 407–11), accompanied by 'notes on the origin of cremation and its continuance' (Anderson 1872).

It was, however, in this one significant respect that Anderson had returned from Scandinavia a confused man. He had discovered that cremation was a widespread Viking-age burial-rite in the homelands, with the ashes deposited in 'a clay urn' or 'stone pot'. In particular, he had observed in Christiania Museum that steatite vessels were 'of common occurrence in the grave-mounds of the Viking period in Norway', noting that they were 'also not unfrequently found in Orkney and

Shetland' (1873, cxx-cxxi). Here then is the basis for his misidentification of various prehistoric cremation-graves in Scotland as being those of Vikings – an error that he promulgated further in his major paper on the Viking-age 'relics' from Scotland, published in 1874, and again in his (1881) Rhind Lectures (see below).

#### 'NOTES ON THE RELICS OF THE VIKING PERIOD' (1874)

Joseph Anderson's 58-page paper published in the *Proceedings* (for 1872–4) is, without doubt, the major 19th-century landmark for the study of Scotland's Viking-age antiquities. Its importance has perhaps been veiled by the modesty of its title, which is merely 'Notes on the relics of the Viking Period of the Northmen in Scotland, illustrated by specimens in the Museum' (to be known here as 'Norse relics'). It was read by Anderson at the Society's meeting on 9 March 1874, and was a direct outcome of his Scandinavian trip; it represents a complete corpus of both the Museum's collection of Viking antiquities and all others that had come to his attention, whether extant in private possession or merely mentioned in antiquarian sources.

'Norse relics' may also be overlooked as a primary source because of the existence of Sigurd Grieg's more recent (and thus more complete) catalogue of *Viking Antiquities in Scotland* (1940). This was compiled by Grieg during a two-month study-tour undertaken during the summer of 1925, at the invitation of Professor A W Brøgger (on behalf of 'The Scientific Research Fund of 1919'), although it was not to be published until 1940, as Part 2 of *Viking Antiquities in Great Britain and Ireland*, edited by Haakon Shetelig. In the meantime, however, its contents had been drawn on by Anton Brøgger, first as the basis for the one (1928) Rhind Lecture that he devoted to the Norse antiquities of Scotland, entitled 'Archaeological remarks' (1929, 95–134), and then, in much greater detail, for his (1930)

monograph, *Den norske bosetningen på Shetland-Orknøyene: studier og resultater* (or *The Norwegian Colonisation of Shetland and the Orkney Islands*, with English summary, pp 271–84), although this does in fact cover the rest of Scotland as well.

The point of this brief excursus into early 20th-century Scandinavian scholarship is to establish that, whereas Grieg's catalogue (for all its shortcomings) represents a work of primary data collection, the surveys by Brøgger are largely works of synthesis (based on Anderson's and Grieg's data-collection). In preparing his catalogue, Grieg had inevitably relied heavily upon Anderson and, as all who have tried to use his catalogue have discovered, Grieg rather often garbled his sources, introducing repetitions and misquoting references. In Arne Thorsteinsson's words:

the book teems with blunders. This is due to the fact that although most of the material has been collected it has never been thoroughly studied, and until this has been done we can write cultural history over the material as much as we like, but it will never be really good. When the foundation is weak the building will also be weak (1968, 164).

In any case, Anderson's status as the pre-eminent authority on the Viking-age archaeology of Scotland was to be maintained well into the 20th century. Indeed, the Museum's 'new and enlarged' *Catalogue* was published in 1892 (following its move to Queen Street), and Anderson's final contribution to Viking studies, one of his last papers, was published in 1907 (concerning burials in Oronsay and Colonsay).

The first part (Part I) of Anderson's major paper on 'Norse relics', entitled 'Stone Urns', is concerned with the steatite vessels containing cremations found in cist-graves in Caithness, Orkney and Shetland (1874, 538–49). These, he argued, were of Viking-age date on the basis of the Norwegian parallels, already mentioned, and because their distribution in Scotland conformed to what he described as 'the old home of the Scandinavian Vikings'. However, he did

conclude that they were only 'probably of the Viking time', for reasons that he subsequently developed in the opening section of the second of his (1881) Rhind Lectures. In this, Anderson pointed out (1883, 66–78) that such steatite vessels 'are rarely placed in cists of stones [in Norway], and they are usually accompanied by such deposits of arms, implements, and ornaments', as had been described by him in his previous lecture on 'Viking burials'. In other words, Anderson fully realized that this form of burial 'is not completely comparable [in Scotland] to the common form in Norway', but he went on to conclude that it was a colonial variation 'in the time of the Scandinavian Paganism'. And thus this matter remained for him, even when the steatite vessels were re-displayed in the new museum in Queen Street, as is shown by their treatment in the (1892) *Catalogue* (pp 179–80).

Steatite was, of course, much used by the Vikings in northern Scotland, being quarried by them in Shetland. Indeed, the use of steatite vessels supplanted the established Pictish pottery tradition in Orkney and Shetland, as has been demonstrated by 20th-century excavations of Norse settlements (eg Hamilton 1956).

The second section (Part II) of 'Norse relics' (1874, 549–62) is devoted to 'Tortoise or Bowl-shaped Brooches' because:

This strikingly peculiar class of relics has a special interest as illustrative of the style of that purely pagan art, which flourished in Scandinavia even after the rest of Europe had been leavened with the refining influences of Christianity (*ibid*, 549).

It is not evident what Anderson thought was 'purely Pagan' about the ornament of oval brooches, but he made the obvious choice in picking on this distinctively Scandinavian artefact-type to open his review of Norse relics from Scottish graves. A pair of oval brooches formed an integral part of Scandinavian folk-costume, as worn by well-to-do women during the 8th to 10th centuries, if not on an everyday



basis. The oval brooches fastened the shoulder straps of an over-dress of wool or linen beneath which was worn a long shift, the finest of which were made of pleated linen. This might be fastened at the neck by a small brooch, but it is more usual to find a third brooch or pin used to fasten an outer garment – a shawl or cape (cf Kaland, S H H in Roesdahl & Wilson 1992, 192–3).

By 1874, there were eight oval brooches from Scotland in the Museum, although Anderson calculated that 'we have notices of the occurrence of fourteen pairs of these brooches in Scotland'.<sup>12</sup> One of these additional pairs was from an important female burial found at Clibberswick, on Unst (in 1863), then in Lerwick Museum (Grieg 1940, 103–5, fig 57); however, Anderson did not know of an oval brooch that had been found two years earlier in another Unst grave. This was purchased, with other objects from Shetland, by Thomas Bateman of Derbyshire, in 1861, and was subsequently acquired by the Museum, following the sale of his collection in 1893 (*ibid.*, 103).

However, by 1881, Anderson had increased his total to 16 pairs of oval brooches, supposedly known from Scotland (1883, 47). A further pair had entered the Museum as a result of the discovery of two well-furnished burials at Ballinaby, on Islay (in 1877), and he had learnt of 'a similar grave' found on Mull, the brooches from which were 'in the possession of Lord Northampton at Torloisk, but I have no further information regarding them' (*ibid.*, 40, n 1). They are now lost.

At this stage, Anderson had no knowledge of the pair of brooches in Perth Museum, already mentioned, and there is a 19th-century find of what may well have been an oval brooch that also seems to have escaped his attention (as that of many others). I am not, however, the first to suppose that the reference in the *New Stat Acct*, 15 (1845), 94, to the discovery, in 1832, of 'a small brass elliptical cockade ... and a small polished bone, supposed to be used for fastening the military plaid', in a mound near Keoldale,

Durness, Sutherland, might indicate a Viking-age grave-find containing an oval brooch. The exploration of this mound was referred to some years later by James Horsburgh, in 1867, when he stated that:

A few miles from Durness, on the road to Gualan house, there are two cairns. One of them was opened many years ago, and I was told that the bottom of a brass candlestick was found in it; this was, no doubt, an elliptical Scandinavian brooch ... The hillock on which they were placed is called Cnoc-na-cnavan – the hill of bones (1868, 278).

It seems probable that this 'opened cairn' should be equated with the 'rifled barrow' at Keoldale mentioned by Tom Lethbridge, according to whom it 'appears to have been that of a woman provided with tortoise brooches and padlocked chests' (1950, 96).<sup>13</sup> Be that as it may, in 1991, a definite pagan Norse grave was finally found in this part of Sutherland, eroding out of a sand-dune on the beach at Balnakeil – that of a young male buried with full-sized weapons (Graham-Campbell & Batey 1998, 140–2).

In fact, Anderson only arrived at his grand total of 32 oval brooches from Scotland by: (i) doubling up on the single-finds; and (ii) including Martin Martin's lost 'pair of scales made of brass', from the enigmatic grave in Ensay (or Killegray), even though such might well have been a find of actual scales. Indeed, when he came to publish the 'Perth' oval brooches for the first time, Anderson mysteriously reduced the number known to him, stating that they brought the 'total up to 15 pairs' (Anderson & Black 1888, 340).

Turning to shawl or cape brooches, Anderson knew of the fine trefoil brooch from the grave at Clibberswick, Unst, which he described as being 'ornamented with dragons' (1874, 556), that is to say what are now known as Borre-style 'gripping beasts'. He also refers to a further 'trefoil or clover-blade-shaped' brooch from one of the graves in the Pierowall cemetery, on Westray (*ibid.*, 553). Thorsteinsson has dismissed this (1968, 152–3), as originating

in a wrongful interpolation by Daniel Wilson (1851, 553), but a close reading of the sources does in fact establish the former existence of this missing brooch.

No equal-armed brooch had been found in a pagan Norse grave in Scotland until the magnificent example excavated in 1991 from the boat burial at Scar, Sanday, Orkney (Owen & Dalland 1999, 60–73), for until then the type had only been represented by a scrap-metal fragment from Harris (Graham-Campbell 1975). Finally, no disc brooch of Scandinavian type is definitely known from Scotland, although there could well have been one or more amongst the lost artefacts from the Pierowall cemetery.

This small tally of imported Scandinavian ‘third’ brooches does not, however, mean that all the wealthy Norse women in Scotland were reduced to using bone pins to fasten their cloaks – or even just to tying them together. During the first generation of raiding in the West, it had become fashionable in Norway, amongst those who had access to such material, to wear an item of Celtic or Anglo-Saxon metalwork as the ‘third’ brooch, perhaps converted from a piece of ecclesiastical loot. A few such pieces were known in the 19th century from the pagan Norse graves of Scotland (Anderson 1880, 87–8, fig 39), but of particular interest is the pair of shrine mounts that replaced oval brooches in a female burial at Càrn a’ Bharraich, Oronsay, excavated in 1891 (Anderson 1907, 437–9, figs 1–2). The most notable such discovery to have been made during the 20th century is the well-known Westness brooch from Orkney, found in 1963 (Stevenson 1968; 1989). More common, however, was the adoption of the Insular (originally Irish) fashion for the ringed pin (Fanning 1983; 1994), although other pin-types are also known, such as the exotic silver pin found in the (1878) female grave at Ballinaby, Islay, its head consisting of a filigree bead from the Baltic region (Anderson 1880, 66–7, fig 27; 1883, 26–8, fig 22; Graham-Campbell 1995, 155–6, no S6).

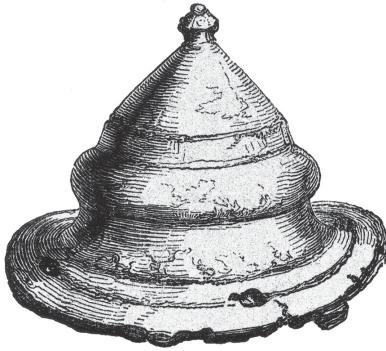
In fact, it was the two rich Ballinaby graves, found in 1878, that provided Anderson with the

basis for the second of his two major papers on the Viking-age archaeology of Scotland, which in turn formed the basis for his two (1881) Rhind Lectures. This was completed in 1879 and published the following year, but first it is necessary to return to ‘Norse relics’ for Anderson’s handling of the main types of artefact found in male Viking graves.

Part III of ‘Norse relics’ is concerned with ‘Characteristic Weapons of the Viking Period’ (Anderson 1874, 562–74) and Part IV deals with ‘Hoards of Silver Ornaments’ (ibid, 574–86). Part V (ibid, 586–7) is devoted to the Westray glass beaker (mentioned above as being a Roman vessel; *illus* 5), and the final section, Part VI, is a pioneering study of the ‘Scottish or Celtic Brooches, &c, found in Viking Graves in Scandinavia’ (ibid, 587–93). Parts V and VI are therefore not relevant to the present paper, and the contents of Part IV will not be considered here (cf Graham-Campbell 1995).

In Part III, Anderson divided the weapons into swords, shields, spears and axes, rounding it off with three miscellaneous artefacts, all from the same grave at Pierowall, on Westray, consisting of an iron key (latch-lifter), the only sickle then in the Museum, and a decorated bronze terminal (1874, 573–4). The latter he interpreted as a Scandinavian ‘sheath-mounting’ because: (i) others of its form were ‘not uncommon in Scandinavia’; and (ii), of its being associated with Scandinavian artefacts. It has since been correctly re-identified as a drinking-horn terminal of Insular Celtic workmanship (Grieg 1940, 96, fig 54).

‘Swords’, not surprisingly, were given pride of place by Anderson, with seven specimens listed (1874, 563–9). Of these only five were in the Museum, two of which had been found on the Isle of Man. One of the Scottish swords has already been noted, that from the railway cutting at Gorton, Morayshire (with no suggestion of it being from a grave). Another of the swords was from one of the Westray graves, but in pride of place was the most recent acquisition, from Rousay, Orkney. This fine sword had



ILLUS 9 The lost shield-boss discovered, in 1829, with both a human and a horse skeleton near Ballindalloch, Banff (as illustrated by Daniel Wilson in 1851)

been ploughed up, in 1826, beside the Bay of Swandro, close to Westness. It was exhibited to the Society in 1834, by Professor T S Traill, when a sketch was made of it, but the sword itself remained in private hands until 1870 (Grieg 1940, 88–90). In the caption to the drawing (SAS MS 522, 33), it is fancifully linked with Earl Paul (c 1128–36), who was abducted from Rousay by Swein Asleifsson whilst staying with Sigurd of Westness. Anderson gave this romantic twaddle short shrift, stating correctly that ‘it is a sword of the Viking period, and ... may be one or even two centuries earlier than Earl Paul’s time’ (1874, 566).

The other two Scottish swords listed by Anderson were known to him only from illustrations: that from Islay, published by Pennant but now lost (illus 4); and one from Sanday, Orkney, which is now in the Hunterian Museum, Glasgow (Grieg 1940, 171–2, fig 86). However, he went on to discuss the relics, comprising a sword, shield-boss and spear-head (then in private possession, at Rosshdu Castle), which had been found at Boiden, by Loch Lomond, as noted above (Stewart 1854). Unlike the objects themselves, the sketches made in 1852, for communication to the Society in February 1853, still exist (SAS MS 498). Anderson was curiously reluctant to accept these

as Viking antiquities, suggesting that ‘they may have belonged to the Early instead of the Later Iron Age’, although he did specifically comment on their similarity ‘to the weapons from Viking graves in Orkney and in Ireland’ (1874, 570).

Another, and even more problematic, lost find is that from Ballindalloch which is on the border between Moray and Banff. The only information concerning this grave remains that provided by Daniel Wilson (1851, 456–7), as a result of a communication to the Secretary of the Society from its Librarian, J Stewart. In this letter (now lost), Stewart reported the discovery, in 1829, of a human skeleton, together with that of a horse, ‘on a moor about a mile from Ballindalloch’. The labourer who discovered this burial also told him that ‘there were a quantity of rings and bits of iron, one of them like a great hoop: but all completely rusted’. In addition, Stewart had been able:

to get hold of what I take to be the [bridle] bit of the horse, two bronze rings, joined by a double link of iron, and also some bronze rings which may have belonged to its harness. There were also some bits of wood,

as well as what was described as ‘a curious little iron cup’. The letter was accompanied by a sketch of the latter from which Wilson had ‘the annexed woodcut’ prepared so as to be able to illustrate it as a shield-boss (illus 9). Wilson decided that the ‘iron hoop’ was the remains of a chariot and so the whole became ‘the tomb of a British charioteer’.

Wilson subsequently changed his mind about this and, in the second edition of *Prehistoric Annals* (1863, II, 153–5), the shield-boss is described as Anglo-Saxon, thus providing ‘a remarkable indication of the presence of the Pagan Saxon so far beyond the limits of the most northern kingdom of the heptarchy’. In ‘Norse relics’, Anderson re-interpreted the supposed chariot-wheel as the rim of a shield and pronounced that ‘the umbo is of a form which was Scandinavian as well as Anglo-Saxon. It may have been Scoto-Scandinavian’

(1874, 567). It was omitted by Grieg from *Viking Antiquities* (1940), but neither Brøgger (1930, 200) nor Shetelig (1954, 72) ruled out the possibility at least of it having been a Norse burial. The fact remains, however, that the Ballindalloch shield-boss does not belong to any normal Viking-age type, and it has most recently been suggested, once again, that it may be of 6th/7th-century Anglo-Saxon manufacture (Proudfoot & Aliaga-Kelly 1996, 3–4, fig 3).

There are three shield-bosses in Anderson's main corpus (1874, 570–1), although his opening statement confuses the issue somewhat, 'We have in the Museum fragments of three shield-bosses, of semi-circular form, and one entire one, found in different parts of Orkney'. This was presumably an error for two and one, making three in total. The first boss listed by him forms part of the Pierowall material and was in fragmentary condition (although illustrated by him in reconstructed form), and his second boss (in many fragments) is that already mentioned as having been found near the Swandro sword, whereas the third, described as 'more conical in shape and ... entire', is otherwise unprovenanced.

Anderson's third category of weapons is spear-heads (1874, 571), of which he wrote that, 'we only have four in the Museum that may be considered of this period'. Two of these are amongst the Westray material and the third was 'found in, or close beside, a cist at Watten, Caithness', although the primary source (from 1871) states unambiguously that it was 'found in a short stone cist ... in which were the remains of a skeleton' (ibid).

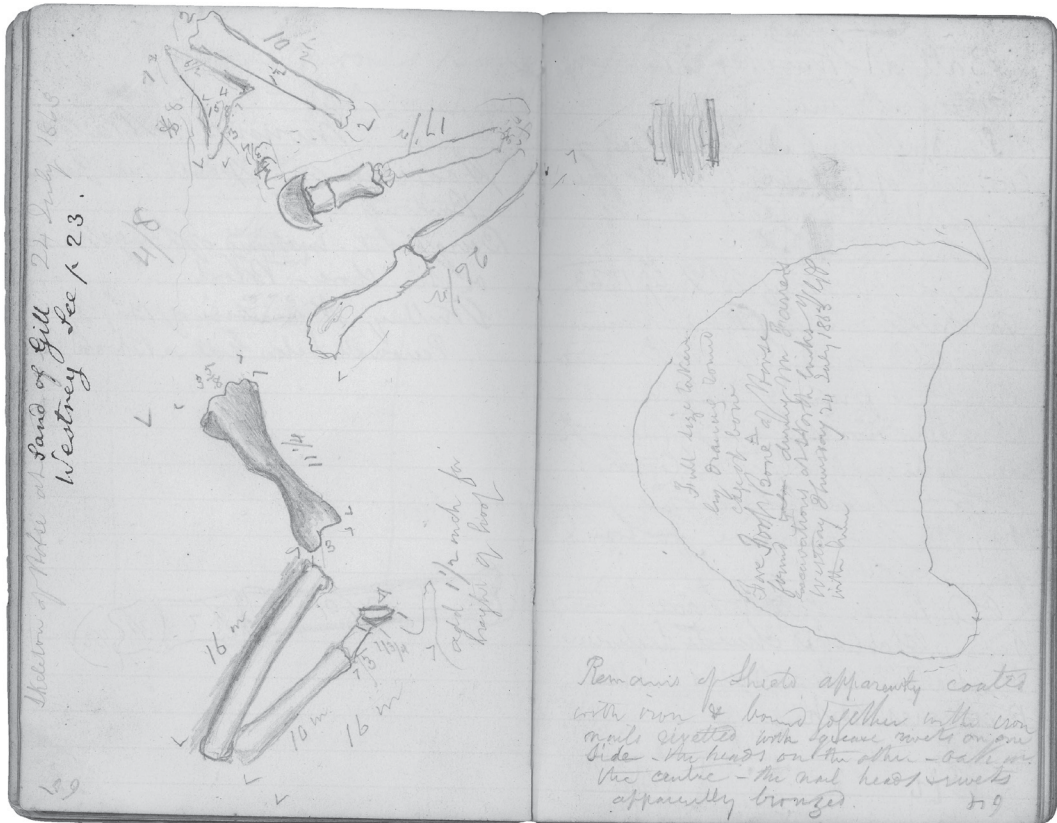
Anderson's fourth find of a (supposedly) Viking-age spear-head is listed as, 'A fragment of the socket portion of a large spear-head found in a cist at Dunrobin Castle, Sutherland'. This cist is distinctive chiefly for having been covered with a Pictish symbol-stone; it contained (apparently) two adult male skeletons and a corroded iron object, since described by Joanna Close-Brooks (1980, 334, fig 5.6) as 'either a ferrule, or the socket for some tool or weapon,

such as a spear or sickle, of which the blade has decayed'. As a result of her re-appraisal of this find, in which she cautions against too readily accepting the detail of the workmen's account of their discovery (made in 1854), Close-Brooks concludes (ibid) that, 'it is unlikely that the grave is Viking, though it has been listed as such (Grieg 1940, 17)', supposing it to have been 'part of a Christian long cist cemetery'.<sup>14</sup>

There is one spear-head, which had entered the Museum in 1870, that is not mentioned in 'Norse relics', but which Grieg was to include in *Viking Antiquities* (1940, 80). This identification was accepted by Shetelig who discussed it as being from one of the three Viking-age cremation graves known to him from Scotland (1954, 88), although commenting that 'the authority of the report is, however, not without question'. Indeed, no source has yet been located to confirm the entry in the 1892 *Catalogue* (p 276: IL 211–13) where it is stated that this spear-head was found together with an iron buckle and part of a bone comb, 'with ashes and burnt bones in tumulus at Lyking', in Orkney Mainland, other than the record of their presentation to the Museum by the Executors of Professor T S Traill, in 1870 (*Proc Soc Antiq Scot*, 8 (1868–70), 390).

There is no doubt that the Lyking comb is of Norse type (Grieg 1940, 80, fig 44) and thus it can only be supposed that, at the time of writing 'Norse relics', Anderson had failed to recognize it as such. In any case, as described above, he believed that Viking-age cremations in Orkney were characterized by the presence of a steatite vessel. Be that as it may, at least by the time of the 1892 *Catalogue*, Anderson had placed the Lyking artefacts on display amongst those of the 'Viking Period' (as above).

The final category of weapons in 'Norse relics' is 'axe-heads', but the Museum contained only a single fragmentary example, amongst the material from Westray (Anderson 1874, 573). In this context, one is forcibly reminded of Anderson's final words in his 'Viking burials' lecture (1883, 65), 'The uninstructed excavators have some respect for stone and bronze, but



ILLUS 10 Notes and sketches by George Petrie of horse bones and an iron rivet from a grave at Sand of Gill, Westray (24 July 1863)

old iron is shovelled into oblivion without a moment's hesitation'.

Given the motley collection of material at his disposal, Anderson did a first-rate job of identifying and ordering it for the first time. What he was lacking, however, was any worthwhile grave-groups, hence his other concerns – for typology, distribution and chronology, as also for the technology of oval-brooch production. For instance, he writes of three grave-groups amongst the Westray material in the Museum, but they are not discussed by him as such, the artefacts being listed by type. The largest of these assemblages, which he believed to consist of an oval brooch (1874, 552, no 3), a penannular brooch (missing; but cf 1880, 87–8, fig 39), a shield-boss (1874, 570, no 1), a spear-head (ibid,

571, no 1), and an axe-head (ibid, 573), is now in fact known to comprise a mixture of artefacts from at least two (and probably three) Pierowall graves, as Thorsteinsson has demonstrated from some contemporary correspondence (1968, 160–1). The second of Anderson's supposed grave-groups consisted of a sword (1874, 566, no 2) and a spear-head (ibid, 571, no 2) from the collection of Westray weapons given to the Museum, in 1863, by Colonel Balfour of Trenabie, who had purchased them at the sale of Kirkwall Museum (*Proc Soc Antiq Scot*, 5 (1862–4), 16). Whereas there is no firm basis for supposing that these two particular items (IL 195–6) were originally associated, and such was rejected by Thorsteinsson (1968, 162–3), there exists some minimal evidence to suggest that

this Westray collection (ex-Kirkwall Museum) derives from perhaps three different graves (Graham-Campbell & Paterson forthcoming).

From the same source, Balfour also acquired – and passed on to the Museum – some iron rivets, identified as ‘fragments of a shield’, together with ‘the bronze cheek ring of a bridle, with part of the iron bit’ (IL 193–4). These had been recovered by a youthful George Petrie, in 1841, ‘at a grave on the sand of Gill, Westray, where the skeletons of a man and a horse, with fragments of a shield, &c, had been found shortly before’ (*Proc Soc Antiq Scot*, 5 (1872–4), 16, no 21). However, Anderson does not mention this as a grave-group in ‘Norse relics’, presumably because it did not include an actual shield-boss and Thorsteinsson chose to reject it as a genuine grave-find (1968, 158–60), although he failed to equate the rivets with the supposed ‘fragment of a shield’ (cf Anderson 1880, discussed below). Much later in his life, Petrie was responsible for helping James Farrer to discover another horse burial on the margin of the Sand of Gill, likewise accompanied by rivets, as recorded in one of his notebooks (SAS MS 550, 64–5), on 24 July 1863 (illus 10). This unpublished source resolves Thorsteinsson’s problem (1968, 161–2), as to who actually found this grave (ibid, 171, grave 17), and locates it ‘near shore north of North Church’ (Petrie notebook, p 23).

After all these uncertainties, it is something of a relief that Anderson’s last assemblage mentioned in ‘Norse relics’ (1874, 573–4) does indeed form (all, or part of) a genuine grave-group, discovered at Pierowall in 1855, by James Farrer (Thorsteinsson 1968, 170–1, grave 16). According to him this comprised a knife, sickle, key, and the (drinking-horn) mount mentioned above, together with wood and rivets, thought then to be part of a shield, but which could well represent the remains of a chest. On the other hand, there is no way of knowing whether or not this grave-group is complete as buried (or even as found), but one can only note the absence of jewellery from what otherwise has the appearance of being the remnants of a

high-status female assemblage (Grieg 1940, 96, fig 54).

#### ‘TWO VIKING GRAVES IN ISLAY’ (1880)

There must thus have been much excitement when, in 1878, two well-equipped pagan Norse graves – one male, the other female – were found ‘in the sandy links at Ballinaby, in the island of Islay’. They lay side by side, with a rich diversity of weapons, implements and ornaments, such as had not been found together in Scotland since the 18th century. Their donation to the Museum must have given Anderson much satisfaction; at last, he had the basis for writing a proper paper on ‘Viking burial customs’, which he read to the Society in December 1879 (Anderson 1880). But, alas, there are no grave-plans.

The contents of the Ballinaby graves were reviewed by Anderson in the context of the ‘Norse relics’ in the Museum and those which he had seen in Scandinavia. In this he was largely successful, although he suggested (if tentatively) that the fragmentary heckles were helmet parts, presumably because he was under the impression that all the iron objects had formed part of the male assemblage (ibid, 63, fig 18). On the other hand, he used an ethnographic parallel for the glass linen smoother, in the form of one sent to him for that purpose from a house in Caithness in which it had been used ‘long ago’ (ibid, 63–4, figs 19–24).

#### VIKING-AGE BOAT BURIALS IN ORKNEY?

Anderson remarked that ‘the island of Islay has yielded a larger number of burials of the Norse Viking time than any other district of Scotland, the island of Westray in Orkney excepted’ (ibid, 70–1), before passing on ‘to the general question of the burial customs of the Norse sea-kings’. A review of the saga evidence led him on to a description of Norwegian ship burials, bringing him to the conclusion that, ‘ship-burials of Norse Vikings have occurred in three instances on our own shores, and ... the relics from them have

been for many years in our Museum, although their distinctive character has been hitherto unrecognised' (ibid, 78). The distinctive feature in all three cases was the presence of iron rivets; these had been misinterpreted as belonging to shields, until Anderson recalled that 'there is no instance of a shield with iron rivets' in Norway, whereas such 'clinker-nails' are characteristic of ship and boat burials (ibid, 79).

The first of Anderson's suggested boat burials from Scotland, for all the vessels found in Norse graves in the western Viking world have been small boats, rather than ships like those buried at Oseberg and Gokstad in Norway, is Petrie's (1841) find from Gill, Westray, which he had ignored in 'Norse relics'. However, the nine surviving rivets would not be considered today to be convincing enough evidence from which to extrapolate the burial of an entire vessel (cf Müller-Wille 1974). Anderson's other two suggested boat burials are also from Westray (1880, 79–80), but again there are not enough rivets surviving to be confident that there had been a complete boat in either of them (in the absence of any proper excavation and recording), rather than a partial boat used as a bier, or perhaps to cover the body. Indeed, one of them is the (1855) Pierowall female grave-group, described above, that might have contained a chest. The third is another Pierowall grave, found in 1863 (Thorsteinsson 1968, 171, grave 17); this certainly contained a horse, but less certainly a complete boat, with only 21 rivets surviving, although it remains the most probable of Anderson's three candidates for having been an actual boat burial (Allen 2002, 249–50). However, there are no recorded grave-goods, apart from a couple of iron buckles that presumably formed part of the horse harness, and some iron fragments (Grieg 1940, 92–3, fig 52).

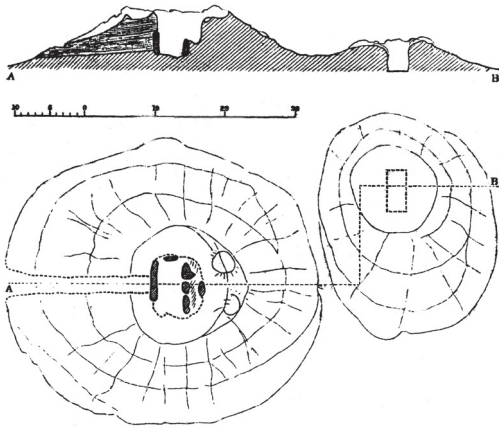
On the other hand, there is every reason to suppose that there might have been one or more boat burials at Pierowall given the excavation, during the latter part of the 20th century, of two such male graves at Westness, Rousay (Kaland 1993, 315–16, figs 17.7 & 8; Allen 2002), and the now well-known triple grave in a boat at

Scar, Sanday (Owen & Dalland 1999; Allen 2002).

#### VIKING GRAVES FROM EIGG

Not surprisingly, the Ballinaby burials formed the starting-point for Anderson's survey of 'Viking burials' in the first of his Rhind Lectures delivered in Oct/Nov 1881 (1883, 14–65). Also not surprisingly, given that so little time had passed since he had read his paper to the Society on this subject (8 December 1879), he had little new to say, except that he was able to include the contents of three pagan Norse graves from Eigg that had been published in the meantime (MacPherson 1878), and deposited in the Museum. The first of the Eigg discoveries had in fact been made about 50 years earlier, when a mound was levelled, but the antiquities had escaped notice, despite them including the finest Viking-age sword-hilt to have been discovered in Scotland (Grieg 1940, 63–6, fig 37). The artefacts together with which it was found comprise a (lost) whetstone, and a fine Insular bronze bucket-mount, wrongly identified as a 'buckle' by Anderson (1883, fig 41), and as a 'mounting for a harness' by Grieg (1940, fig 38). There was also what Anderson correctly identified as part of a three-legged medieval bronze pot (1883, 53–4; MacPherson 1878, fig 7), despite subsequent suggestions by Brøgger (1930, 225) and Grieg (1940, 66) that it might be a small Norse anvil.

The publication of this remarkable sword-hilt was occasioned by the opening of two adjacent mounds in Eigg, in 1875, by Professor Norman MacPherson and Mr Arthur Joass (MacPherson 1878, 589–92, figs 8–15). They proved to contain pagan Norse burials, both with a sword and other grave-goods (Grieg 1940, 67–70, figs 39–40), and there is even a published plan and section of sorts, made by Joass (MacPherson 1878, figs 12–13); this shows the mounds as having contained graves (illus 11), but nothing as to the disposition of their contents.



ILLUS 11 Plan and section by Arthur Joass of two 'tumuli' in Eigg, excavated in 1875 (as published in 1878)

#### KILORAN BAY, COLONSAY: A VIKING BOAT BURIAL

As fate would have it, the year after Anderson's delivery of his Rhind Lecture on 'Viking burials' saw the discovery (in June 1882) of the single most important Viking grave yet known from the west of Scotland – that of a man and his horse, with a boat, at Kiloran Bay on Colonsay. Its contents still remain to be published in detail (but are listed in Grieg 1940, 48–61, figs 26–33), and all aspects of the burial will be fully treated in *The Pagan Norse Graves of Scotland* (Graham-Campbell & Paterson forthcoming). It is, however, important to note here the existence of two grave-plans, of which the first (SAS MS 175c) was drawn up in 1883 from measurements taken by Malcolm McNeill during the (1882) excavation. Both this (illus 12) and its companion plan, made on the occasion of the second (1883) excavation, when the skeleton of the horse was recovered (SAL Brown Portfolio L5.72; Philpott 1990, 26, fig), are the work of the architect, William Galloway, who was then engaged on the restoration of Oronsay Priory. The former constitutes the first measured plan of a pagan Norse burial to exist for Scotland; regrettably, it was also the last such record to

be made for nearly 50 years, and itself awaited publication until 1984 (RCAHMS 1984, 150, no 298).

Nothing of significance about the Kiloran Bay burial appeared in print until 1907, after Galloway's death, his own intention of publishing a report in *Archaeologia* having come to naught. This was in Anderson's last paper on Norse relics, which begins with an account of the contents of a grave found on Oronsay, in 1891 (McNeill 1891; Anderson 1907, 437–41). The Kiloran Bay burial was written up on the basis of Galloway's notes (*ibid*, 443–9) and a rough sketch-plan provided by the Rev Maxwell Joass (*ibid*, fig 8), but the objects were on exhibition in the Royal Scottish Museum, and Anderson only illustrated them with a rough 'drawing made when they were exhibited in the Fisheries Exhibition, London, in 1883' (*ibid*, fig 9).<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless, this is an important paper that brought to an end Anderson's remarkable publication record of the Norse antiquities of Scotland, by means of which he had established their study on a firm factual basis well before the end of the 19th century.

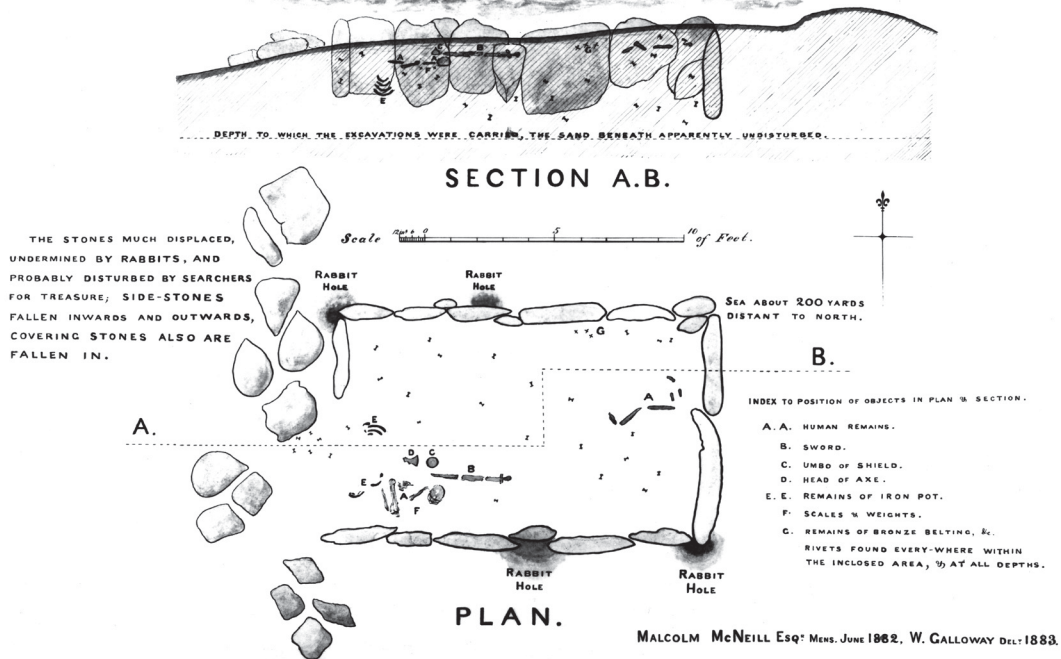
#### THE TWIN HEROES

As this saga has progressed through three centuries of antiquarian observation and speculation, concerning 'Danes in this Country' and 'The Vikings in Scotland', so as to arrive at the mid-19th century with the development of scientific archaeology, there have emerged two towering figures: Daniel Wilson and Joseph Anderson. If designated here as 'The Twin Heroes', it is because they were truly the giants in the land, without whom it would have been impossible for those who have since embarked on the study of the Scandinavian graves, hoards and single-finds of Viking-age date, discovered before the rise in 20th-century settlement excavation and metal-detecting, to have made anything approaching a worthwhile contribution to interdisciplinary Viking studies in Scotland.



## VIKING GRAVE, KILORAN BAY, COLONSAY.

DISCOVERED JUNE 1882.



ILLUS 12 Plan and section drawn by William Galloway (in 1883) of that part of the boat burial which had been excavated in 1882, by Malcom McNeill, at Kiloran Bay, Colonsay

The energy and initiative displayed by both Daniel Wilson (Hulse 1999) and by Joseph Anderson (Graham 1976; Clarke 2002) seem to have been boundless in their search for data and if, on occasion, their subsequent deductions can be shown to have been incorrect, these were not generally the result of mere speculation. It was rather that lack of knowledge which will, in due course, render many more recent deductions inaccurate, or even irrelevant.

In this attempt to understand, and thus to highlight, the outstanding nature of both Wilson's and Anderson's contributions to Viking studies in Scotland, aided by their Scandinavian mentors (Munch and Worsaae), what must not be overlooked is that their achievements in this field formed only a small part of their overall contribution to our ability

to comprehend something of Scotland's earliest past today.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are many who have assisted me with the preparation of this paper during the last decade, suggesting or locating obscure references, while others have advised me on various drafts. Amongst these friends and colleagues, I would particularly like to mention: Trevor Cowie, David Henry, Fraser Hunter, Lawrence Keppie, Euan MacKie, Andrew Martin, Caroline Paterson, Alison Sheridan, Andrew Wawn and David Wilson, to all of whom I am most grateful for their assistance. I also wish to thank the Society for having honoured me with the invitation to give the Rhind Lectures for 1995–6, as well as its officers on that occasion, notably Fionna Ashmore (as Director), for the efficiency of their organization and the excellence of their entertainment.

## NOTES

- 1 Owen's (2002) paper was delivered at a conference held in Normandy in 1999, and so she was unable to take into account Stummann Hansen's paper (published in 2000). The latter serves to highlight the fact that timber farmsteads, of the type postulated by Owen for transport across the North Sea, are currently unknown from 8th/9th-century Norway. This is not to diminish the significance of Barbara Crawford's excavation, at the Biggings, Papa Stour, Shetland, of a 13th-century log-timbered *stofa*, prefabricated in Norway (Crawford & Ballin Smith 1999), rather it is intended to be a warning against the back-projection of such imports to the 9th century. Indeed, Crawford and Ballin Smith concluded that, 'It seems very likely that the *stofa* at the Biggings would have been one of the first to be imported into Shetland' (ibid, 247).
- 2 These two papers, by Alfred Johnston, contain essentially the same archaeological information, the earlier of the two (1903a) having been delivered in April 1902, on the occasion of the AGM of the Viking Club in London, and the second (1903b) to the meeting of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, in Edinburgh, on 8 December 1902.
- 3 Wallace's identification, although in a manner of speaking 'correct', was not of course based on any knowledge of the comparative material in Scandinavia, for such had to wait until the mid-19th century, with the (1846) tour of Scotland by J J A Worsaae (described later in the text).
- 4 As, for example, by James Farrer, MP, in the summer of 1854 (1862a, 11, 16–19), which preceded his opening of Maes Howe in 1861 (ibid, 13–16; Stuart 1864b); another Admiralty Surveyor, Commander A G Edye, 'examined' a mound on Barra in 1862, in which he found a Viking-age grave (see note 12, below).
- 5 That the Cornaigbeg graves are to be interpreted as most probably forming part of a Viking-age cemetery is because of the similarity of their description with that, of similar date, of those found on Westray, including the presence of horse skeletons (see below). In antiquarian accounts of Viking-age graves, shield bosses were often mistaken for helmets (as on Westray), and an explanation for the 'brass spear' is suggested by the fact that a ringed pin found at Saever Howe, Orkney, was initially described as a 'spear-head'. This is recorded by James Farrer (1862b), who commented, 'It is stated that the exact counterpart of this weapon was found many years previously sticking in a skull about a mile to the north-west of the Knowe.' The latter is the ringed pin, from 'near the Earl's Palace at Birsay', illustrated and described by Grieg (1940, 167, 169, fig 84; Fanning 1983, 338, no 27).
- 6 Colleen Batey's recent suggestion (2002, 189–90) that the Caithness (1786) oval brooch, now in Copenhagen, never entered the Museum with its pair (but was a gift to Worsaae from the Duke of Sutherland) is therefore at odds with Worsaae's own testimony at the time; indeed, Anderson himself annotated the Museum's copy of the printed 'List of Donations' (*Archaeologia Scotica*, 3 (1831), 61), 'One of these brooches was given to Mr Worsaae when he was here and is now in the museum at Copenhagen JA'. This accords with Anderson's printed statement (1874, 550), 'One of this pair of brooches was given to Mr Worsaae, on his visit to Scotland, along with other Scottish specimens, in exchange for representative specimens of Danish antiquities; and I had no difficulty in recognising it in one of the cases of the Museum at Copenhagen' (cf Anderson 1883, 43–4, n 4).
- 7 I am most grateful to David Henry, of The Pinkfoot Press, for permission to quote from Åse Goldsmith's draft translation of this letter, undertaken in preparation for the companion volume to his book, *Viking Ireland* (1995), on the subject of Worsaae's travels in Scotland.
- 8 I am most grateful to Euan MacKie for the information that Worsaae's field notebook, in the National Museum, Copenhagen, contains a plan and two sketches of 'Backie' broch (MacKie 2002, 50, ill 3.7).
- 9 Reviewed by A H Rhind (the founder of the Rhind Lectures), aged 21, in the *London Quarterly Review*, 4 (Sept 1854); John Stuart commented in his *Memoir* of Rhind (1864a, 6–7), that 'this paper . . . was noted as remarkable at the time of its appearance, by competent judges, who only came to know of its authorship in after days'.
- 10 The version of these papers quoted by Wilson in 1851 (p 17, n 2) was that published separately in Dublin during the second week of January 1847, between the dates of two letters written by Worsaae to his mother (8 & 15 Jan), one just before and the other just after it was printed (Henry (ed) 1995, 15, 17), with the title: *The Antiquities of*

*Ireland and Denmark; being the substance of two communications made to the Royal Irish Academy at its Meetings, Nov 30, and Dec 7, 1846.*

- 11 There is no intention in this paper to trace the development of runic studies during the 19th century in Scotland, but the opening of Maes Howe by James Farrer in 1861, with the inscriptions privately published by him (1862a), obviously provoked a flurry of interest and activity, as described by Michael Barnes (1994).
- 12 The contents of the female grave removed from Barra by Commander Edye, in 1862 (Anderson 1874, 555, no. 8), remained in his possession until 1895, when he sold them to the British Museum; once thought to have been a double grave (Grieg 1940, 72–3), the supposed weapons have been re-identified as textile implements, in the form of an iron weaving-batten (Gordon 1990, 153, illus 2, d) and a pair of heckles (*British Museum Guideto Anglo-Saxon Antiquities* (1923), 128–9).
- 13 Colleen Batey has proposed that three items from Keoldale (a bronze bell, an enamelled penannular brooch and two 'bronze and silver ear-rings'), illustrated by Tom Lethbridge in 1948 (86–7, fig 11, nos 13–15), might conceivably 'represent a Viking grave as suggested by Lethbridge' (Batey 1993, 155–6, fig 6.5), but in fact he dated them to the '7th-8th cent.?' (1948, 87) and stated only that he had seen a 'site' (presumably a midden) 'which may date back to the days of the Norse settlement ... within a short distance of [the above-mentioned] rifled barrow' (1950, 96). As Batey herself comments (1993, 156), 'the dating of the objects would conventionally probably be pre-Viking' and, given that the supposed 'ear-rings' do not appear to have received any discussion to date, it is worth drawing attention to a seemingly related S-shaped object (lost) from the Pictish silver hoard found at Norrie's Law, Fife (Graham-Campbell 1991, 249, 250, illus 1, no 7).
- 14 Stuart (1864a, 19–20) quotes a letter from A H Rhind, dated 23 August 1858, to his friend, Dr Davis, concerning this Dunrobin grave in which he presents four reasons 'for believing the deposit to be Scandinavian'. On the other hand, it is not evident why Anderson did not suggest that some of the post-broch burials 'excavated' by the Rev Maxwell Joass (1873, 97–102), at the broch of Kintradwell, on the coast of Sutherland (5km north of Brora), might not likewise be interpreted

as Viking-age graves, notably the one located apart that was slab-lined and contained 'an iron dagger-blade' (ibid, 98; Anderson 1883, 219), but – no doubt, as a result – they have escaped subsequent comment (eg Grieg 1940; Batey 1993).

- 15 It was not until 1924, 11 years after Anderson's retirement, that the Kiloran Bay grave-goods were transferred (on loan) from RSM to NMAS.

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