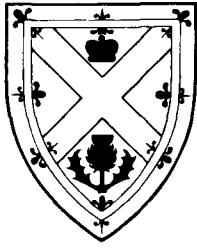

C L CURLE

**PICTISH AND NORSE FINDS FROM THE
BROUGH OF BIRSAY 1934-74**

ILLUSTRATION T BORTHWICK

APPENDIX J R HUNTER & C D MORRIS

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FOREWORD

Birsay is one of the most numinous of Scotland's archaeological sites standing as a rich outpost of Pictish and Viking culture as though defying the Atlantic. The finds discovered over the last half century have added more to our knowledge of Scottish history of the 1st millennium of our era than any single site in the whole of the country. The excavations conducted by a whole range of scholars, Scottish and English, have produced for us material which is only now being gradually released to a more general scholarly audience.

Mrs Curle's volume is a labour of love and has produced many new and rich facets, particularly concerning the manufacture and embellishment of metalwork on the site in pre-Viking times. I have read it with great attention and interest and am sure it will stand for a long time as a major tool of Orcadian and Scottish scholarship and as such is highly to be recommended.

David M Wilson
Director, The British Museum

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In addition I wish to thank those who have so kindly advised me on particular problems: Professor L Alcock, Mrs Brighitt Arrhenius, Dr E Bakka, Mr J Graham-Campbell, Dr Kristine Danielson-Ambrosiani, Dr A Lundström, A Leistøl, Mr Arthur MacGregor, Dr H B Madsen, Professor O'Kelly, Mr D J Rackham, Dr R Tylecote and Dr D M Wilson.

I am indebted to those who contributed specialist reports: Dr J R Hunter and Mr C D Morris for the appendix containing their report on the excavation below Room 5 of 1973 and 1974, together with Dr Seller's exhaustive report on the animal bones, that of Miss Alison Donaldson on plant remains and of Dr Woodward on shell. Mr Robertson contributed an account of his experiments in constructing two piece moulds. Mr Rackham identified the species of bone used for artifacts. Dr Hunter has contributed a valuable report on the glass fragments.

I must also thank Mr Larner for the excellent photographs of the finds, Mr Bryce and Miss McQueen of the National Museum laboratory for the conservation of the perishable objects and Mrs K Antonio for providing X-rays. A special debt is due to Miss Bell of the Museum for all the care and interest she took with typing the text and catalogue, and to Mr W G Ford for kindly checking the measurements of the finds.

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