

## VI.

NOTES RESPECTING TWO BRONZE SHIELDS RECENTLY PURCHASED FOR THE MUSEUM OF THE SOCIETY; AND OTHER BRONZE SHIELDS. BY MR WILLIAM T. M'CULLOCH, KEEPER OF THE MUSEUM. (PLATE IV.)

The two circular shields now exhibited were found in 1837, in digging a drain in a marshy field near Yetholm, about eight miles south from Kelso. They are formed of thin bronze. One of them measures  $23\frac{1}{2}$  inches in diameter, and is ornamented by thirty concentric rows of small convex studs or knobs, alternating with projecting circles or ribs; the other measures 24 inches, and has twenty-four rows of knobs and ribs. In the centre of each shield is a hollow circular umbo or boss, projecting  $1\frac{3}{4}$  inch, and measuring 4 inches in diameter. The bronze handle of each shield is placed across the boss, and is fastened by rivets to its edges. Each shield has on the inner side two small metal tongues in the same line of diameter, which is shown on the front of the shield by a larger knob or rivet, each is placed six inches from the outer edge; the use of these tongues, which also occur in other bronze shields, is not very apparent. Shortly after their discovery they were exhibited, by George Wauchope, Esq. of Niddry, at a meeting of the Society, on the 10th of April 1837. They are well shown in Plate IV.

The only other recorded example of bronze shields having been found in Scotland, occurred in the year 1780, on a farm called Luggtonrigge, near Giffin Castle, in the parish of Beith, Ayrshire. The group, in number five or six, were discovered in a peat moss several feet below the surface, and were stated to have been arranged on their edges, so as to form a circle. One of the shields, which displays twenty-nine concentric circles, and measures  $26\frac{3}{4}$  inches in diameter, was presented to the Society of Antiquaries of London.

Shields of the same type have been found in various places in England. Two specimens are in the Goodrich Court collection, one having twenty-seven and the other twenty concentric rings of knobs and ribs: They were found in a turbarry called Rhyd-y-gorse, not far from Aberystwyth, in

Cardiganshire. Sir Samuel Meyrick, in a communication to the Society of Antiquaries of London (*Archæologia*, vol. xxiii. p. 95), says respecting these shields, that "they are ancient British, and termed, in that language, the *Tarian*," and such as were "used by the Britons before the Roman invasion, and such as they had been taught to manufacture by the Phœnicians, for when that people commenced trading with the Britannic Isles the targets were of wickerwork—in which the natives are said to have excelled—of a circular form, flat, and covered with hide." Another specimen in the same collection was found in 1784 in a peat moss at Moel Sinbod, near Capel Curig, Caernarvonshire. Meyrick also mentions that one was found near Newcastle-on-Tyne, but the owner, wishing to oblige his friends, had it cut up like a cake, so that each might have a slice.

Mr Roach Smith describes, in the published Catalogue of his own collection, two similar shields, which were found in the bed of the River Thames, the one off London, which measures  $21\frac{1}{2}$  inches in diameter, and has eleven concentric rings; and the other off Woolwich, having twenty-six concentric circles. Along with the latter was dredged up a bronze leaf-shaped sword. These shields are now in the British Museum. Mr Smith is inclined to suppose them of Eastern origin.

In the "Journal of the Archæological Institute" (vol. vii. p. 77), is an account of the discovery of a bronze shield in a peat moss at a depth of about 12 inches from the surface, near a very perfect cromlech, about 400 yards south-east of Harlech, North Wales. It measures 22 inches in diameter, and has seven concentric ribs, without any knobs. Like those found in Ayrshire, this shield had been buried in an upright position. A shield similar to the last-mentioned one was discovered at Coveney Fen, near Ely, in 1846, and with it was found another, having only two outer concentric circles, the rest of the shield being covered with projecting ribs of a meandering pattern, supposed to represent snakes. These are both preserved in the museum of the Society of Antiquaries of Cambridge. The result of analysis of the metal showed in the one case—copper 87·50, tin 11·62; and in the other, copper 87·72, tin 11·72; and nickel 0·40.

The British Museum contains a specimen of a shield which has only two rows of large projecting knobs, with a single concentric circle or rib

between them, and a large boss in the centre. It measures 14 inches in diameter, and was found in Oxfordshire, on the lower margin of the pool of little Wittenham, or Day's Lock, upon the river Isis, near an earthwork called Dyke Hills, and three quarters of a mile from the entrenchment upon Sinodun or little Wittenham Hill. The shield is figured and described in the "Archæologia," vol. xxvii. p. 298.

In Lord Londesborough's collection there is a shield similar to the specimen found in Oxfordshire, but smaller in size. It was found in Ireland. The shield measures 14 inches in diameter, has a large boss, and two rows of knobs, with one raised concentric rib between. It is said to have been found along with a large bronze spear-head in a rath or mound at Athenry, county Galway.

It may be worth noticing, that of the bronze shields found in Great Britain, seven were discovered in Scotland, six in England, and four in Wales, extending over a district of country from Luggtonrigge, in the parish of Beith, Ayrshire, in the north; to Woolwich, Kent, in the south. One only is stated to have been discovered in Ireland.

Circular shields occur on several of the early monumental stones found in the north-eastern parts of Scotland, and which are figured in the "Sculptured Stones of Scotland," by Mr John Stuart, Sec. S.A. Scot. Plate 79 of that work shows a stone, now in the churchyard of Aberlemno, Forfarshire, on which is cut, in relief, a battle scene; two of the figures are drawn in profile, and each bears a shield, which is slightly convex in outline, and is held by the left hand grasping the handle inside the projecting boss in its centre. On another stone at Benvie, Forfarshire, plate 126, is a figure on horseback, bearing a shield, which is ornamented by three concentric circles. There is no evidence to show of what material the shields thus represented were composed, but in all likelihood they were made of bronze.

In the "Horæ Ferales" (1863) there are notices of a shield found at Bingen on the Rhine; also of eight discovered in a tomb opened at Cære, in Italy; of one found in a tomb at Tarquinii; and of another discovered in the Island of Crete.

Several shields found in Denmark, with a similar style of ornament, though slightly differing in pattern, are figured and described in Mr Worsaae's Catalogue of the Museum at Copenhagen, 1859.

Circular bronze shields were found by Mr Layard in a chamber of the Palace at Nimroud. The diameter of the most perfect, which is now in the British Museum, measures 30 inches. The handles of each were of iron, and were fastened by six bosses or nails, the heads of which formed an ornament on the outside of the shield. They were held by one hand when in use, in the same manner as the other shields now described, as is shown on various sculptured stones found in the excavations at Nineveh.

A portion of a shield formed of thin bronze, with a projecting boss, which was found in a tomb at Thebes, was presented to the Museum of the Society by the late Mr A. Henry Rhind.

This being the concluding meeting of the Session, the usual thanks were voted to the Office-bearers; and the Society adjourned to the commencement of next Winter's session.

Fig. 1.—Front view of Bronze Shield ; diameter, 23 $\frac{3}{4}$  inches.

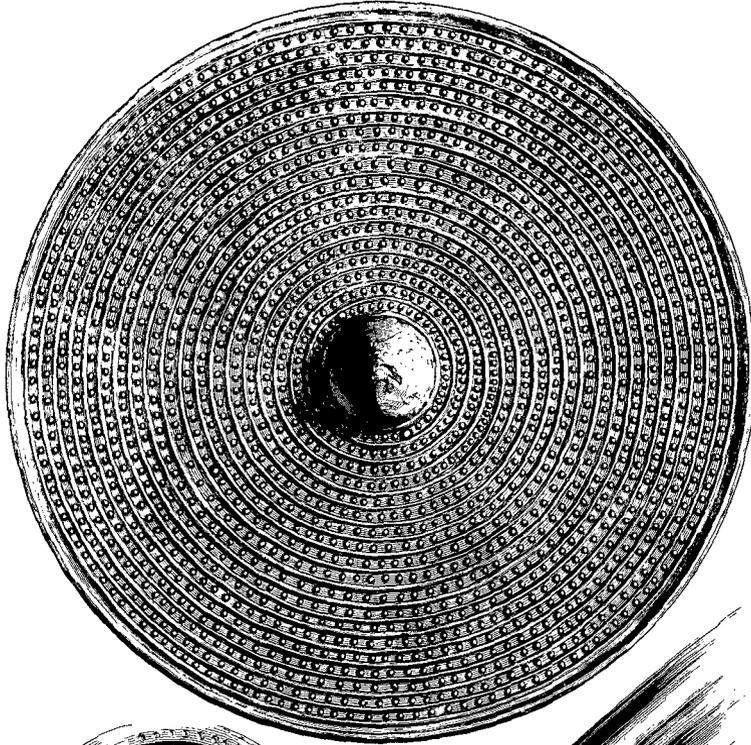


Fig. 2.—Boss of Shield inside ; diameter across the hollow, 4 inches.

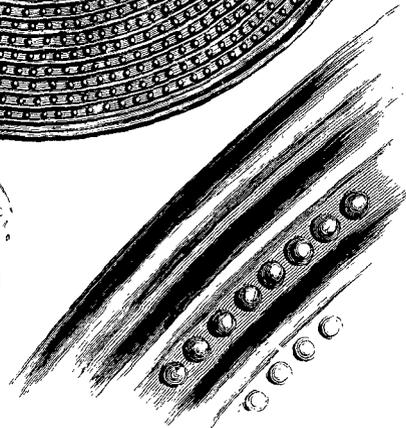


Fig. 3.—Portion of front of Shield ; full size.