

## III.

## NOTICE OF A BRONZE PENANNULAR BROOCH FROM THE ISLAND OF MULL. BY PROFESSOR DUNS, D.D., VICE-PRESIDENT.

This brooch was recently found by me in an out-of-the-way corner of the New College Museum, among some common minerals and other things of no value. On examining some old memoranda, which, fortunately, are preserved, of gifts made to the Museum in 1845-46, I discovered the following entry in a list of articles presented by the late Mrs Macfie of Langhouse—

“Mrs M‘Lean, } 1 Ancient Brooch.  
Mull,            } 1 Ancient Pin.”

The acus, or pin, was in the same box, but not attached to the brooch. The Mrs M‘Lean here referred to still survives. In answer to a communication from me, she says she remembers having sent a number “of odds and ends” to Mrs Macfie for the Museum at that time, but cannot say anything about the brooch; its presence among the articles sent seems to have fallen out of memory.

I. FORM AND SIZE.—The brooch (see fig. 1), which is of much interest, because it is rare and highly-finished, is penannular—that is, the hoop is separated below to allow the pin, or acus, to pass through it. It measures from the top of the hoop to the outer edge of the ring at the opening, 4 inches; and in the line of the larger axis, close on the bar which lies across the hoop at the top of the broadest part of it,  $4\frac{2}{3}$  inches, giving an imperfect oval. The whole length of the acus is 7 inches. At the head, in front, it has a broad quadrangular plate, 1 inch long and  $\frac{3}{4}$ ths of an inch broad, concealing the loop which clasps the ring.

II. ORNAMENTATION.—1. *Gilding*.—On making a cast of the head of the acus, traces of gilding appeared, some of the rust having adhered to the plaster. The application of a little vinegar to the brooch itself made

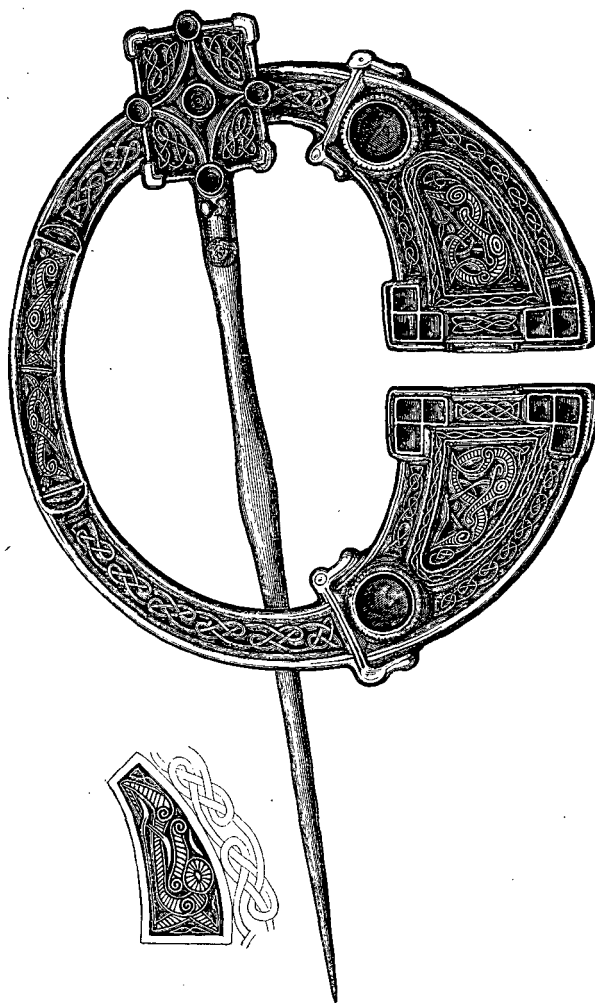


Fig. 1. Brooch found in Mull. (pin 7 inches in length).

it clear that the whole of the ornamental work had been gilded by a gold wash. Evidently, too, the large settings in the broadest part of the hoop are surrounded at the base with a thin plate of gold. 2. *Jewelling*.—Dr Wilde says, with reference to the specimens found in Ireland, "In some instances there were as many as eight studs in front of the brooch." But in this Mull specimen there are settings for twenty-one studs—sixteen on the hoop and five on the acus. Those on the hoop are of various forms. Two, between which the head of the pin is placed, are fragments of a circle; twelve, arranged in clusters of three at each end of the opening, are square; and the two largest, which are close to the double band which crosses the hoop at the top of its broadest part, are circular; as are also those on the plate-head of the pin. The studs, as we know from other instances, were generally of amber or of glass. 3. *Other decorative devices*.—There are representatives of six complete, grotesque, fabulous reptilian forms, and of five heads of the same. Four occur on the obverse of the ring and two on the reverse (one of which is shown in the figure under the brooch, fig. 1), the twisting of the latter being less complicated than that of the former. The simple lines which bring out these forms are clean, clear, distinct, and exceedingly graceful and effective. The separate heads bear a strong resemblance, if the comparison may be allowed, to the gavial rather than to the crocodilian head. The eyes are more to the side, and the broadening of the snout is less abrupt than in the crocodile. The double bands, referred to as crossing the front of the hoop, have one of these heads at each edge. All the heads have some resemblance to that which occurs at the bend of the Lismore Crosier, figured by Miss Stokes in her work, "Christian Inscriptions in the Irish Language," and by O'Neill in his "Fine Arts and Civilisation of Ireland." The date of the crosier is generally held to be about the beginning of the twelfth century.

The other decorations consist of the twisted strap, or interlaced-work, and a chain-like ornament. The former is seen in the deep grooves on the outer and inner edges of the broadest parts of the hoop, and also in the grooves which run between the same parts and the settings between

which the head of the acus is placed. The chain ornament occurs on the flat face of the lines forming an irregular triangle, and bounding the dragons on each side of the opening of the hoop. It may be worth

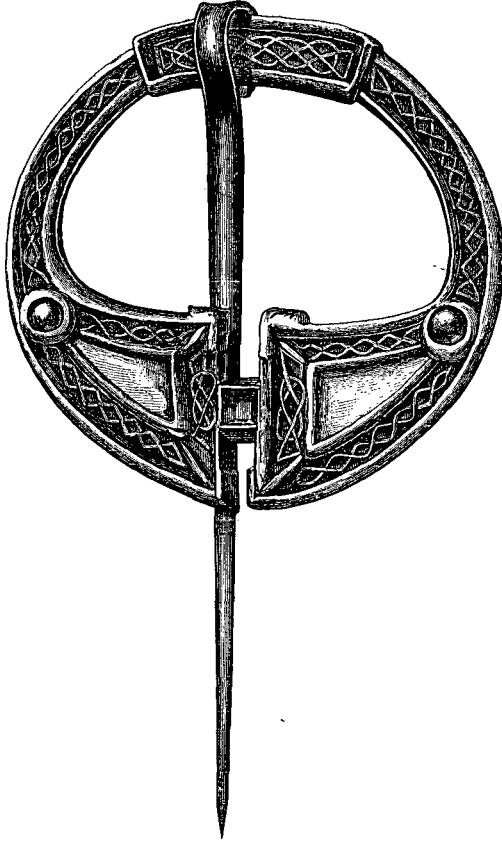


Fig. 2. Bronze Brooch found in Mull (actual size).

mentioning that, with one doubtful exception, neither of these forms of ornament occur among the numerous related specimens figured by Mr Cuming in his work on the "Runic and other Monumental Remains of

the Isle of Man," nor have I found them in Dr Stuart's "Sculptured Stones." Dr Wilde says that "The spiral ornamentation and the twisted strap-work are believed to be of Celtic origin." This kind of tracery is common on Irish ornaments. It may also be seen on the large Cadboll Brooch described and figured in vol. viii. of our "Proceedings."

The only recorded specimen from Mull of which I have any knowledge is one figured in the third volume of the *Kilkenny Archaeological Journal*, 1854-55, and described by Mr Richardson Smith. Mr Smith says, "I unfortunately only know that it was found in the island of Mull," and adds, "I purchased the brooch with a large collection of Celtic antiquities in the village of Lochgilphead, Argyleshire." Mr Smith's specimen (fig. 2) is much smaller than that now noticed, its ornamentation is not nearly so rich, a characteristic figure on the present brooch is not represented, the part of the acus which plays on the ring consists simply of a plain loop, and the interlaced tracery is less complicated. Any other forms bearing closer resemblances to this one have been hitherto found in Ireland. Referring to these, Dr Wilde says—"In breadth of ring they vary from  $1\frac{1}{8}$  to  $4\frac{3}{8}$  inches." The acus of the largest in the Museum of the Royal Irish Academy is  $7\frac{5}{8}$  inches long.

Fig. 3 represents another bronze brooch among the "odds and ends" referred to by Mrs M'Lean. It is penannular, and measures  $2\frac{3}{4}$  inches in diameter. The pin, which is

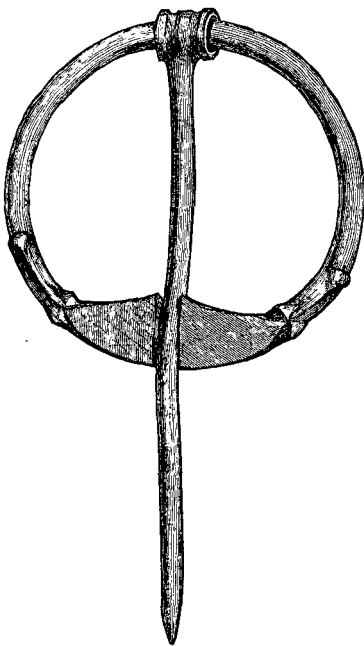


Fig. 3. Brooch found in Mull (5 inches in length).

5 inches long, is bent where it passes the narrow part of the hoop. The head consists of a broad ring slightly raised at the edges. This is clasped by a narrow band, an apparent extension of the pin itself, forming a double furrow on the broadest part of the head. The reverse of the brooch is destitute of ornament. The ornamentation of the obverse is of the simplest kind, but exceedingly neat. The snout-like knob at the termination of the broadest part of the hoop on each side of the cleft shows that the pin was fastened in the dress in a direction at right angles to the cleft—that is, crosswise—the knob affording a support for the clasp on the one side, and for the bent part of the shaft on the other side.

[These two brooches are now, with consent of the Senatus of the New College, deposited in the Museum.]

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MONDAY, 13th January, 1879.

FRANCIS ABBOTT, Esq., in the Chair.

A Ballot having been taken, the following Gentlemen were duly elected Fellows of the Society :—

Hon. JOHN ABERCROMBY, 4 Shandwick Place.  
ARCHIBALD SHOLTO DOUGLAS, Esq., Crauford Bank, Lasswade.  
Major-General ROBERT WARDEN, C.B., 4 Lennox Street.  
JAMES BARCLAY MURDOCH, Esq., Langside.

The following gentleman was likewise elected a Corresponding Member :—

M. L'ABBE MAILLARD, Thorigne en Charnie, Mayenne, France.

The following Donations to the Museum and Library were laid on the table, and thanks voted to the Donors :—

(1.) By Mrs POWLES, 37 Somerset Street, Portman Square, London.  
Crescent or flat Penannular Ring of gold, 2 inches by  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches.

Penannular Ring of gold formed of a cylindrical bar, less than  $\frac{1}{16}$ th of an inch in diameter, bent into a ring 1 inch in diameter, and having the ends slightly thickened.

Smaller Penannular Ring of gold,  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch in diameter.

All found in Indian graves near Bogota, in Colombia, South America.

(2.) By GEORGE G. CUNNINGHAME, Esq., F.S.A. Scot.

Helmet made of sheet iron, with face-defence of a single piece, and chin-piece following the curve of the chin and neck, both moving on the same pivots. The crown of the helmet is cut into strips of about an inch and half wide, which are tapered off so that when bent towards a common centre, and the ends riveted to the circumference of an oval plate, 3 inches by  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches, which forms the top of the helmet, they fit closely together and form a rounded head-piece. The neck-piece is cut out and fitted in the same way, and its upper-ends riveted to the back of the head-piece. The face-piece has two elongated slits for eye-holes, and is pierced with eighteen small circular air-holes. This very peculiar helmet was dug up on the battle-field of Leney, near Ballymoney, in the county of Antrim, Ireland.

(3.) By JAMES CHISHOLM, Esq., F.S.A. Scot.

Polished Stone Implement,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches long,  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch wide, and about  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch in thickness, having a small hole drilled in the middle of its width near each of its ends. It belongs to the class of stone objects which have been called "bracers," because it is supposed that they may have been worn on the left wrist to protect it from the recoil of the bow-string. It was found in the north of Ireland.

(4.) By CHARLES RAMPINI, Esq., Sheriff-Substitute, Lerwick, F.S.A. Scot., formerly a Judge in Jamaica.

Polished Celt of greenstone, 5 inches long,  $2\frac{3}{4}$  inches across the face, tapering to the butt end, and a flattened oval in section, having one of its sides rubbed flat and the other rounded, the cutting edge broken. It was found in a cave in the island of Jamaica.

- (5.) By Mr JAMES MACRAE, Innkeeper, Miabhaig, island of Lewis, through D. Milne Home, Esq., LL.D., F.S.A. Scot.

Small Sink Stone of granite, quadrangular in shape, with rounded edges and having grooves cut around it longitudinally and transversely. It measures 3 inches in length by 2 inches in breadth, and about 1 inch in thickness. The grooves are cut to about the depth of  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch. It was found on the hill of Nisvore, near Miabhaig, Lewis, in 1877.

- (6.) By Mr GAVINE, Builder, Inveresk.

Small Globular Vessel of Roman smother-kiln or blackish ware, with painted ornamentation of lines crossing each other in a chevron pattern. It is thin and well baked, and has been blackened in the kiln. It measures  $3\frac{3}{4}$  inches in height and  $2\frac{3}{4}$  inches across the mouth. It was recently found three feet under the surface in digging a drain in a field close to the railway station at Inveresk. [See also the subsequent Donation List of the April meeting.]

- (7.) By Mr THOMAS PROUDFOOT, Farmer, Midmains, Inveresk.

Coin of Trajan (second brass), *Obv.* laureated head of the emperor, *Rev.* a standing figure, probably Peace or Felicity. Inscription effaced.

Fragment of an iron spear-head, about 3 inches in length, with part of the socket.

Both recently found in digging in a field in front of Midfield Mains, Inveresk.

- (8.) By CHARLES ROACH SMITH, Esq., Corr. Mem. S.A. Scot., &c., the Author.

Collectanea Antiqua, vol. vii. part i. 8vo, 1878. Printed for the subscribers.

- (9.) By THE MANX SOCIETY.

Records of St Mark's Chapel, in the parish of Malen, Isle of Man. 8vo, 1878.



- (10.) By D. MURRAY LYON, Esq., Corr. Mem. S.A. Scot., the Author.

History of the Lodge of Edinburgh, embracing an Account of the Rise and Progress of Freemasonry in Scotland. Edinburgh, 1873.

There were also exhibited :—

- (1.) By Sir GRAHAM G. MONTGOMERY, Bart., M.P., F.S.A. Scot.

Massive Armlet of Bronze, two Bronze Mountings of Harness, and a Roman Patella, found at Stanhope, Peeblesshire.

[See the subsequent communication by Dr John Alex. Smith.]

- (2.) By JOHN STURROCK, Esq., F.S.A. Scot.

Collection of Flint Arrow-heads, Awls or Piercers, &c., from Patagonia.

[See the subsequent communication by Mr Sturrock.]

- (3.) By JOHN BALFOUR, Esq. of Balbirnie, F.S.A. Scot.

Collection of Cinerary Urns, found in a small cemetery in Drymmie Wood, and a finely-ornamented Bronze Celt, found on the neighbouring farm of Dams, on the Balbirnie estate.

[See the subsequent Communication by Mr Anderson.]

- (4.) By Sir WYNDHAM C. ANSTRUTHER, Bart., M.P.

Collection of Cinerary Urns, found in a small cemetery on the farm of Sheriff-flats, Thankerton, Lanarkshire.

The following Communications were read :—