

#### IV.

NOTICES OF THE DISCOVERY OF A HOARD OF RAPIER-SHAPED  
BLADES OF BRONZE AT DRUMCOLTRAN, IN THE STEWARTRY  
OF KIRKCUDBRIGHT, AND OF A VIKING SWORD AT TORBECK-  
HILL, NEAR ECCLEFECHAN. BY A. O. CURLE, *Director of the Museum.*

In describing the circular earthwork at Drumcoltran in the *Proceedings* of the Society for the session 1892-93, vol. xxvii. p. 106, Mr F. R. Coles relates that "in the trench where deepest there was found in 1837 a hoard of bronze weapons, and in 1867 the present tenant, Mr Copland, found in the same trench an 18-inch blade"; while the Dumfries and Galloway Antiquarian Society's *Transactions*, January 1863, describes the find as one of "twelve very fine bronze spears." This autumn I was fortunate enough to meet Mr James Houston, Dumfries, the owner of the three weapons illustrated here, being the remainder of this hoard, and he knew of only six rapier blades having been found. Of these, two were taken to America; one, believed to be the finest, passed into the hands of a workman; and the remaining three were in Mr Houston's possession. They are slender and tapering, as is characteristic of the type, are covered with a fine green patina, and measure in length respectively 20 inches, 18.2 inches, and 14 inches. The 18-inch blade is still almost of its original length, but both of the others have lost their points. Each has a marked midrib and flutings along the sides. Judging from the appearance of the best-preserved specimen, the bases have been notched, rather than perforated, for the rivets.

In January 1867 a discovery of six similar blades, of lengths varying from 12 to 22 inches, was made in a meadow in Devonshire<sup>1</sup>; and among numerous other examples recorded by Sir John Evans is one,<sup>2</sup> also from an earthwork, at Badbury, Dorsetshire. On learning of the importance of these relics, Mr Houston generously presented the best of the three to the National Museum; and has lent the other two for exhibition.

#### VIKING SWORD.

In the autumn of last year there was presented to the National Museum by John Bell, Esq., of Torbeckhill, Ecclefechan, an iron double-edged sword (fig. 2) of a well-known Viking type, which was found at a depth of some two feet under the surface, on the top of a quarry situated on the left bank of the Mein, just below the outlet of the Annan District Water Works, on the estate of Torbeckhill, and some 9 miles inland from the Solway. No other relics or any evidences of an interment accompanied the sword. The point of the blade is wanting; the complete length of the weapon as existing is 2 feet 6 inches. The pommel is trilobate, and shows on the front of the central division a circular border, which has contained a mark or symbol now indecipherable. It rests on a forked plate, acting as an upper guard, curving upwards at either end, while the guard at the lower end of the tang curves downwards.

A similar sword, found with a pair of convex oval brooches of bronze at Santon, Norfolk, is preserved in the British Museum. In describing the latter sword<sup>3</sup> Sir Hercules Read quotes Dr Sven Söderberg of Lund, to the effect that in all the Swedish graves excavated by Dr Stolpe the Santon type of sword is invariably associated with relics of a later date than the year 1000, while the straight guard and triangular pommel accompany interments of the three centuries preceding this date.

<sup>1</sup> *Archæological Journal*, xxiv. p. 110.

<sup>2</sup> *Ancient Bronze Implements, etc.*, p. 250.

<sup>3</sup> *Archæologia*, vol. 1. p. 531.

MONDAY, 13th April 1914.

THE HON. JOHN ABERCROMBY, LL.D., President,  
in the Chair.

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

T. BAXENDALE PATTERSON, L.D.S., Carisbroose, 84 Station Road,  
Blackpool.

J. HUBERT ROBERTS, P.A.S.I., etc., Bryntirion, Eaton Grove, Swansea.  
JOHN RUSSELL, 323 Leith Walk.

The following Donations to the Museum and Library were exhibited,  
and thanks voted to the Donors :—

(1) By Miss CANNAN, 87 Cornwall Gardens, London, S.W.

Greek Vase, with black Palmette ornamentation on a red ground,  
height  $6\frac{1}{2}$  inches.

(2) By J. G. HAWKSLEY BEDFORD, F.S.A. Scot., the Author.

Pedigree of the Family of Bedford of Hull, Dewsbury, Penistone,  
etc., Co. York, and Collateral Branches, viz. :—Hall, Middleton,  
Hawksley, and Pashley. Extracts of Manor Court Rolls and Wills,  
Memoranda, etc. Sheffield, 1914. 4to.

(3) By ROBERT DE CARDONNEL FINDLAY, F.S.A. Scot.

La Sala d' Armi nel Museo dell' Arsenal di Venezia, by G. de  
Lucia. Roma, 1908. 4to.

(4) By J. GRAHAM CALLANDER, F.S.A. Scot., *Secretary*.

Transactions of the Banffshire Field Club. Odd numbers between  
1881 and 1887 ; complete set from 1887 to 1909.

- (5) By THOMAS JOHNSON WESTROPP, M.A., M.R.I.A., the Author.  
 Kilkee (Co. Clare) and its Neighbourhood. Part III. Dunbeg to  
 Kilkee. Limerick, 1914. Pamphlet, 8vo.



Fig. 1. Urn from a Sand-pit at The Cuninghar, Tillicoultry.

- (6) By THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON ANCIENT AND HISTORICAL  
 MONUMENTS (SCOTLAND).  
 Fifth Report and Inventory of Monuments and Constructions in Gal-  
 loway. Vol. II. Stewartry of Kirkcudbright. Edinburgh, 1914. 8vo.
- (7) By THE MASTER OF THE ROLLS.  
 Calendar of the Patent Rolls preserved in the Public Record Office.  
 Edward III. Vol. XV. A.D. 1370-1374. London, 1914. 8vo.

There was exhibited by Colonel Wardlaw Ramsay of Whitehill an  
 Urn (fig. 1) of food-vessel type, found 14th January 1914,  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches  
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in height by  $4\frac{3}{16}$  inches broad at the mouth, decorated with the oblique impress of a twisted cord.

The following particulars of its discovery were supplied by Mr Fraser, estate overseer, Tillicoultry :—

The urn was discovered in a sand-pit situated about 150 yards to the north of the site of the previous discovery of an urn at The Cuninghar in 1895. It stood upon a flat stone about 10 inches square, at a depth of 2 to 3 feet below the surface, and was protected on either side by two side stones some 18 inches square, but no covering stone or end slabs were seen. The main axes of the slabs were north and south.