

IV.

NOTE ON A SMALL GOLD RING OF TWISTED WIRES, FOUND IN A
PICT'S HOUSE, AT SHAPINSHAY, ORKNEY. EXHIBITED BY DAVID
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This ring, which is formed of three twisted wires of gold, is not unlike that figured in Vol. V., Plate VI., page 214, of the Proceedings, as having been found in the island of Bute, except that the Bute one has only two

strands, whereas this Orkney one has three. The Bute ring is also slightly larger and heavier, weighing 202 grains, while this one weighs only 132 grains. The history of its discovery, so far as known, is given as follows in "The Old Statistical Account," vol. xvii. 1796, p. 237.

"Near Cliffdale, some short time ago, when the workmen were digging for the foundation of a house, they discovered a subterraneous building of a singular nature. It had been formed by digging the earth about 3 feet deep, and erecting pillars of stones built one upon another to the height of 4 feet, to support a flat roof of broad stones or flags that covered the whole building, which was composed of two hexagons contiguous to one another, and their diameter about 3 feet, and of a rectangle as large as both. As the whole fabric was considerably below ground, and no vestige whatever to be seen on the surface, it perhaps has been used as a place for concealing various articles of value, for which it seemed well calculated. However that may be, there was found in it a gold ring of an uncommon construction. The outside of that ring was broad and large, composed as it were of three cords twisted or plaited together; the inside was much narrower, and pretty well fitted for the use of the finger. No inscription whatever appeared on any part of it; and at the joining, instead of being soldered, it seemed to have been beaten together with a hammer."