

VI.

NOTES ON A GOLD LUNETTE FOUND AT AUCHENTAGGART, DUMFRIESSHIRE, AND A MASSIVE SILVER CHAIN FOUND AT WHITE-CLEUGH, LANARKSHIRE, EXHIBITED BY HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF BUCCLEUCH. By J. GILCHRIST CLARK, Esq., F.S.A. Scot. (Plate I.)

Gold Lunette.—The lunette now exhibited (and represented in the accompanying Plate I.) was found during the winter of 1872–73, on Auchentaggart farm, in the parish of Sanquhar, by John Wilson, then ploughman to Mr T. B. Stewart. He was ploughing stubble at the time, with three horses, a furrow rather deeper than usual, when the plough turned up what appeared to be a piece of thin metal folded together and rolled up almost like a ball. He took it home with him, and, after washing and unrolling it, found it to be a plate of yellowish metal, shaped, as he described it, “like a man’s collar.” In being unfolded, the metal gave way, as will be observed, at one point. It was then placed on the mantlepiece, where it remained along with the candlesticks and other articles usually found there. The ploughman removed a year or two afterwards from Auchentaggart to Euchanfort in the same parish, and took with him the pieces of old metal. In the beginning of 1878 he became unwell, and was attended by Dr J. J. Underwood, then practising at Sanquhar, who, while visiting his patient, observed the yellow metal “collar,” and thinking it a curiosity, though he did not know what, obtained it from the finder. As Dr Underwood was about to go abroad, it was obtained from him, through Mr J. R. Wilson, for the Duke of Buccleuch, on whose estate it had been found, and by whom it is now exhibited. It will be observed from the representation of the Lunette given in Plate I. that a portion of one of the rounded extremities is wanting, and that along the edge next the missing portion, nine holes are pierced. The purpose of these is suggested by one of the lunettes

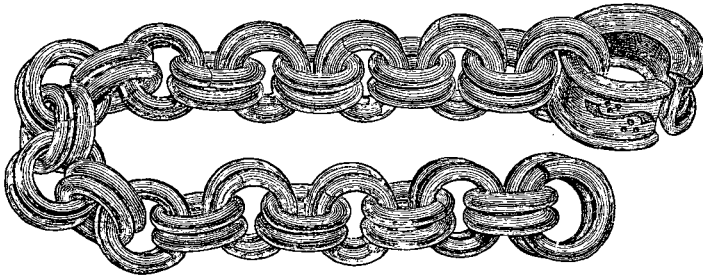


Gold Lunette from Dumfriesshire.

already in the Museum, and the missing portion may perhaps be lying still where this was found. The weight is 4 oz. 1 dwt. 5 grs.

About two miles to the north-west of the place where the lunette was found there is a supposed Druidical circle on the hill of Knockenheir, and nearer, there is on Sanguhar Moor a small crannog or lake dwelling, while between these and Auchentaggart there is a ridge, on which there are a number of small tumuli, about the size of ordinary graves, which tradition makes the scene of a battle. But there are no apparent remains of antiquity where the lunette was found, and the manner in which it was folded up and rolled together suggests the idea that, when lost, it was being concealed. It may have been in the possession of its rightful owner, or it may have formed some one's share of a rich plunder, but in any case one cannot but think that on Auchentaggart Moor it was either concealed or cast away by some fugitive who was never able to return.

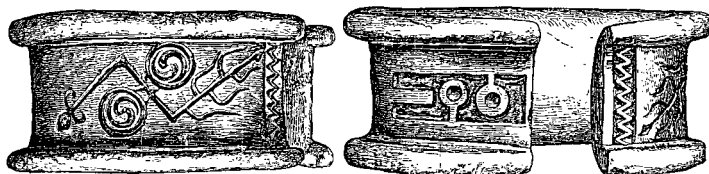
Silver Chain.—In May 1869, John Murray, shepherd at Shieldholm, in the parish of Crawfordjohn, Lanarkshire, while walking across a part



Silver Chain found at Parkhill.

of that farm, observed protruding from the side of a sheep drain which had been rather widened by the water, two or three objects which looked like rings. On touching them he found they were connected with something still in the earth, and then with a pull he brought away the whole of the chain now exhibited. It consists of forty-six rings attached to a

massive penannular link, and is almost precisely similar to the chain found at Parkhill, Aberdeenshire, now in the Museum, which is here figured. The chain had been lying about 18 inches below the surface of the ground, resting on the stiff clayey subsoil. When found the rings were all entire, but two have been since broken by persons attempting to open them. The weight of the whole is 62 oz. 12 dwt. and the silver of which it is made is not quite pure. It will be observed that the incised ornament on the penannular link is almost identical with that on the Norrie's Law plate



Terminal Link of Silver Chain found at Crawfordjohn.

or scale now in the Museum. The chain was obtained from John Murray by the Duke of Buccleuch, on whose estate it had been found, and is now by direction of His Grace exhibited to the Society.

The situation and position in which it was found, seem to suggest that it was there by accident. The spot is about 135 yards north of the march with Dumfriesshire, and a mile and a half, measuring along that march, west of Crawick Water. It lies in the middle of a tract of rough hill pasture, and there is nothing very near it to indicate earthworks or any other traces of ancient occupation. There is, however, a tradition that in former days there existed a road which led from Nithsdale by the glen of the Crawick, across this moor to Douglas, and standing on the spot where the chain was found, one can see, at the distance of about a mile to the north, the green turf that marks the site of an old camp, called on the Ordnance Map "Roman Camp," and close to the house at Shieldholm, which may possibly have been intended to command that road. If this were so, fights on the line of road would be frequent enough, and in one of such fights the chain and its owner may have been parted.