

9. A MEDIEVAL GOLD RING FROM SHETLAND.

A gold ring from Shetland has been given to the Museum in the name of the late Dr George Munro, M.B., of Kergord, Weisdale, Shetland (fig. 6). It was

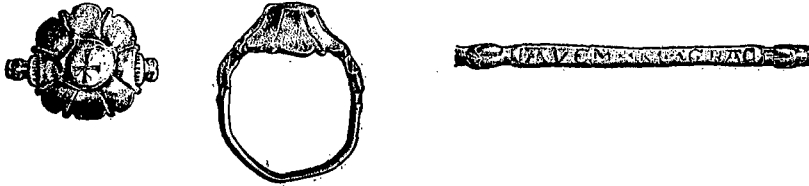


Fig. 6.

found, before 1914, by roadmen carting road metal from a beach in the vicinity possibly at the bay of Noustiegarth, Haggersta, on Weisdale Voe.

The ring is all gold, without a stone or other setting. The hollow bezel is an eight-petalled rose with a raised centre, on which an equal-armed cross with
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splayed ends is inscribed; there are short, lightly inscribed lines bisecting the arms of the cross. The shoulders are decorated with poorly executed animal heads, and the exterior of the hoop is engraved with the legend "AVE M[ARIA] GRAC"—the first words of the Angelic message to the Virgin in the Annunciation.

The talismanic inscription suggests a 14th century date, comparable to that of many Scottish brooches, as do the ring's other features although no close parallel is adduced for them. It was indeed suggested locally that the ring might be a relic of the Armada, but Mr C. C. Oman of the Victoria and Albert Museum considers that it has no Spanish characteristics, and we may presume it reached Shetland long before the late 16th century.

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