

XXXII.—*List of Donations from the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury ; with a Notice of the Gold Coins found in the Cathedral Church of Glasgow.*

[*Read to the Society, December 1837.*]

*Exchequer Chambers, Edinburgh,
30th November 1837.*

SIR,—I have received the commands of the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury, to make offer to the Society of Antiquaries of the following articles of Treasure-trove in my possession, viz.—

1. A massive Silver Chain, weighing about 93 ounces, which was found in digging the Caledonian Canal in 1808.
2. Twenty-three Gold Coins of the reigns of James I. and James II., being part of a parcel found in 1815 near the House of Cadder, in the county of Lanark.
3. Thirty-eight Silver Pennies of various reigns.
4. A Silver Penny of the reign of Alexander King of Scotland.

I have also received their Lordships' authority to allow the Antiquarian Society to make a selection from a parcel of Silver and Copper Coins of the reigns of James IV. and James VI., which were found in June last on the property of Sorn, in Ayrshire,

If, therefore, you will call here and make a selection from the last-mentioned coins, and grant an acknowledgment for the whole articles of treasure-trove above specified, I will have much pleasure in delivering them over to you, to be deposited in the Museum of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland.—I am,

SIR,

Your most obedient Servant,

*To the Secretary of the Society of
Antiquaries, Edinburgh.*

JOHN HENDERSON,
Q. & L. T. R.

*Exchequer Chambers, Edinburgh,
18th December 1837.*

SIR,—I have received the commands of the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury to deliver to the Antiquarian Society of Edinburgh, for preservation in that Institution, two ancient Gold Coins, the one an English

Noble, and the other a Scottish Merk Piece or St Andrews, forming part of a parcel of coins lately found in the Cathedral of Glasgow.

I have therefore to acquaint you that these two coins will be delivered to you on your calling and granting a receipt for the same at this office.—
I am,

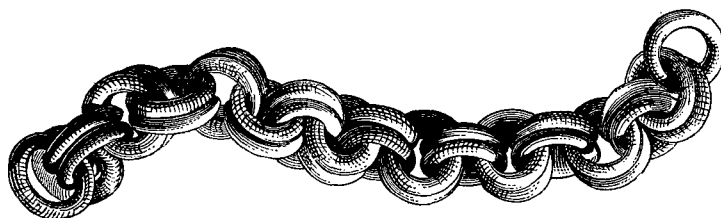
SIR,

Your most obedient Servant,

JOHN HENDERSON,
Q. & L. T. R.

W. F. Skene, Esq., Secretary, &c.

[The following descriptive notices of the articles referred to in these letters, are subjoined, without offering any remarks on the statements and suggestions which they contain. For the drawing of this woodcut, representing the silver chain found in the Caledonian Canal, we are indebted to James Drummond, Esq., F.S.A.]



1. EXTRACT FROM THE SCOTS MAGAZINE, *May* 1810.

“ THIS chain, of pure silver, was found, in the course of last year, by the workmen employed in digging the Caledonian Canal. It is now in the possession of the Honourable Barons of Exchequer, and is conceived to be an object of considerable curiosity. We were anxious, therefore, to preserve a drawing of it; which we have been enabled to gratify our readers with, through the polite attention of Sir G. Mackenzie, Bart., who has not only supplied us with the engraved plate, but also with the following extract, from a communication made by him on the subject to the Royal Society of Edinburgh.

“ The chain was found at the depth of two feet among gravel. The length is 18 inches exclusive of a grooved link, which has not reached Edinburgh with the chain. The single ring at one end, is 2 inches and one-tenth in diameter. The rings at the other end, 2·8 inches in diameter.

The thickness of the rings at the end is $\cdot 45$ of an inch; that of the others $\cdot 4$. The whole chain weighs 92 oz. 12 dwts. It was reported that a ball of silver was found with the chain; but it has not been recovered. Sir George is of opinion, from the general appearance of the chain, that it has been used for ornament, and that it probably suspended a lamp in some Roman Catholic Church, whence it had been stolen during the ferment excited by John Knox, and buried. Perhaps it had been concealed by the rightful owners; and owing to some accident befalling the possessor had been concealed, till dug up in the canal."

2. GOLD COINS FOUND IN THE CATHEDRAL OF GLASGOW.—EXTRACT FROM THE GLASGOW NEWSPAPERS, *October 1837.*

"THESE COINS were found below a flag stone at the north-east corner of the second pillar from the north-west pier of the great tower, on the northern side of the nave; they were lying among a dry sand, immediately below the stone, with neither bag nor box above them. The party wall which inclosed the portion of the nave, used until lately as a place of worship, was only a few inches to the west of their place of deposit; but, as it was merely a brick erection, resting on the old pavement, there is no difficulty in supposing that the coins may have been placed there long previous to its erection, which seems to have taken place about the time of the Reformation. One circumstance induces us to attribute a pretty remote date to their concealment.

"There are in all (in the hands of the police), 120 gold pieces; of these 62 are English, and 58 Scottish. The English are all pieces of the coinage of Edward III.; the Scottish of one of the Roberts. As we shall have occasion to show, in these remarks, it is highly probable that no gold was coined in Scotland previous to the reign of Robert II., and consequently that the Scottish pieces are either of the reign of that Prince, or of his successor Robert III., the last of the name who filled the Scottish throne. Edward III. ascended the throne of England in 1326, and died in 1376. Robert II. ascended the throne of Scotland in 1371, and Robert III. died in 1406; and until 1424, during the detention of James I. in England, the sovereign sway was exercised in this country by the Duke of Albany. The gold pieces being all either of Edward III. of England, or some Robert of Scotland, renders it very improbable that they could be deposited long after

the demise of Robert III., as it is impossible that they could be deposited before the accession of Robert II. Had they been hidden at a later period than is here fixed upon, it is scarcely possible that the gold coin of some other King should have been found among them. We may, therefore, fix the date of the deposit approximately between 1371, the accession of Robert II., and 1424, the liberation of James I. Perhaps the time might be still further narrowed. There are two classes of gold coin bearing the name of Robert of Scotland—the one simpler and ruder in workmanship than the other. Antiquarians have concurred in attributing the former to the second, the latter to the third Robert. The coins recently found in the Cathedral are of the second—the more finely executed class. If there be any force in this remark, the period of deposit was probably between 1390 and 1424. We have thus two terms—the one of 53, the other of 34 years—within which there is some feasibility in the supposition that these coins were deposited where they are now found.

“ The longest of these periods embraces the last years of the reign of Edward III., Richard II., and a considerable part of that of Henry IV. of England. It embraces the reigns of Robert II. and III. of Scotland, and the government of the Dukes of Albany. The Bishops of Glasgow were:—Walter Wardlaw, 1368 to 1387; Mathew Glendonning, 1387 to 1408; William Lauder, 1408 to 1425. During the incumbency of Glendonning, the wooden spire with which some previous Prelates had decorated the central tower was struck with lightning and consumed. He collected materials to rebuild it of stone, but the accomplishment of his design was reserved for his successor. If we suppose any new arrangement of the pavement within the tower, and in its immediate vicinity, consequent upon this accident and rebuilding, we may have another means of approximating to the period of probable deposit—the accession of Glendonning in 1387, and the death of Lauder in 1425. The distracted state of society during the feeble reign of Robert III., and the usurpation of the Dukes of Albany, renders this period one in which men were not unlikely to hide their treasures. It may also be noticed, that in 1380 Glasgow seems to have been visited by a pestilential disease—at least, in a small table of memorable events inserted in the chartulary—1350 having been marked *prima mortalitas*, 1380 is marked *secunda et tertia mortalitas*.

“ The coins themselves are objects of considerable interest—being, we may say, the earliest gold coins of their respective nations.”