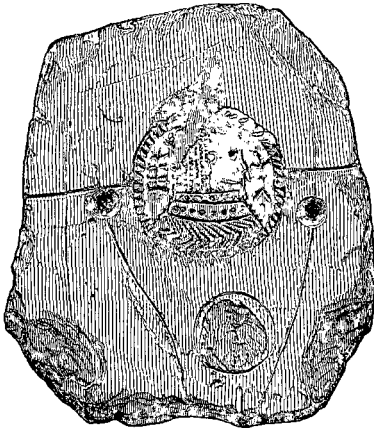


III.

NOTE OF A PECULIAR STONE MOULD FOUND NEAR JEDBURGH,
By JOHN ALEX. SMITH, M.D., Sec. S.A. Scot.

The stone mould now exhibited and presented to the Museum of the Society was given to me by Mr Alexander Jeffrey, Jedburgh, F.S.A. Scot. It was discovered last summer by a woman (Janet Lindsay), when working in a field called the Muirfoot, on the farm of Swinnie, a few miles to the south of the town of Jedburgh. The farm lies on the

Fig. 1.



Stone Mould found near Jedburgh
(on a reduced scale).

Fig. 2.



Cast from Mould (full size).

high ground, between the valleys of the Jed and Rule; and the field referred to is between the turnpike road from Jedburgh to Rule Water, and the valley of the Blackburn, a little to the south-west of the Douglas Camp as it is named, of the times of the Bruce. Remains of several camps, are still to be observed on various parts of Swinnie Muir.

The mould, now partly chipped or broken, consists of an irregularly

shaped piece of fine-grained micaceous clay slate, measuring about $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches long by 3 inches in breadth, and half-an-inch in thickness (see the annexed woodcut (fig. 1) on a reduced scale). Mr Jeffrey considers that the stone of which it is composed may belong to the Jedburgh district. It presents on one side a circular concave depression $1\frac{1}{4}$ inch in diameter (see woodcut, fig. 2), in which is very rudely cut the head of a man in profile to the right, possibly in armour partially of chain mail, as may perhaps be indicated by the parallel vertical lines, irregularly chequered, covering the back of the head. A small curved line, indistinctly seen, projecting beyond the margin of these lines, may have been intended to represent the ear; there is also the indication of a moustache and a pointed beard. On the head there appears to be a low-arched crown, although unfortunately somewhat indistinct and defaced by an injury which the mould has sustained in this part; across the neck there is a band rudely ornamented with lines crossing one another, possibly representing some kind of *gorgière* or armour for the throat, and below this is a second parallel band, with a row of studs, which may have been intended to represent a collar of jewels or other ornaments. The portion of the bust below these bands is covered with chevrony strokes, which may possibly represent folds of the dress, or some kind of armour. In the field, in front of the head, is a cross which appears to be placed on a bifurcate foot, and at the back of the head a more complex cruciform object or monogram, of doubtful meaning. Around the margin of the cavity are cut small diagonal strokes, evidently in imitation of the usual pearly border by which mediæval seals and coins are ornamented. A fine line is cut transversely across the face of the stone, at about the middle of this depression; below this line, on each side, a small round hole is deeply cut into the stone, and from each of these holes finely cut lines run downwards to the margin of the stone. On the under part of the same side of the stone, there is a smaller circle rudely scratched, and partially hollowed out, as if it had been intended to carve another mould on the same stone.

The stone would appear, therefore, to be the half of a mould, the opposite, or other half, having been probably cut, so as to form the back part of the casting; and from this latter half, two pegs would project, to fit into the holes just described, and thus make the mould complete.

The surface of the mould has been recently slightly chipped or injured at the upper part of the head, and also at the side, in front of the face (as is shown in the woodcut), probably from its being struck, when discovered, by the iron agricultural implement which brought it to the surface of the ground.

Never having seen any mould exactly corresponding in character to this one, I felt considerably at a loss to account for its supposed use; as to its antiquity, there seemed to be no room for doubt. I fancied it might have been used for casting small metal badges or brooches, and from the apparent presence of the cross in front of the head, might possibly have been used by those pilgrims who had visited some of the sacred fanes of Teviotdale, if it was not simply a badge worn by some of the church vassals themselves. From the rude character of the work and the style of dress or chain mail shown on the mould, I was at first inclined to suppose it to belong to the age of the Bruce, or a little later; the apparent presence, however, of the low-arched crown which was first worn in Scotland by James IV. seems to point to a still later period.

A gutta-percha cast from the mould was sent to Mr Albert Way, F.S.A., Scot., &c. &c., and to him I am indebted for revising my description of the mould, and also for the following remarks:—

“I wish that I could offer you any serviceable suggestion regarding the mould found near Jedburgh. I believe it to be a mould for those rude ornaments of pewter or lead, the *enseignes* or *signacula* worn on the dress, or on the cap, and in form of small brooches, with a little simply-fashioned *acus* at the back, by which they were attached, as De Comines tells us Louis XII. used to fix them on his bonnet. The counterpart of the mould had possibly a disc in relief on the surface, so as to give to the casting a scyphate form. I have examined the cast carefully with the help of a friend, who is very skilful in matters of this kind, and we are quite agreed that the conjecture regarding mail is to be advanced with much caution, in fact we do not think there is any mail intended. We have no hesitation, however, in the conclusion, that there is an arched crown on the head, of the low fashion usual in Scotland, with the usual ornaments round the hoop, rudely represented. Unluckily the injury the stone has sustained makes this feature indistinct, although we can entertain no doubt of the fact; and as this arched crown was not

used in Scotland before the reign of James IV., the date of this curious object is brought down to late in the 15th century. The design of the mould being very probably suggested by a coin, a comparison with coins might have aided the inquiry, which presents many perplexing obscurities. The work of the mould does not partake of the rude character of early English or Scottish coins; unartistically as it is executed, there is a good deal of detail recalling a late period, and the imperfection of execution is probably due to the difficulty of working well on such material. The lines on the side of the cavity are intended to facilitate the escape of air when metal was poured into the mould; there must have been in the counterpart stone a little channel for transmission of the melted metal, and the two perforations are doubtless for pegs to connect the two moieties together. There are other specimens of stone moulds of this description; one I remember is figured in the 'Archæologia.' Whatever the date or intention, the object is very curious, and merits careful investigation."

The only mould of a somewhat similar character figured in the "Archæologia" which I have been able to find, is in vol. xiv. p. 275, plate 48; 1808. The mould appeared to be formed of hardened clay, and was for casting small circular or ring-shaped brooches, and, from the letters of the inscription, was believed to be of as early a date as the 12th century, but it is probably of the 14th. It shows at least how these moulds were united together, and also the channels for pouring the molten metal into them, which, in the stone mould now presented to the museum, must, however, have been confined entirely to the side that is wanting.

For the purpose of getting the cast compared with coins, I requested our Numismatic Curator, Mr George Sim, to examine it, calling his attention to the arched crown, and the appearance of chain mail on the back of the head; and Mr Sim favoured me with the following notes:—

"We all know that Henry VII. in England, and James IV. in Scotland, were the first to use arched crowns,—and we also know that chain mail was not in use at that period. Suppose, then, we dismiss the idea of mail, and substitute the bushy wig worn about the time of James IV., and suppose the monogrammic letters behind the head, to represent the initials of the king and queen—say (with a stretch of the imagination—I. M.) for James and Margaret his queen; and that the cross in front of

the head is intended to represent the sceptre usually seen before the face on early Scottish and other coins. We might also correctly suppose the necklace or collar to belong to this and even a later period, for on a rare bonnet piece of James V. he is represented with a necklace of thistles. But if Mr Way be right in supposing that the pattern of the mould has been suggested by a coin, it seems evident that it could not have been from a coin of the period of the Jameses, for there are no sceptres in front of the face after Robert II. On the groats of James I. (which are all front-faced), there is a sceptre, and after his time sceptres placed in that way entirely disappear. The mould, if suggested by a coin, might, however, by an ignorant artist, have been very well suggested by a coin of Robert II., or even an earlier coin, which still passed current in the reign of James IV., for we know from finds, that coins of kings who reigned long before, were still current in his reign; but this is not very likely.

"I do not at all pretend to be a judge in this matter, not being able to speak as to its age from the character of the work of the mould, and what I do say, I beg you to understand, I say with hesitation, and only as a conjecture.

"Well, on the coins of William the Lion I find a sceptre very like the cross in front of the head on the mould; and on the coins of Edward the Confessor I find as good an arched crown as that on the head of our stone mould! I think if the parallel lines on the back of the head had been intended for hair, they would have been represented as hanging over the collar. I therefore cannot help thinking that mail is intended by it, as well as by the chevron strokes below the collar; and that the combination of ornaments, sceptres, and monograms, are suggestive of a period long prior to the reign of James IV."

Mr Roach Smith, to whom I sent a rude sketch, and also a cast from the mould, says in reply, that "the impression shows the leaden boss, or whatever it may have been, to be much more ancient than I had conceived from the rough sketch; but there is nothing in it to lead one to say positively what it may have been meant for. I do not think the mould could have been for Pilgrims' Signs; but possibly for a kind of *bouton*, or ornament for man or horse."

I exhibit another small **STONE MOULD**, formed also of a fine-grained micaceous clay-stone, which was sent to me by Dr Scoresby-Jackson for

the purpose of being shown to the Society. The stone has been cut or shaped with much more regularity than the one already described, and measures 3 inches in length by $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch in breadth, and 1 inch thick; it has a circular regularly hollowed depression cut on the surface of one of its sides, which measures 1 inch in diameter, and displays a regular ornamental pattern radiating from its centre. It shows no channel cut on its surface for pouring in the metal, or perforations for the pegs of the reverse of the mould, but there is a slight groove along one of its sides which may have answered the latter purpose, and assisted to fix the two halves of the mould together; the metal, however, may have been simply poured into the open depression on the surface of the stone, no other portion being required to render the mould complete. Dr Scoresby-Jackson informs me that this mould was found some eight or ten years ago in a cairn or heap of stones on Goathland Low Moor, near Whitby, Yorkshire. Various cairns existed on this moor, but they have all now been many times turned over and examined, and various curious relics, such as beads, part of a bracelet, and arrow and spear heads of flint, &c., were stated to have been found; these, he understood, were sold, and purchased for some museum. Dr Jackson also exhibits three arrow-heads of light-coloured flint from the same locality; two of the arrow-heads have stems and barbs, the third is of a ruder character, being simply a triangular piece of chipped flint, possibly an unfinished arrow-head, which was stated to have been found in the same heap as the stone mould.

From the general appearance and regular pattern of the mould exhibited by Dr Scoresby-Jackson, I am inclined to consider it of much less antiquity than the one found near Jedburgh. I am, however, unable to offer any suggestions as to its use, unless it may perhaps have been for casting circular brooches, or probably a large ornamental button-like stud, or nail-head, such as those used in early, or in mediæval times.
