

IV.

NOTE ON THE CAPRINGTON BRONZE HORN. BY R. W. COCHRAN-PATRICK, Esq., B.A., LL.B., F.S.A. Scot.

The bronze horn or trumpet, of which an illustration is here given from a wood-cut presented to the Ayrshire and Wigtonshire Archaeological Association, by Mr Smith Cunningham of Caprington,¹ was found some time before 1654² on the estate of Coilsfield, in the parish of Tarbolton, in Kyle.

It is thus referred to by Sir Robert Gordon, in the description of Kyle given in Bleau's Atlas, published at Amsterdam in 1654 :—

“In campo ubi decertatum lituus incurvus figura sua cornu referens, in primus canorus, multo post annis effosus est, quo comarchi Caprintonii, quorum ædes primariæ nostris Coilsfield dicitur, ad cogendos rusticos suos et operarios utuntur.”³

Defoe says : “A trumpet resembling a crooked horn, which has a very shrill sound, was dug up in the field of battle, and is still kept in the Laird of Caprington's house, called Coilsfield.”⁴

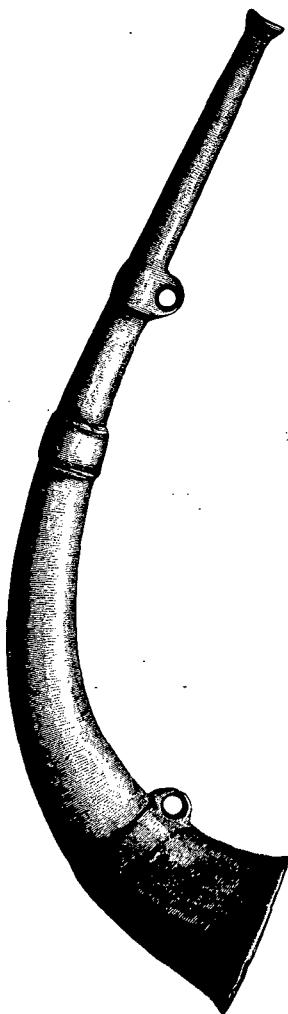
The writer of the “New Statistical Account” notes that “this horn, so minutely

¹ “Ayrshire and Wigtonshire Archaeological and Historical Collections,” vol. i.

² “New Statistical Account of Ayrshire,” p. 753.

³ Vol. vi. p. 50.

⁴ “Tour through Britain,” vol. iv. p. 130.



described in Bleau's great work, and by Defoe, is carefully preserved at Caprington Castle."¹

The horn is 25 inches in length, measuring from the mouthpiece to the aperture along the centre. The circumference 1 inch from the mouthpiece is 2 inches. At the lowest band the circumference is almost 8 inches. It is nearly 4 inches across the aperture.

It is the only instance of a bronze horn recorded as having been found in Scotland.

From an analysis made by Professor Stevenson Macadam, the composition of the bronze is as follows:—

Copper,	=	90·26
Tin,	=	9·61
Loss,	=	·13
		100·00

Bronze trumpets are of very rare occurrence in Britain. Mr Franks records one found in England.² They are not uncommon in Ireland. For an account of the Irish specimens, reference may be made to the "Ulster Journal of Archæology," vol. viii. p. 99, and also to the "Descriptive Catalogue of the Antiquities in the Museum of the Royal Irish Academy," by Sir William R. Wilde (pp. 623-632), where the sixteen specimens of trumpets in the Academy's collection, comprising five distinct varieties of the instrument, are figured and described, and notices are given of the finding of these and other specimens in different districts of Ireland.

¹ "Ayrshire," p. 754.

² "Horæ Ferales," pl. xiii. fig. 2.