

XI.

NOTICE OF AN ENAMELLED BRONZE HARNESS ORNAMENT, FROM AUCHENDOLLY, STEWARTRY OF KIRKCUDBRIGHT, NOW PRESENTED TO THE MUSEUM BY MR ARCHIBALD HUME OF AUCHENDOLLY. BY SIR HERBERT EUSTACE MAXWELL, BART., M.P., F.S.A., SCOT. (PLATE VIII.)

The enamelled bronze (shown in Plate VIII. fig. 1), for which the Society is indebted to Mr Archibald Hume of Auchendolly, belongs to a well-defined group of objects, recognised as horse-trappings, which have been found in considerable numbers in various parts of the British Isles.

Dr Joseph Anderson has recently given a concise summary of the history of the *opus Britannicum*, or *champlevé* enamel (*Proceedings of the Society*, 1884, p. 49), and has quoted the well-known passage in Philostratus, where he describes the picture of a boar-hunt in which the harness of the horses is enriched with gold and various colours, and proceeds to explain the process by which "the barbarians in the ocean" poured the colours upon heated brass, which hardened and preserved the forms of ornament hollowed in the metal.

Although this kind of work appears to have had its origin among the British Celts, who retained, so far as is known, a monopoly of the art ;

¹ *Ivories, Ancient and Mediæval, in the South Kensington Museum*, by Maskell, p. 64.



ENAMELLED CELTIC HORSE-TRAPPINGS

1. Found in Kirkcudbrightshire 2. Found in Suffolk.

yet Mr Franks describes and figures an enamelled harness-mount in the museum at Florence, which, however, "may not have been found in that country, but carried to Italy by dealers in antiquities. It has more of a Roman character than the British specimens, though preserving somewhat of a Celtic style" (*Horæ Ferales*, p. 194, plate xix. fig. 5).

The present specimen came into Mr Hume's possession accidentally. He happened to meet some drainers returning from work, and one of them brought him the bronze and asked his opinion about it. Unfortunately, no means were taken to identify the spot where it was found, and near which, no doubt, other pieces of trappings are lying.

It is a piece of metal of semilunar shape, ornamented on both sides with a design thoroughly Celtic in character, the interstices of which are filled with enamel of opaque vermillion, with small circles of bright opaque yellow. It measures $3\frac{1}{2}$ by $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches, but the actual width of the crescentic band of metal nowhere exceeds $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches. The inner margin of the crescent is strengthened by a cylindrical edging, which increases in thickness from the centre towards the extremities, where it is about a quarter of an inch in diameter. The outer margin of the crescentic plate is thin and somewhat damaged. The surface is mostly covered by a thick layer of brownish patina, which has scaled off in some parts, exposing the greenish oxidised surface of the metal underneath. The pattern, which is the same on both sides of the pendant, appears in relief, the ground having been excavated or sunk for the enamels. They are much decayed, and have in several cases fallen out of the sunk spaces, but in any case it is still possible to say whether the space has been filled with the red or the yellow. In the character and partly also in the colour of the design, it resembles one of a pair of objects found at Westhall, Suffolk, and now preserved in the British Museum, which has been figured in plate xix. fig. 4, of *Horæ Ferales*, and is now reproduced (in Plate VIII. fig. 2) on a scale of three-fourths, below the Auchendolly example for comparison. It differs, however, from this and other similar objects preserved there, in respect that the points of the crescent-shaped plate are not united into a ring. There remain, however, two slits, indicating the attachment of a bar, which was probably cylindrical, to which a strap would be affixed.

Dr Wilson records a remarkable discovery of a quantity of harness rings at Middleby, Annandale, in 1737, which found their way into the collection of Sir John Clerk of Penicuik (*Prehistoric Annals of Scotland*, vol. ii. p. 157); and Mr Franks has figured several in *Horæ Ferales*. The discoid ornament found on a crannog in Dowalton Loch, Wigtownshire, figured in the *Proceedings* of this Society, vol. xv. p. 155, is the metal-setting of enamel of the same description.