

MONDAY, 8th January 1906.

DAVID CHRISTISON, M.D., Vice-President, in the Chair.

A Ballot having been taken, the following were duly elected Fellows :—

Dr JOHN AITKEN, Ardenlea, Falkirk.

ANDREW EDWARD MURRAY, W.S., 7 Eton Terrace.

JAMES LYLE, Waverley, Queen's Crescent.

The Very Rev. JAMES C. RUSSELL, D.D., 9 Coates Gardens.

The following Donations to the Museum and Library were laid on the table, and thanks voted to the Donors :—

(1) By the DAUGHTERS of the late JOHN BUCHANAN, Esq., LL.D., Glasgow.

Collection of antiquities of various kinds, comprising—

Two fragments of decorated "Samian" ware and a fragment of an Inscribed Stone, with II in one line and V in the line below, from Cadder.

Base of a small Vessel of soft red ware, from New Kilpatrick.

Fragment of decorated "Samian" ware Bowl, small shallow Vessel of "Samian" ware $2\frac{7}{8}$ inches in diameter and $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches in depth, plain; two small decorated fragments of the same ware; portion of large shallow Vessel of reddish ware 9 inches in diameter by $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches in depth; handle and portion of Vessel of smooth greyish ware; handle of Amphora, with potter's stamp VMEDIC; portion of small terra-cotta Bust of Female Figure, described in Stuart's *Caledonia Romana*, p. 348; six fragments of Tiles; small portion of the rim of a glass Vessel,—all from Castlecary.

Fragment from arch of gateway at Garscadden, with inscription "OMNIA FIRMAT."

Stone Cup, slightly oval, measuring over all $5\frac{1}{4} \times 3\frac{5}{8}$ inches, across the

hollow $2\frac{3}{4} \times 2\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and $\frac{7}{8}$ inch in depth, with short rounded handle at one side, from a tumulus at Gallowflat, Rutherglen.

Four blue, decorated, glazed Tiles, 5 inches square, from Slatefield.

Pocket Sun-dial, with Compass and hinged Gnomon, in brass case, with lid to screw on.

Embroidered Satchel, lettered in red silk thread — I LIEVE AND DEY IN CONSTANCIE. ABSENCE NEVER PAIRTS LOYAL [HEARTS]—the last word being symbolised by the figure of two hearts entwined.

Flat piece of lead, 8 by $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches, pierced for seven nails, found underneath one of the dug-out canoes discovered in May 1852 at Clydehaugh, near Govan.

Piece of Mosaic from Hadrian's Villa; and fragment of the Arm of marble Statue, with the Hand of a child resting on it, from the Baths of Constantine, Rome.

Small slab of grey sandstone, with figure of Hindoo Goddess, from Sangor, Central India; and brass Figure of Krishna, from Benares.

Bridle-bit of iron, from Cawnpore.

(2) By the MASTER OF THE ROLLS.

Acts of the Privy Council of England, New Series, vol. xxix., 1598-99, and vol. xxx., 1599-1600; Calendar of Close Rolls, Edward III., vol. viii., 1346-49; Close Rolls, Henry III., 1231-34; Patent Rolls, Richard II., 1391-96; Patent Rolls, Henry IV., vol. ii., 1401-05; Year-Books, 18 and 19 of the Reign of Edward III.; State Papers, Ireland, 1660-62; Treasury Books, vol. ii., 1667-68; State Papers, America and West Indies, 1697-98.

There was exhibited:—

(1) By Mr C. O. DUSSEL, 8 Danube Street, through Mr JAMES URQUHART, F.S.A. Scot.

An ornamental horse-crupper from Kirkwall, Orkney (fig. 1), consisting of thirty brass plaques affixed to two longitudinal straps of leather,

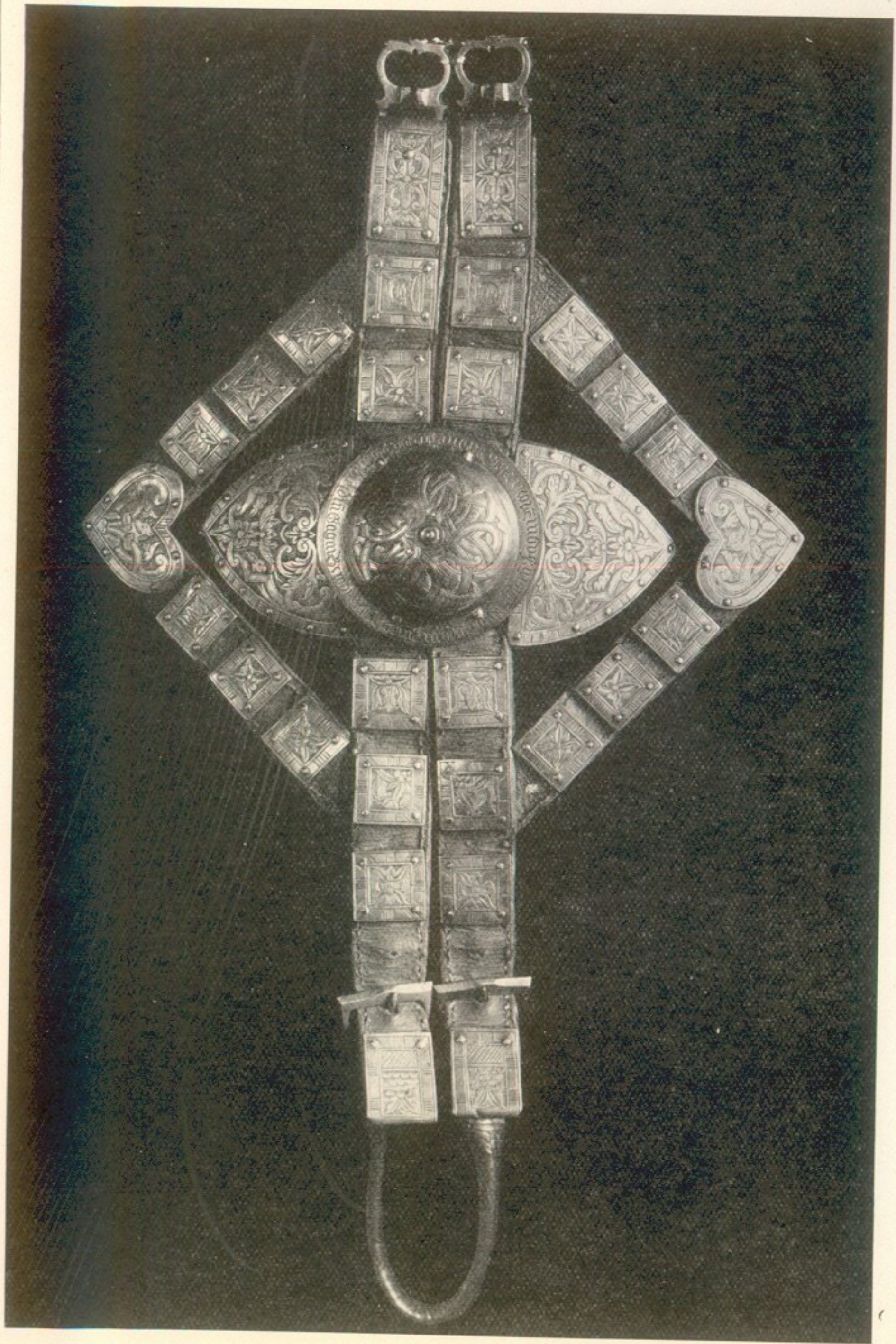


Fig. 1. Ornamented Crupper of a Lady's Saddle from Iceland.

with a lozenge-shaped centre-piece consisting of a central boss flanked by two side-pieces of triangular curvature. The length, including the buckles at the end, is $21\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and the breadth from point to point of the lozenge-shaped part is $14\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The terminal plaques are oblong, those at the posterior end being $1\frac{7}{8}$ inches in length by $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in breadth, and those at the anterior end $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length by $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in breadth. The other ten plaques on the longitudinal straps are $1\frac{3}{8}$ inches square and placed half an inch apart. Twelve similar square plaques are similarly placed on the straps which make the lozenge-shaped part, and the two terminals on the outer side angles of the lozenge are heart-shaped. The central boss is $3\frac{3}{8}$ inches in diameter, surrounded by a flat border half an inch in width. The flanking plaques of triangular curvature measure $3\frac{3}{8}$ inches along each side. The oblong and square plaques are chased with a floral device in an oblong or square panel in the centre of each, surrounded by a border crossed at intervals by groups of parallel lines. The heart-shaped plaques have each a bear seated upright, and looking out of the floral scroll with his fore-paws clasped round two of its branches. The plates of triangular curvature which flank the boss have an elaborate floral scroll filling the space within a border of the same character as that of the other plaques, but studded with small boss-like nail-heads at intervals of $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch. There are similar nail-heads in the angles of the margins of the oblong and square plaques, and round the margin of the heart-shaped plaques. The central boss has four such studs round the margin and one on the top, and the whole of its convexity is chased with an elaborate pattern of interlaced work, with incipient leafage at intervals. Round the flat margin of the boss is an Icelandic inscription incised in the old black-letter character, which Mr Eiríkr Magnússon of the Cambridge University Library, in a letter to Dr Anderson, discusses and explains as follows :—

“The inscription of which you send me a rubbing and a correct transliteration proves the boss on which it is engraved to have been an ornamental affixture to a *crupper* attached to a saddle given to a bride on the occasion of her bridal ride, or procession on horseback, with her party to the church, or

to the place where the wedding feast was to be given. This the translation of the quatrain will bear out inferentially.

"The quatrain is in Icelandic. In form it is an absolutely perfect piece of poetry, and yet of an elaborate technique. The language is remarkably pure, and, in want of any data, may belong to any time from, say, 1600 to 1800; but must belong to the time when ladies' saddles and harness decorated with ornamental plaque-work in brass were most in vogue—the 18th century.

"I will now give you a copy of the quatrain such as will exhibit at a glance the technique of its poetical form :—

Reidiñ	Gagni	Frægda	<i>Brwdi</i>	<i>Best</i>	<i>Dafni</i>
<i>Byriñ</i>					
Leidiñ	Fagni	<i>Mooti</i>	<i>Mest</i>		
<i>Medur</i>		<i>ægda</i>		<i>Safni</i>	

"The vertical arrangement shows the *assonantic* syllables, the letters in italic type show the *alliteration*. Reduced to ordinary 18th century spelling, the verse reads :—

Reidinn gagni brúdi best,
Byriñ frægða dafni,
Leidinn fagni móti mest,
Medur ægða safni.

Before interpreting the verse, I must call attention to the assonantic first words of lines 1 and 3 : *reiðinn*, *leiðinn*—I use the normal spelling of to-day. At the end of a word the *unstressed* syllable *inn* has the same sound volume as the (unstressed) syllable *in* ; therefore :

1st, Reidiñ may stand for reiðinn or reiðin.
2nd, Leidiñ " " leiðinn or leiðin.

"Both words stand in nom. case with definite article *hinn* or *inn* = Engl. *the* suffixed. Therefore : *Reið-inn* = *reiði'nn* (*reiði hinn*, *reiði inn*) may be nom. of *reiði*, m. (= a crupper), meaning *the crupper* ; or it may be nom. of *reið*, f., a ride, *reiðin* (*in* = the fem. of the article *hin*, 'in) = *the ride*. Now both *crupper* and *ride* suit the sense of the first line equally well ; so I take it the author meant *reiðin(n)* to have the double meaning I have pointed out.

"*Leidiñ* can stand for *leiðinn*, m., *the tedium*, *the weariness* (unfulfilled desire of a love-lorn heart) ; or it may stand for *leidin*, f., which I think has here the sense of *leet*, assembly, wedding party. Accordingly the translation of the quatrain will be :

Let the { ride } suit the bride in the best manner,
 { crupper }
Let the fair wind of renown(ed deeds) increase (for the couple to be married),
Let the { weariness } rejoice at its most in the meeting (of bride and
 { wedding party } bridegroom),
With a collection of *comforts* (wedding presents).

“*gagni* = pres. subj. of *gagna*, be of gain, suit; *brúði*, dat. s. of *brúðr*, bride; *Byrr*, ‘bearing,’ fair wind; *best*, superl. of *góðr*, best; *frægða*, gen. pl. of *frægð*, fame, renown, deed worthy of fame; *dafni*, subj. of *dafna*, to thrive, increase; *fagni*, subj. of *fagna* (‘fawn’ upon), rejoice; *mest*, most; *medur*, prep. with dat. with; *þægða*, gen. pl. of *þægð*, f., an obliging act, gratifying deed, comfort conferred upon a person, winning gift; *safni*, dat. sing. of *safn*, n., collection.

“In his *Reise igiennem Island*, 1772, pt. i. p. 44, Eggert Olafsson gives a description of the 18th century lady’s saddle in Iceland as follows:—

“‘In other places of the country the ladies ride by themselves in a *lady’s saddle*, somewhat resembling those in use in Denmark. Yet the Icelandic saddles are much more decorated. They are lined by blue or green cloth, covered by brass work, and here and there ornamented by large bosses of the same metal, engraved by foliate designs, animals and birds. The bridle, crupper, and breast-straps are also thickly set with bosses of brass.’

“This antiquarian curiosity is very valuable, now that all traces of brass-bound ladies’ saddles seem to have vanished in Iceland.”

As the crupper has been thus shown to be undoubtedly a product of Icelandic handicraft, probably of the 18th century, it would have been interesting to have known how and when it came to Kirkwall; but unfortunately, although it is known to have been there for at least fifty or sixty years, no traces of its previous history appear to be obtainable.

The following Communications were read:—