

II.

ACCOUNT OF THE EXAMINATION OF A RELIC BED ON THE MOTE OF INGLESTON, KELTON PARISH, KIRKCUDBRIGHT, FROM WHICH WAS RECOVERED A PADLOCK OF TUBULAR FORM; AND A NOTE OF SIMILAR PADLOCKS PRESERVED IN THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ANTIQUITIES. BY ALEXANDER O. CURLE, *Secretary*.

In the park that lies between the farm of Ingleston and the road from Castle-Douglas to Auchencairn, and about 100 yards distant from the road, is a natural rocky hillock (fig. 1) which has been adapted as a mote by scarping the sides and levelling up the summit.¹ It is doubtful if it has been entrenched, as only for a very short distance towards the NNE. is there any trace of an outer bank to contain an entrenchment, and that is probably natural. At the opposite end of the hillock a projecting tongue of rock has evidently been levelled down, but obviously not cut through for a trench, and similar levelling has been effected on the S. The hillock has a general height of about 18 feet, but with the fall of the ground towards the SSW. it shows a somewhat greater elevation in that direction. The summit is a fairly regular oval, with its longest axis NNE. to SSW., measuring 71 feet by 43 feet. Near the centre is a low oval mound with its longest axis identical with that of the summit, measuring some 20 feet in length by 10 feet 6 inches in greatest breadth, and rising little if at all above the general level, but formed by the excavation of a shallow trench around it, a few inches in depth and from 4 feet to 7 feet wide, the wider portion being at the SSW. end and the narrowest at the opposite extremity. At the former end this hollow has been carried forward to the edge of the bank with a width of about 4 feet

¹ The accompanying illustration from a drawing by Mr F. R. Coles, previously utilised in the Society's *Proceedings*, figures it admirably.



Fig. 1. View of the Mote of Inglesston, Kelton, Kirkcudbrightshire.

6 inches, and with the same width at the opposite end it is traceable towards the edge for a distance of 12 feet.

The edge and sides of the hillock, especially towards the E. and SE., have been much broken down by sheep and cattle, and in consequence at the SE. there was exposed, extending from the upper surface in depth for 2 feet 2 inches or thereby and in breadth to 2 feet 7 inches, a bed of discoloured soil. With the permission of the proprietor a slight examination of this spot was made, and it was found to contain much wood charcoal, a few particles of calcined bone, and a quantity of burnt or compressed clay and light slag or cinders. From it there were recovered a number of iron nails, square in section, an iron rivet

(fig. 2) with a rhomboidal head at one end and a round nut hammered on at the other, a shard of pottery (fig. 3) found 13 inches below the surface, of a fine red ware, covered externally with a brown lustrous glaze, and decorated in appliqué with a small rosette and a wavy moulding; a number of small ornaments from the same vessel, and a fragment of the circular base, with a small piece of the wall attached, of similar red ware, also probably belonging to the same vessel. The bottom of the vessel has been flat, and the edge has not been pressed out with the thumb. There were also found a fragment

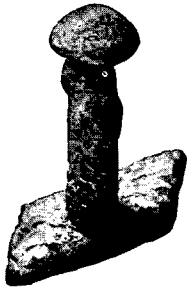


Fig. 2. Iron Rivet.

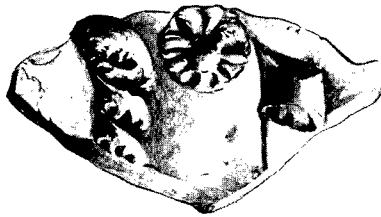


Fig. 3. Shard of Pottery.

From the Mote of Ingleston (§).

of dressed sandstone, with two parallel lines incised across it, and the tubular padlock to be hereafter described. Across a space of 18 inches there occurred a second bed about 1 foot 10 inches in breadth, but of less depth than the other, and containing no relics. These beds were not above a few inches in thickness, but as the nails and small fragments of pottery recovered from the loose stones and earth on the scarp below indicated, they had been originally considerably thicker. The evidence did not suffice to warrant the presumption that they were post-holes. Beneath a turf raised on the hollow on the summit lay a fragment of the lip of a vessel of white ware, with traces of bright green glaze upon it. There was also picked up on the scarp of the mound, on

the opposite side from where the other objects were found, a tiny piece of the red-bodied brown glazed ware, but nowhere else around the mound were any traces of occupation exposed to view.

The padlock (fig. 4) recovered is of a type well known to have been in use throughout the Middle Ages and, in the modified form of the fetter-lock and other padlocks, still survives. In its simplest form it consisted of a metal cylinder, the former closed at either end by a plate pierced at the one extremity with a rectangular opening, and

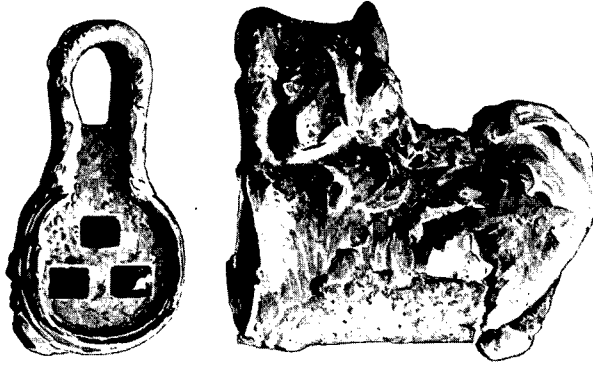


Fig. 4. Iron Padlock from the Mote of Ingleston (3).

at the other by a key-hole and surmounted by a narrow tube. Two bolts, connected so that they resembled the letter **U**, were pressed into the tube and the cylinder respectively, but while that which entered the tube was a plain rod, that entering the lock was furnished with two barb-like springs. These were compressed as the bolt was forced into the opening, and expanded when such a check as was provided for them in the interior was passed, thus rendering the withdrawal of the bolt impossible without the application of a key to compress the springs on the inside. The links or staple to be fastened were thus held on the connecting curve of the bolts at the end of the padlock.

This type of lock in a slightly different form is believed to have been introduced into this country by the Romans, and, according to General Pitt Rivers, who illustrates a number of examples in *Primitive Locks and Keys*, it probably came originally from the East.

In addition to that found at Ingleston there are five specimens in the National Museum, none of which have hitherto been described or illustrated, and that I propose now to do, treating of them, as far as possible, in what appears to be their chronological sequence.

In 1889 there were sent into the Museum by a Mr Henry Griffiths a number of objects of iron, much corroded and for the most part in fragments, found in a broch at Skelpick, Sutherlandshire. No further information, seemingly, accompanied them, and as no one of the several brochs in the neighbourhood of Skelpick appears to have been cleared out, we must assume that the objects were recovered in some partial excavation. They include one large iron cylindrical padlock (No. 1), the cylinder of another (No. 2), the tube containing a portion of the bolt of another, and fragments which may possibly be pieces of bolts, etc.

No. 1, the larger and more complete (fig. 5), is formed with a cylinder 3 inches in length by $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter, from the upper side of which projects a thin iron plate $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch in height, confined between upward extensions of the discs which close the cylinder at either end. The upper end of each of these extensions is curved round so as to form a small loop. Lying along the edge of the plate, and resting on the loops, is a tube $\frac{9}{16}$ of an inch in diameter, for the reception of the one arm of the bolt, a portion of which is firmly corroded within it. Near the centre of the front of the cylinder the disc has been pierced horizontally for the barbed arm of the bolt; the edge of the aperture is broken, but sufficient remains to show that it has been oblong, measuring $\frac{1}{2}$ inch by $\frac{5}{16}$ of an inch. The keyhole at the opposite end of the cylinder is placed vertically close to one side, and measures $\frac{11}{16}$ by $\frac{3}{16}$ of an inch.

No. 2 consists only of the cylinder (fig. 6), and measures $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches in length by $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter. It is encircled by four bands or

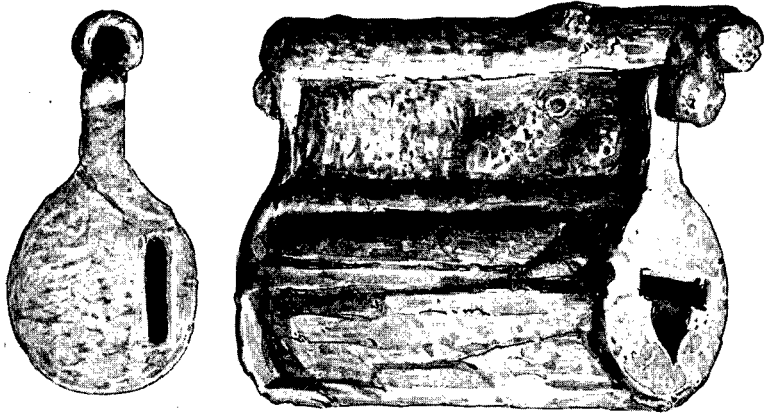


Fig. 5. Iron Padlock (No. 1) from Skelpick Broch ($\frac{2}{3}$).

hoops, one at each end and the other two equidistant between them. The bolt aperture is broken; the keyhole is placed vertically, as in the previous example, and measures $\frac{9}{16}$ by $\frac{3}{16}$ of an inch.

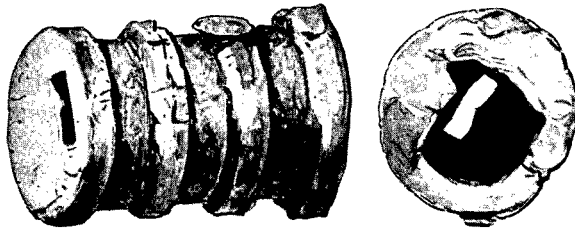


Fig. 6. Iron Padlock (No. 2) from Skelpick Broch ($\frac{2}{3}$).

Among the fragments in this find is the tube containing a portion of a bolt already referred to, and attached to it at either end a loop similar to those on No. 1.

A small leaf-shaped piece of metal terminating in a loop is probably part of yet another padlock.

No. 3. This padlock, which is of the same class as the foregoing, was presented to the Museum in 1866 by Sir David Brewster, who found it in an earth-house which he explored near the village of Raits, parish of Alvie, Inverness-shire, and which he described with illustrations in the *Proceedings*, vol. v. p. 119.

Both portions of the bolt remain in the lock.

Though the circumstances of the finding of the padlocks from the broch are not such as to warrant a conclusion that they belong to the broch period—for it is possible that they were attached to some objects hidden in the ruins—yet the recovery of a lock so similar from an earth-house, a construction which may well be contemporaneous with the broch, justifies an assumption that this form of the padlock is contemporaneous with both structures.

A bolt furnished with its springs, found in the Buston crannog, is also in the Museum, and was illustrated by Dr Munro in his *Scottish Lake Dwellings*.

In the padlocks described the bolts appear to have been completely detachable from the lock, an arrangement involving awkward consequences if the parts became separated. The obvious necessity for some attachment indicates the use of the loops as being for the fastening of one end of a chain, the other end of which was connected with the bolt. That this was their probable purpose is demonstrated in an illustration by General Pitt Rivers of a padlock from China taking the form of a fish. In it the bolts are shown as entering the mouth of the fish and connected by a chain to a ring in the tail.

No. 4. This is a padlock (fig. 7) made of brass, which, though exactly similar in principle, differs slightly in external appearance from the previously described examples. It came from the Sym collection with no record of its *provenance* or of its association with other relics. It is an interesting specimen, as showing the springs

still on the bolt. It may be compared with a padlock similarly ornamented, found, with no associated relics, nor in any circumstances

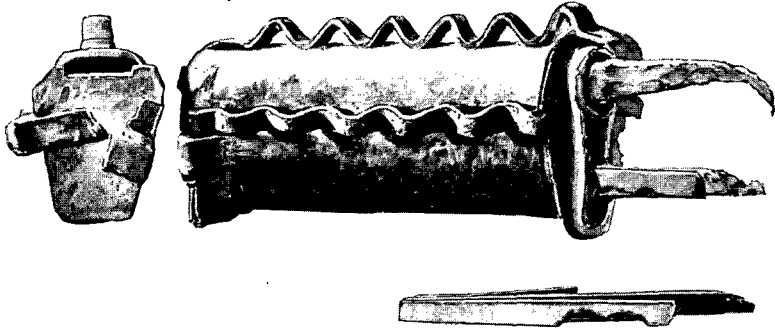


Fig. 7. Padlock of Brass (No. 4) from the Sym Collection in the Museum ($\frac{2}{3}$).

which suggest a date for its employment, near Avebury, and illustrated in the *Diary of a Dean*, by Dean Merewether.

No. 5. This is a smaller padlock (fig. 8) than either of the foregoing,

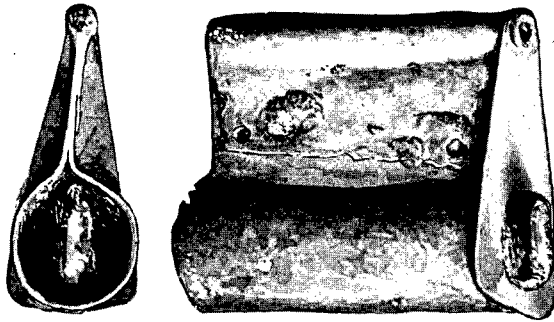


Fig. 8. Padlock of Brass (No. 5) from Glenluce Sands ($\frac{1}{2}$).

made of brass, and found, with no associated objects, on the sand-hills of Glenluce. It is of the form of No. 1, and measures $1\frac{1}{8}$ of an inch in extreme length. The cylinder measures $\frac{1}{16}$ of an inch in diameter,

the plate that rises from it $\frac{9}{16}$ of an inch in depth, and the tube surmounting it $\frac{4}{16}$ of an inch in diameter. The plate is formed of a piece of metal folded over the tube and riveted. The bolt aperture in the end of the lock and the keyhole at the opposite extremity are vertical.

In all the foregoing the attachment has been around the curved connecting portion of the bolts which projected from the end of the padlock, thus permitting a direct strain to be put on the lock in an attempt to force it. This danger was overcome in the form which we come to next, and which is that of the padlock from the Ingleston mote. That lock is imperfect, but fortunately in the *Norske Oldsager* (Ryghy, fig. 452) we have in an illustration its almost exact counterpart. The cylinder, an essential feature of the type, still remains, but the upper plate has been dispensed with as also the tube which rested on it, and in their places there rise from the top of the cylinder two arched protuberances with a clear space between them, and each perforated in the upper half for the passage of the bolt. The attachment is thus made by the upper arm of the bolt crossing the space intervening between these two projecting arches, by which arrangement the resistance of the lock is increased, and the mechanism relieved from any direct strain being put upon it. This further entailed a change in the arrangement at the end of the padlock. It being no longer necessary that there should be a projection, the bolts were henceforth attached to the ends of a plate which was pressed home into a slight recess formed at the end of the cylinder for its reception.

Another departure from the earlier form, which came into vogue at some indefinite period of the development, evidently with the view to strengthen the hold of the bolt within the lock, was the substitution for the single-barbed bolt of a three-pronged bolt, each arm of which entered a separate aperture in the frontal disc, but was not necessarily furnished with a spring. This is shown in an

illustration in *La Ferronnerie* (Liget), of a Russian padlock of bronze, assigned to a date between the first and fourth centuries of our era.

Both the Norwegian and Ingleston examples show this feature. The only respect in which these two locks seem to differ, as far as external appearances go, is that the latter is furnished with a slot, rectangular in section, along the top of the cylinder between the arched projections, apparently formed for the movement backwards and forwards of a block to prevent the complete withdrawal of the bolt from the padlock. There is no indication in the illustration of the Norwegian lock of such a groove, and as one half of the upper portion of the Ingleston padlock is imperfect, the complete form of this feature, and the method by which the bolt, with its attachment, moving within it, was passed through the staple or other object to be fastened, is not clearly apparent. The padlock from the mote hill (fig. 4) measures $2\frac{9}{16}$ inches in length, the cylinder $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches in diameter, the arched protuberance (one only remaining) rises $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches above the cylinder, the opening through it for the bolt measures $\frac{1}{16}$ by $\frac{5}{16}$ of an inch. A raised moulding is carried round the exposed edges of the padlock to give additional strength. The plate that closes the cylinder at the bolt end is recessed about $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch, and is pierced with three rectangular apertures placed triangularly, each measuring $\frac{4}{16}$ by $\frac{6}{16}$ of an inch. The back of the padlock has been crushed, but a small rectangular opening just visible through the corroded metal in the inside, and placed in the centre of the plate, has evidently been the key-hole.

Fortunately both these last-mentioned padlocks have been found in association with other objects which place limits to the period of their use. The Norwegian example was found in a grave at Hoerland, Laerdal, with charcoal and an iron axe belonging to the Viking or Second Iron Age period of Norway, reckoned to have endured from the end of the eighth to the middle of the eleventh century, and the complete introduction of Christianity. The Ingleston padlock was

found, as previously narrated, associated with fragments of pottery. This pottery is of a fine red body, such as was used for tiles in Cistercian abbeys, and is decorated with applied ornament, a fashion which does not admit of its being dated at the earliest, previous to the thirteenth or fourteenth century, and more probably indicates a date of the fifteenth or even early sixteenth century. Unless, therefore, this padlock was of considerable antiquity when it came to be associated with the fragments of pottery, there is evidence here of the survival of this form over a period of several centuries. The fact that it admirably served its purpose probably protected it from further modification, and a similar reason may account for its survivance with almost identical external appearance in China at the present time.

Having now considered these padlocks in their chronological order, it is desirable to return once more to the subject of the Ingleston mote and see what significance these relics attach to it. The Anglo-Norman origin of the mote hills in Scotland, thanks to the researches of Dr George Neilson, Mrs Armitage, and others, receives now almost universal acceptance; and that they were surmounted with wooden towers encircled by a palisade of wood, or wattle and daub, is a known historical fact. But though this origin indicates the twelfth century and the reigns of David I., Malcolm, and William the Lion as the *terminus a quo* for erection and occupation, the *terminus ad quem* is still indefinite for both events. That the occupation extended into the sixteenth century is no extravagant assumption. Here, at Ingleston, we see in these relics—bone, cinders, pottery, etc.—satisfactory evidence of an occupation, and that probably of the fourteenth century, possibly later. The piece of white ware, with green glaze on it, is a mere fragment, but it is typical of the fifteenth or sixteenth century rather than of an earlier date. Numerous though these mote-hills are in the south-west of Scotland, no other is known to the writer on which any evidence of occupation is visible,

nor does the National Museum contain other relics from such a site. A piece of a side-blast trumpet of bronze is recorded as having come from Innermessan, also a mediæval tripod ewer of the same metal, but a statement that the former came from the *Mote* of Innermessan is not in accordance with the record in the *Proceedings* (see vol. xxxiii. p. 151).