

## I.

NOTICE OF (1) CERTAIN BRONZE IMPLEMENTS FROM DUMFRIESSHIRE; AND (2) A SYMBOL STONE FROM EAST LOMOND HILL, FIFE, RECENTLY PRESENTED TO THE NATIONAL MUSEUM. BY J. M. CORRIE, F.S.A.Scot.

## (1) BRONZE IMPLEMENTS FROM DUMFRIESSHIRE.

In his instructive paper on Scottish Bronze Age Hoards<sup>1</sup> Mr Callander has pointed out that the number of bronze objects found in Scotland cannot be considered very large when compared with the number found in England and Ireland. It is therefore very desirable that as many known examples as possible should be recorded and described in the *Proceedings* of this Society, and I wish to direct attention to a number from Dumfriesshire that have not previously been noted.

*Bronze Hoard from Greyfriars Church, Dumfries.*—A series of plaster casts representing four axes and two spear-heads of bronze has, for many years, been preserved in the collection of the Dumfriesshire and Galloway Natural History and Antiquarian Society, and the label on the exhibit records that the original implements are said to have been found when excavating for the foundations of Greyfriars Church, Dumfries, in 1866. At the time of these excavations it was reported in the local press that a careful watch was being kept for relics, and a subsequent notice recorded the finding of a bronze figure of Christ.<sup>2</sup> Reference to this find is also made in the *Transactions of the Dumfriesshire Society*,<sup>3</sup> but there is no mention of the discovery of the axes and spear-heads represented by the casts just referred to. The original implements, it is believed, were at one time preserved in a private museum at the Crichton Royal Institution, Dumfries, but that collection was given up many years ago, and, until recently, it was thought that all the relics had been dispersed. The accidental finding of one of the axes, however, induced Mr James Flett, Clerk of Works at the Institution, to make further search, and it is gratifying to learn that a number of relics—including two more of the original axes from the supposed Greyfriars hoard—has since been recovered. The illustration (fig. 1) is made from photographs of three of the implements them-

<sup>1</sup> *Proceedings*, vol. lvii, pp. 123-66.

<sup>2</sup> This relic, which originally had formed part of a crucifix, has been figured in Dowden's *Mediæval Church in Scotland*, p. 124.

<sup>3</sup> *Transactions Dumfriesshire and Galloway Natural History and Antiquarian Society*, 1866-7, p. 31.

selves, Nos. 2, 3, and 4, and of three of the casts, Nos. 1, 5, and 6. It is probable that a manuscript catalogue of the Crichton collection would, at one time, be in existence, but, if so, all trace of it has been lost, and our information in respect of the find location of these relics is derived solely from the very unsatisfactory record affixed to the casts. This is unfortunate, because there is difficulty in reconciling the number of casts with references to the Crichton exhibits gleaned from other sources. In the catalogue of a Loan Exhibition held in Dumfries on 26th June 1865—a year prior to the discovery of the Greyfriars relics—the Crichton Museum is represented by “two hatchets and one spear-head,” whereas in a later Exhibition, on 7th July 1873, “four axes and two spear-heads”—the number actually represented by the casts—are included in the catalogue. The inference that the casts deposited by the Dumfriesshire Society in the Observatory Museum, Maxwelltown, in 1880<sup>1</sup>—which are those referred to—were, in reality, replicas of all the bronze relics preserved at the Crichton Royal Institution, appears obvious. That a hoard of bronze implements was actually discovered at Greyfriars Church, and that for some reason or another it escaped notice at the time, can scarcely be questioned, but in view of the information at present available it appears probable that the hoard consisted of only two axes and one spear-head which cannot now be identified from the other specimens whose provenance is not known.

The axes are all of the flanged and palstave types, and they represent a group more or less illustrative of the development of these forms of bronze implements. No. 1, fig. 1, the smallest implement in the series, measures  $3\frac{3}{8}$  inches in length. It is provided with broadly developed lateral flanges and a well-defined stop ridge. It has a cutting edge of  $1\frac{3}{8}$  inch, and is nearly 1 inch in width across the broadest portion of the flanges, which are abruptly reduced in breadth near the butt, and the axe is thinned at the shaft recess to a thickness of  $\frac{1}{8}$  of an inch. No. 2, fig. 1, measures  $4\frac{1}{4}$  inches in length, and has the same well-developed flanges tapering, in this instance, equally and gradually towards the butt and cutting edge, and it shows a stop ridge prominently defined on its two sides. The axe, like the first, is thinned to a thickness of  $\frac{1}{8}$  of an inch behind the stop ridge, and the cutting edge is  $1\frac{3}{8}$  inch across. No. 3, fig. 1, shows several new features. The most obvious is the widening of the cutting edge, but the axe has also been increased in thickness to  $\frac{3}{8}$  of an inch, and it shows an additional feature in the shape of a vertical mid-rib, which serves the double purpose of a simple decorative motif and a strengthening ridge for the blade. The implement measures

<sup>1</sup> *Transactions Dumfriesshire and Galloway Natural History and Antiquarian Society*, 1880-1. App. C., p. 86.

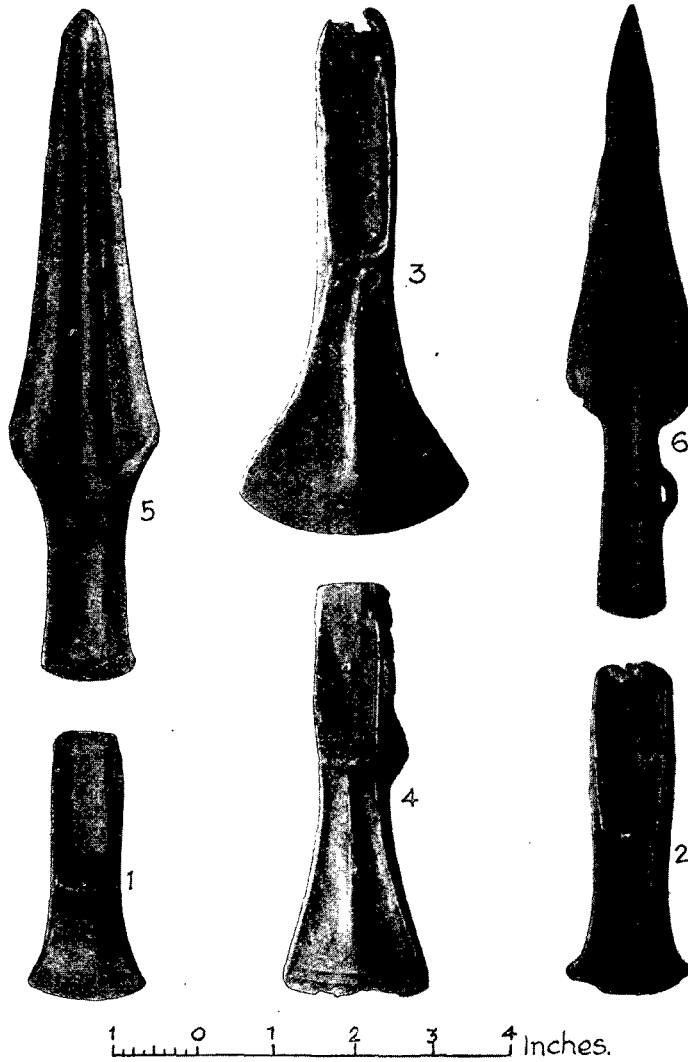


Fig. 1. Bronze Axes and Spear-heads found at Dumfries.

$6\frac{1}{4}$  inches in length and  $2\frac{7}{8}$  inches across the cutting face, and it is furnished with well-defined flanges and stop ridges. No. 4, fig. 1, measuring  $5\frac{1}{8}$  inches in length and  $1\frac{7}{8}$  inch across the cutting face, illustrates a further development in the provision of what has obviously been intended as a side loop for additional attachment to the shaft, and in a more definite amalgamation of the same broad flanges with the well-defined stop ridges. It is of peculiar interest in being an unfinished specimen, the inequalities of the casting not having been removed by dressing, and the side loop, in particular, being left as an unperforated lug. The specimen also retains the strengthening mid-rib in front of the stop ridge.

Coming now to the spear-heads, No. 5, fig. 1, represents a fine specimen of rare form, known from the name of a place in the Isle of Wight, where the first recognised example was found, as the "Arreton Down type." Blades of this description have sometimes been regarded as daggers, but it has been demonstrated that there are features in their construction and method of mounting which show that they are spear-heads.<sup>1</sup> The blade is usually thick and strong, showing a central ridge, and having the sides more or less fluted or lined where the metal is reduced in thickness. In its earliest form the type was provided with a long, narrow tang perforated at the end for a pin or rivet, as seen on two Scottish examples from Whitehaugh Moss, near Muirkirk, Ayrshire,<sup>2</sup> and from Crawford Priory, in the parish of Cupar, Fife.<sup>3</sup> Two examples—one from the Arreton Down hoard, and another from Snowhill, in Gloucestershire—were furnished with a ferrule riveted upon the tang. A later development shows the tang displaced by a socket formed by casting the blade and ferrule in one piece. The example from Dumfries belongs to the latter early socketed variety, and it shows the interesting feature of having the rivet heads of the earlier form retained as a decorative motif. It measures  $7\frac{1}{8}$  inches in length. The only other known Scottish example of this class is a small one, showing two rivet holes and a somewhat squared socket, which was found at Kincluney, in the parish of Durris, Kincardineshire, and is now in the National Collection.<sup>4</sup>

The second spear-head, No. 6, fig. 1, of the Dumfries specimens exhibits developments of a later period in the addition of loops on the socket for the more secure attachment to the shaft, and the introduction of the leaf-shaped blade, with a hollow mid-rib formed by continuing the socket

<sup>1</sup> *Archeologia*, vol. lxi., pt. 2, pp. 445-6.

<sup>2</sup> *Scotland in Pagan Times—Bronze and Stone Ages*, p. 180, fig. 185. Since this paper was read the specimen has been presented to the National Collection.

<sup>3</sup> *Proceedings*, vol. xxviii, pp. 219-25, fig. 1.

<sup>4</sup> *Proceedings*, vol. liv, p. 149.

nearly to the point. This spear-head, which measures  $7\frac{1}{8}$  inches in length and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inch across the blade, has lost one of the loops on the socket and has had the blade bent forward slightly near the point.

*Three Bronze Relics from Dunscore.*—On the 26th March of this year, a flat bronze axe was found by Mr William Wilson, a workman employed by Mr A. Laurie of Brockhillstone Farm, in the parish of Dunscore, Dumfriesshire, to remove sand and gravel from a large moraine heap situated between 200 and 300 yards north of the farmhouse, and about 700 yards, or thereby, to the east of the well-defined motehill of Birkshaw, in the neighbouring parish of Glencairn. The axe was observed by Mr Wilson amongst the debris of a slight fall of earth, and the depth at which it was originally embedded cannot therefore be determined with certainty. Mr Wilson expresses the opinion that the implement came from about 2 feet from the surface of the crest of the knoll, and that there was nothing to indicate an intruded deposit. The relic was acquired by my father—to whom the discovery had been immediately reported—and it has since been presented by him to the National Collection. A special interest may be attached to the axe because of the fact that it is the first specimen of the flat type from Dumfriesshire to find a place in the National Museum, and only the second example of the type definitely known to have been discovered in the county.<sup>1</sup> The axe is a little uneven along the cutting edge, but it is otherwise in a remarkably good state of preservation. It is covered with a thick green patina, and bears no ornamentation. The measurements are 6 inches long,  $3\frac{3}{8}$  inches across the cutting edge, and  $\frac{3}{8}$  inch thick in the middle of its length, thinning gradually and evenly to the cutting face and to a slightly rounded end,  $1\frac{1}{8}$  inch in width, at the butt. The lateral edges are ridged and beautifully curved, and the implement weighs exactly  $16\frac{1}{2}$  ounces.

Two other bronze relics, an axe and a large leaf-shaped spear-head, both of them said to have been found at different times on, or near, the fort at Springfield Hill, in the same parish, may be included in this short notice.<sup>2</sup> The first relic—an axe of the flanged type—was brought to my notice through information supplied by Mr M'Murdo, Woodfoot, Dunscore, shortly after the discovery of the Brockhillstone specimen. It had long been in the possession of Mr A. Symington, Allanton, Auld-girth, Dumfriesshire, the proprietor of the estate on which Springfield Hill fort is situated. As a result of my inquiries he has generously presented the implement to the National Museum. The axe, which

<sup>1</sup> The other specimen was found on the farm of South Cowshaw, in Tinwald parish.

<sup>2</sup> The New Statistical Account mentions a third relic from the same site, but its precise character is not specified.

appears to have been found about sixteen years ago, is well preserved, and measures  $4\frac{3}{4}$  inches in length and  $2\frac{9}{16}$  inches across the cutting edge. The flanges are broadly defined, but they do not reach the "palstave" form, and the unusually developed stop ridge presents the appearance of having been dressed up after casting. The sides expand gradually from a butt, 1 inch in width, till reaching the sharp and somewhat oblique cutting edge, where they terminate in very sharply defined and upturned pointed curves. The second relic found in November 1865 by a son of Mr Hyslop, the farmer, at a point on the same fort known as "Camp Hill," is a large, plain, leaf-shaped spear-head with prominent mid-rib, and of late Bronze Age type, slightly imperfect at the socket, and now measuring  $12\frac{7}{8}$  inches in length. It is preserved in Dr Grierson's Museum at Thornhill, Dumfriesshire.

(2) SYMBOL STONE FROM EAST LOMOND HILL, FIFE.

A noteworthy addition to the sculptured stones in the Museum has this summer been made by the donation of a small slab bearing the incised figure of a bull (fig. 2). While engaged on the survey of the archæological remains of the county of Fife for the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland, I had occasion to visit the large and very interesting fort on the top of the East Lomond Hill, in the parish of Falkland, and in the course of my inspection of the fort I picked up a spindle whorl and a small fragment of pottery from the debris of one of the defences. On mentioning my finds to Mr William Strudley of the Bruce Arms Hotel, Falkland, he vouchsafed the information that a number of years ago he had found on the same fort a fragment of stone with the figure of a bull carved upon it, and that, being much struck with the quality of the representation, he had carried the stone home in his shooting-bag. The slab was produced for my inspection, and I thereupon asked Mr Strudley if he would be willing to part with it. On hearing that I desired it for the National Collection he generously consented to give it as a donation, and he has obligingly furnished the necessary particulars as to the year and precise location of the find. The stone was discovered about 1920, within the precincts of the fort on its south side. It consists of a slab of yellow sandstone, measuring 17 inches by 12 inches diagonally and 3 inches thick, bearing on the upper portion, in incised sculpture, the spirited and artistic representation of a bull walking. The nature of the sculpture indicates that the artist had accomplished the design, not by the chisel, but by the method of percussing or pecking out the conventional outline of the figure. The special class to which it

belongs, showing the figure of a bull incised, is already well known, six examples from Burghead, in Elginshire, and two from Inverness having been figured and described in the *Proceedings*,<sup>1</sup> and in *The Early Christian Monuments of Scotland*, pp. 102-8 and 118-24. They have, however, been hitherto restricted in their geographical distribution to



Fig. 2. Symbol Stone from East Lomond Hill, Fife.

these two northern counties, and the acquisition of a specimen from the midland and maritime county of Fife is, on that account, of special importance. The design on the Fifeshire slab differs in some degree from that of the other examples. On the Burghead and Inverness slabs the hoofs of the bulls are distinctly shown and the limb lines are conventionally embellished with spirals, whereas, in depicting the

<sup>1</sup> Vols. iv. p. 355, pl. ii. figs. 1, 2, and 3; x. pp. 664-5; xxiii. pp. 348-9.

animal on the East Lomond specimen, the artist has adhered, with pleasing effect, to a simple and more natural treatment by omitting the conventional curves. He has, perhaps intentionally, left the hoofs unclosed to portray the animal as it was presented to him with the feet obscured. The eye, also, shows a slight variation. In the Burghead and Inverness examples it is shown as a completed oval with a dotted centre, but in the Fife specimen it is effected by a small semicircular incision with the extremities linked to the forehead.

The thanks of the Society are due to the gentlemen named for their valuable donations.