## I.

### NOTES ON (1) A CASKET OF CETACEAN BONE, AND (2) A HIGHLAND BROOCH OF SILVER. By J. GRAHAM CALLANDER, F.S.A.Scot., Director of the National Museum of Antiquities.

#### (1) A Casket of Cetacean Bone.

One of the most important objects recently acquired by the National Museum is a casket of whale's bone with bronze mountings, decorated with Celtic interlaced designs carved in fairly high relief, which had been preserved in Eglinton Castle, in Ayrshire (fig. 1). The casket measures $10\frac{3}{8}$ inches in length, $4\frac{5}{8}$ inches in breadth, $3\frac{5}{8}$ inches in height at the corners, and $3\frac{7}{8}$ inches at the centre of the lid, which is curved transversely. It is formed of six plates of bone about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick, five dovetailed together forming the box, and one the lid, the latter being rebated on the four sides so as to fit inside the walls of the box. At the corners the box is strengthened by vertical angle-plates of bronze with scalloped edges, each kept in position by two horizontal straps of metal fixed at the ends by a dome-headed stud, while at the top of the ends is a narrow band milled on the upper edge. On the top of the ends of the lid is another band of metal scalloped on the inner side, with a small circular depression punched in the centre of each scallop and a slight notch cut in the middle of its outer margin. The casket has been further strengthened by four transverse metal straps on the top, bottom, back, and front, these being hinged at the back of the lid. There is also a vertical strap in the centre of each end, and aligned with them on the bottom is a short band carried from the ends as far as the nearest cross strap. All these straps, with the exception of those on the bottom, which are flat and plain, have a double bead moulding on the surface, and are fixed by three dome-headed studs, one placed at each end and one in the centre, the straps being flattened and widened where the studs are inserted. On the front of the box is a lock with a double hasp, one arm of which, judging from the positions of the slots for the keepers (one being higher than the other), seems to have been rather longer than its neighbour. This hasp is hinged to the two central straps crossing the lid. Between the lock and the bottom of the casket there have been two short straps in line with the central pair on the top.

Three of the metal mounts—the two short ones on the front just

mentioned, and one of those across the bottom—have disappeared, and three of the bone plates are cracked, the front showing a fracture extending its whole length, the lid a crack for half its length, and the bottom a break across one of the dovetails; otherwise the casket is in a wonderfully good state of preservation.

In accordance with the arrangement of the metal mounts, the front, top, and back of the casket are each divided into five oblong panels, and the ends into two, all these divisions being filled with carved interlaced designs, which are separated from those adjoining by narrow plain bands covered by the metal mounts; there is also a plain narrow margin at the ends of each panel. On the bottom are two large squares of interlaced knot-work, with an oblong plaited
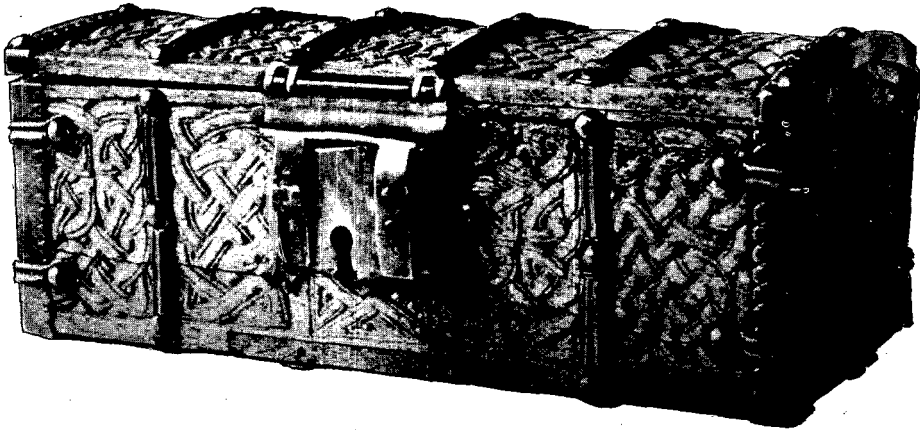


Fig. 1. The Eglinton Casket—Front.

pattern in the centre, but there are no plain divisional bands between them.

In discussing the carved designs on the casket we shall number them from left to right, taking them in the order of the front, lid, back, ends, and bottom.

*The Front* (fig. 1).—Although the presence of the lock on the exterior of the front of the casket curtails and breaks up the space available for decoration, there are five panels on it, as on the lid and the back, only the central one is small and horizontal, as it occupies the space between the lock and the bottom. The designs on the four vertical panels are all different. The first consists of a six-cord plait, with two of the strands returning towards the sides at a sharp angle so as to form a broken ring pattern; but the want of

space has prevented the repetition of the design, and it is finished off as a four-cord plait at the top. The second is a plait of four cords with a circle introduced in the centre. The third design to a slight, extent resembles the first, as certain of the cords return at an acute angle from the centre to the sides; the main pattern is a six-cord plait, which at the top and bottom runs into two loops formed by four of the cords. The fourth is a complicated interlaced design, with the pattern unbalanced or bungled at the top. The fifth panel, the small one below the lock, shows four triangles, two at the ends and two at the sides, correctly interlaced at their apices.

*The Lid* (fig. 2).—It will be seen that there are three distinct
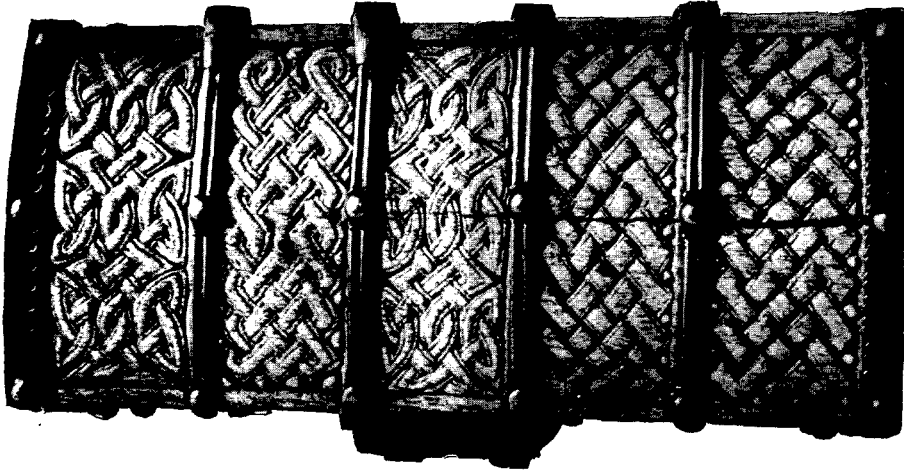


Fig. 2. The Eglinton Casket—Lid.

patterns on the lid, two of these being repeated; the first and third are similar, as are also the fourth and fifth. The first pair consist of a well-composed pattern of eight cords, plaited so as to form two complete and two half-lozenge designs in the centre, and three simple knots on each side; the second pair show an angular direct six-cord plait, with pellets in the marginal angles; and the remaining pattern, which occupies the second panel, shows only a slight variation from the last, inasmuch as there is a break in the middle of the design caused by turning back two cords at the centre instead of carrying them straight forward; further, owing to a want of accuracy in spacing, it has been necessary to insert an extra loop at the corners of one end to fill up the panel.

*The Back* (fig. 3).—Each of the five panels on the back bears a

different pattern, although there is a strong affinity between the first and second, and to a less extent between the fourth and the fifth. The first and second are composed of eight cords, but in the first only two of the cords are carried diagonally from one corner to another, while in the second four cords are thus treated, the result being that there is a more elaborate piece of interlacing in the corners of the first. The designs in the fourth and fifth panels consist of six-cord plaits, with a circle introduced into the centre of the former, and a lozenge into the centre of the latter. The remaining panel, that in the centre, is a simple six-cord plait.

*The Ends* (figs. 4 and 5).—No two of the four panels on the ends are alike. The first panel on the left end (fig. 4) contains a pattern composed of four interlaced triquetras, the one on the inner side
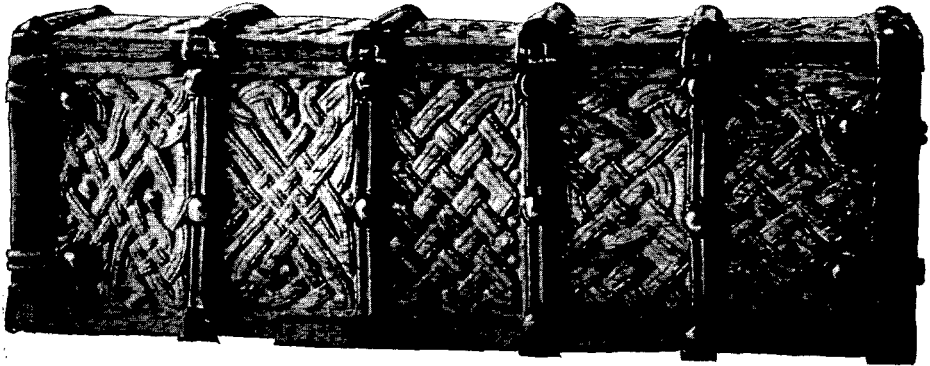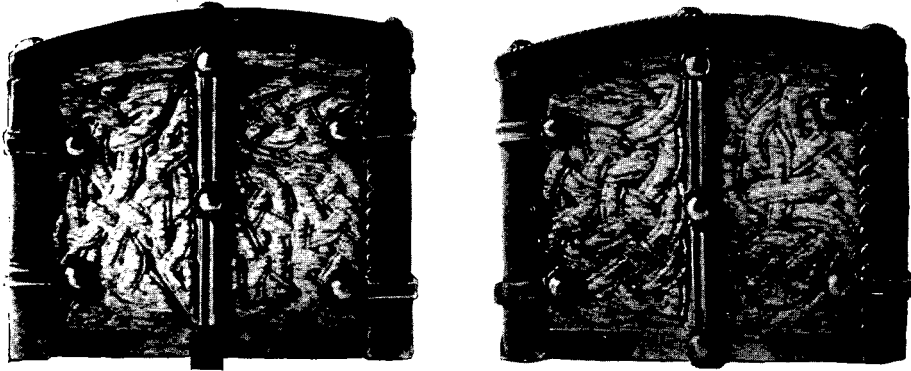


Fig. 3. The Eglinton Casket—Back.

having an extra twist added at the top and bottom, owing to the greater length of this side. The other panel shows a pattern of eight cords in a simple interlacement at the top, running into an intricate plait below, a combination of patterns which we shall have to consider later. Both of the designs on the opposite end (fig. 5) consist of six cords forming complicated plaits not correctly balanced.

*The Bottom* (fig. 6).—Both of the knot designs which occupy the ends of the bottom resemble each other in showing two diagonal bands extending between opposite corners; but the one on the left has interlaced circles in the centre, and the other an interlaced lozenge instead; the plaits at the corners are also different. The narrow oblong panel between the knots bears a simple plait of six strands.

Although there are twenty-two carved panels on the casket, there are only eighteen different patterns, as the six-cord plait, which appears

twice on the lid, occurs once on the back and once on the bottom as well, and the design in the first panel on the lid is repeated in the third.

All the cords of the interlaced designs are flat and relatively broad,



Figs. 4 and 5. The Eglinton Casket—Ends.

and the edges are pared down slightly, leaving a higher band in the centre, so as to give them the appearance of being longitudinally divided into three parts. It is not an uncommon feature of the plaited bands on
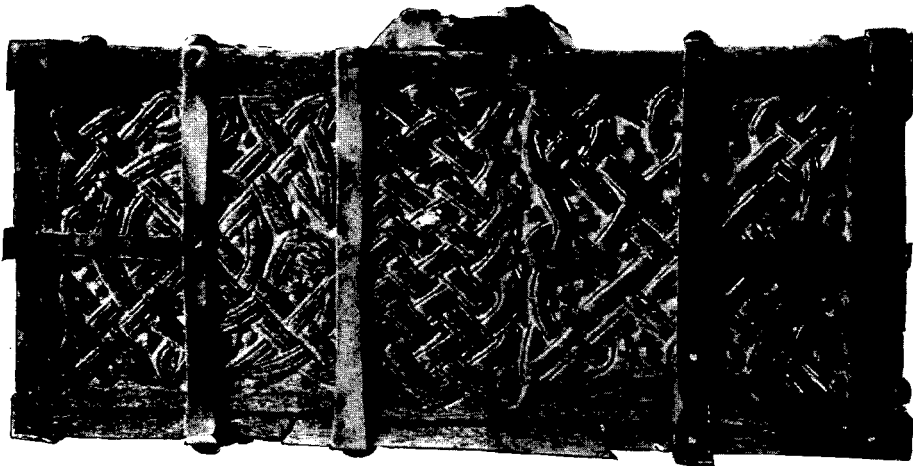


Fig. 6. The Eglinton Casket—Bottom.

the crosses and cross-slabs of Scotland, belonging to Early Christian times, to be divided into two strands by a medial line ; but cases where they are divided into three are very rare, the only two of which I am aware

occurring on a cross-slab at Ardchattan, Argyll,[1] and on another at Farnell, Forfarshire.[2]

In addition to the interlaced bands, some of the panels show small carved bosses or pellets in the angles between the plaits. In several of the designs, such as the second, fourth, and fifth on the lid, and the third on the back, these pellets are regularly placed and form a part of a regular ornamental scheme; but on others, such as the two-knot patterns on the bottom, they have been added simply to fill up vacant spaces, as two or three pellets appear in one part of the design, and only one or two in the corresponding space opposite. This motif does not occur in the earlier sculptured stones figured in the *Early Christian Monuments of Scotland*, although bosses of large size are carved on some of them. However, it is often seen in the dirk handles of the eighteenth century, where
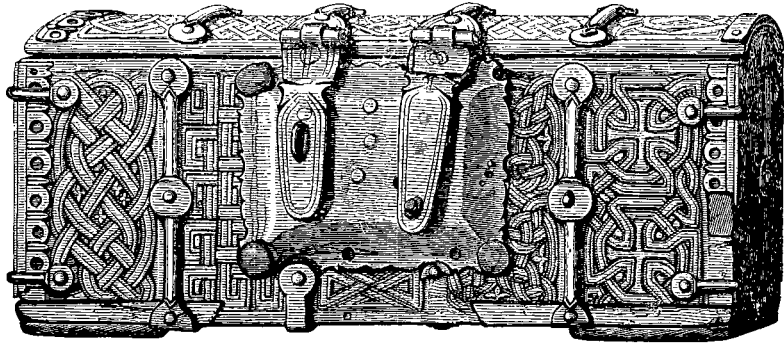


Fig. 7. The Fife Casket—Front.

the small pellets introduced into the angles of the plait-work form a distinct feature of the design.

The Eglinton casket is not the only example of its class known in Scotland, as another, from Fife (fig. 7), was exhibited to the Society forty years ago, and was described and illustrated in the *Proceedings* (vol. xx. p. 390) by Dr Joseph Anderson. The Fife casket, of which we have a replica in the National Museum, bears a wonderful resemblance to our newly acquired specimen although it is rather shorter and broader, its dimensions being 8¾ inches in length, 5 inches in breadth, and 3¾ inches in height at the centre of the lid.

The same number of plates of bone are used in making each casket, and they are dovetailed together in similar fashion. The form and ornamentation of the metal mountings at the corners of the boxes and

[1] *Early Christian Monuments of Scotland*, p. 378, fig. 393.    [2] *Ibid.*, p. 219, fig. 232A.

ends of the lids—scallops with punched centres; the number, arrangement, and method of fixing (by round-headed studs) of the metal straps, and the shape and position of the locks, are practically the same. There are minor differences in the locks and in the form of the straps, the hasps on the Fife casket being hinged separately, and the straps on it being narrower, with more pronounced expansions where the studs are inserted, than those on the Eglinton casket. It has also to be noted that in the Fife specimen the straps on the lid (fig. 8) are fixed with four studs, and also the bottom of the box is uncarved, but for part of a design scratched at one end. As the metal
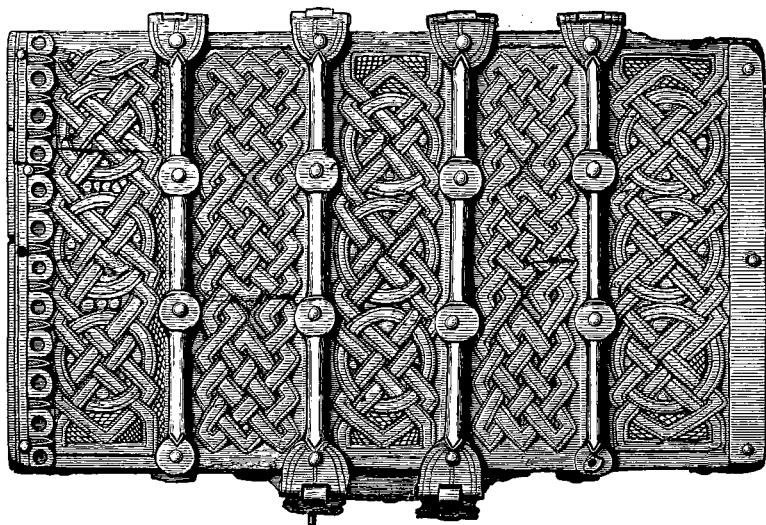


Fig. 8. The Fife Casket—Lid.

mounts are similarly arranged on both caskets, it follows that the panels formed by these divisional members are of the same form, even on the ends and front.

A comparison of the interlaced designs on the two caskets is also illuminating. The bands forming the designs on the Fife casket have the same tripartite form as those on the Eglinton casket, but owing to a greater repetition of patterns on the former, it shows only thirteen different designs on the front, back, lid, and ends, against sixteen on the other. The duplicated designs on the Fife example generally show a better balanced arrangement than those on the Eglinton one. Three patterns appear on both caskets: the six-cord plait, which occurs four times on the Ayrshire example and twice on the one from Fife, the

interlaced triangles on the small panel below the lock, and an intricate pattern which is seen once on the end of the first casket and twice on the second. The repetition of the first two designs need occasion little comment, as both are quite simple, and might be produced by any artist engaged in this Celtic style of decoration. But the occurrence of the third pattern (fig. 9) on both caskets is most surprising, because it consists of two distinct parts—a simple plait at the top, and a very complicated piece of interlacing below it, occupying the greater part of the panel.

The points of resemblance between the two caskets, and especially the repetition of the last-mentioned carved design, are so striking that one is tempted to suggest that the two caskets may have emanated from the same workshop. The designs on the Fife casket, as they appear on the
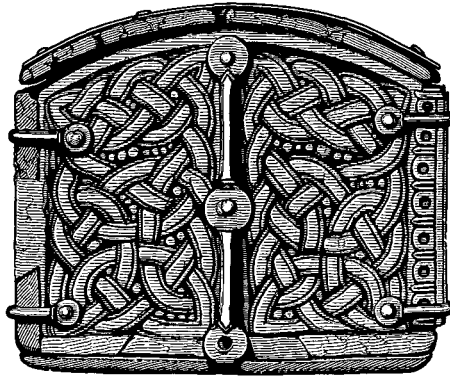


Fig. 9. The Fife Casket—End.

replica, are not quite so effective as those on the one from Ayrshire, because they are not carved in such high relief; but where the interlacing on a panel consists of a recurrence of its component parts, these are better and more carefully spaced. The Fife casket also shows some of the interspaces between the plaits occupied by cross-hatching, which occurs nowhere on the other.

If the two caskets were not the products of the same centre of manufacture, it is quite evident that the persons who made them were working to a pattern well known in Scotland. This is amply demonstrated by an examination of some of the designs which are cut on the late mediæval sculptured grave-slabs of the western parts of the country—a line of investigation which also furnishes a clue to their date.

In many of the kirkyards of the West of Scotland, both on the mainland and in the Outer and Inner Hebrides, are to be found a distinct class

of beautifully sculptured slabs belonging to late mediæval times. Generally they bear foliaceous and interlaced designs, the centre of the stones being very often occupied by the representation of a sword. In addition there are occasionally depicted grotesque animals, hunting scenes, galleys, shears, combs, and other objects of domestic use. A small proportion of the slabs bear inscriptions and dates, but usually, owing to the wear and decay of the stones, these are not now decipherable. Still, there are a few examples which have been read, and thus their date is known.

Among the designs which occur on the sword-slabs, a rectangular figure carved in relief is not infrequently seen, but in many cases it is so much weathered or defaced that it appears as a plain panel, devoid
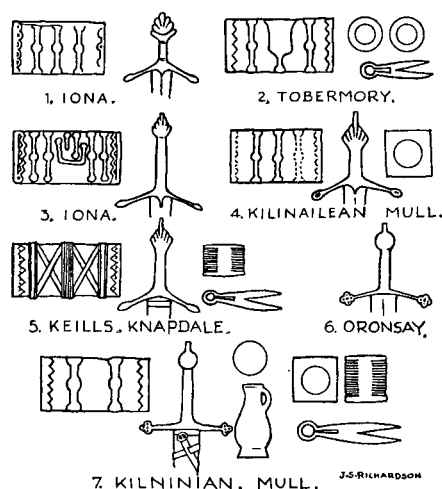


Fig. 10. Caskets and other Objects sculptured
on West Highland Grave-slabs.

of any further sculpturing. What this figure represented has proved a puzzle to archæologists, a common suggestion being that it was a book. This, however, does not seem to be a correct reading of the design, because we shall see from illustrations of books dealing with these monuments, that a few of the better-preserved stones undoubtedly bear carvings of caskets with metal mountings of the same character as the two which we have been discussing. By a strange coincidence three of the sculptured stones, which are to be described in the next paper to be read to-night, show fairly well-preserved figures of caskets (fig. 10, Nos. 2, 4, and 7), as well as other designs which have proved very helpful in the matter of dating the stones and the type of casket sculptured upon them.

In fig. 10 are shown sketches of six of the best representations of these

caskets with their associated objects carved on grave-slabs, which have come under my notice.[1] Where swords occur, a drawing of the hilt only is given, because, as we shall see, one of the few dated slabs has a sword with a very characteristic hilt sculptured on it. Five of the caskets on the stones, it will be noted, have metal mountings very similar in form to, and fixed in the same way as, the Eglinton and Fife caskets. The number of the transverse straps on the sculptured caskets, however, varies from two to four. The illustrations Nos. 1 and 3, from slabs at Iona, are of special interest, as the first has the end-bands scalloped and punched, and the other shows a lock on the front with two hasps of different lengths—features seen on the surviving caskets. Drawing No. 2, from a slab at Tobermory, Mull, like No. 3, seems to give a view of the front of the casket, with its lock, but this design is much defaced. The remaining sketches show views of the tops or lids. The other objects figured consist of shears; double-toothed combs; a pitcher, of a form which might easily belong to the fifteenth century; a bowl beside the last; and circular and square objects with a circle in the centre, which probably represent trenchers.[2] The other designs which, in addition to the swords, appear on the slabs referred to, are grotesque animals, plaited patterns, foliage with inter-laced stems, a harp; and in the case of No. 1, a mounted warrior armed with a spear, and a kneeling figure with a rosary in its hands. The slab

[1] As the sketches are intended only to indicate the form of the sculpturings, neither the caskets nor their associated objects are drawn to scale, neither are they shown in the relative positions they occupy on the slabs. Nos. 1 and 3 are taken from Drummond's *Sculptured Stones of Iona*, Pls. xxvi. and xxviii. ; No. 5 from White's *Archæological Sketches in Scotland—Knapdale*, Pl. xxxvi., and Drummond's Pl. lviii. ; No. 6 from the cast of a slab at the Priory, Oronsay, in the National Museum ; and Nos. 2, 4, and 7 from figs. 7, 8, and 10 on pp. 127-9 of this volume. I am indebted to Mr Jas. S. Richardson for making these drawings.

[2] It has been suggested that the circular plate-like objects may have been pattens, but this is unlikely, as some of them would have been shown with an accompanying chalice. That they, like the square objects, represent trenchers, seems more likely. Mr A. O. Curle has directed my attention to the article on "Trenchers" (*Tranchoir*) in Havard's *Dictionnaire de l'Ameublement*, vol. iv., col. 1504, which states that trenchers were an important feature in the furnishings of the mediæval table, and that they are often mentioned in documents relating to such matters between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries. Trenchers, at first made of wood, towards the end of the fifteenth century were replaced by those made of pewter, and such continued in use until the end of the seventeenth century. From the fourteenth century there were trenchers of silver, of silver-gilt, and even of gold, in princely houses. Illustrations in illuminated MSS. and in pictures of the period show that they were of various forms—round, oblong, and especially square. Many are referred to in inventories. In the Inventory of the Duc de Berry (1416) six square trenchers are listed ; in the Inventory of the silver plate of Anne of Brittany (1505), four of gold, of which two were round and two square, are mentioned. Many entries such as these could be quoted from other French inventories.

Another suggestion regarding the circular objects is that they represent mirrors, as those made during the Middle Ages were generally of circular shape. In this connection attention may be directed to a slab at Tobermory illustrated in the present volume on p. 126, fig. 5, which shows two of these circular objects along with two pairs of shears and a comb.

at Iona, on which the designs shown as No. 3 appear, exhibits a further feature which is of particular importance in our inquiry, as it bears a cross and a knot, both of interlaced work, the cords of which are divided longitudinally into three strands, like those on the Eglinton and Fife caskets. The evidence for the contemporaneity of caskets like the two whale's bone examples with many of the West Highland grave-slabs is very strong, although it cannot be claimed that those represented on the monuments must necessarily have been made of cetacean bone.

When we try to determine the date of the two caskets, it is to be regretted that the chronology of the West Highland slabs has not been satisfactorily worked out. It is clear, however, that many of them belong to the fifteenth and first half of the sixteenth centuries. From the sketches on fig. 10, it is seen that four of the caskets are associated with a sword with a fan-shaped pommel, and drooping quillons with bulbous ends, and one with a sword with a circular pommel surmounted by a blunt spike, and straight quillons with quatrefoil terminals. The first of these two varieties of swords seems to have been well known in the fifteenth century in Scotland, and no doubt it survived into the sixteenth. Swords of this class are seen over and over again on the stone effigies, with their monotonous conical bascinet, camail, and quilted jupon, of the west of Scotland, as well as on the grave-slabs; but again their exact period is not known. As for the second variety of sword, that with the quatrefoil terminals on the cross-guard, one of which occurs with a casket on the slab at Kilninian, Mull (fig. 10, No. 7), we know that it goes back at least to the early part of the sixteenth century, because on the slab at the Priory, Oronsay, Argyll, which bears a sword of this type with slightly depressed quillons (fig. 10, No. 6), the name Murchardus Macdufie (Macphee), and the date, 1539, are easily deciphered.

Grave-slabs are not the only monuments on which caskets are carved, as there is a good example on a cross-shaft at Kilkerran, near Campbeltown.[1] This cross, in addition to foliaceous and interlaced designs, shows two persons standing face to face in a niche, a man on horseback armed with a sword and a spear, and a galley, carved upon it. It also bears the inscription—HEC EST CRUX CRISTINI MACT[?] ET UXOR EIUS. Although there is no date on this cross, and the man whose name it bears cannot be identified, there is no doubt that the monument belongs to about the end of the fifteenth century, as there is another cross-shaft in the same burying-ground which, if not cut by the same hand as the first,

[1] Stuart's *Sculptured Stones of Scotland*, vol. ii. p. 29, Pl. lv.; and White's *Archæological Sketches—Kintyre*, p. 96, Pl. ix.

was sculptured about the same time.[1]  It also shows two human figures face to face in a niche, a horseman with a sword and a spear, and a galley, with an inscription on the same lines as that on the first cross.  The inscription runs — HEC EST CRUX CALANI McHEACHURNA ET KATIRINE UXORIS EIUS.  This man is believed to have been a Colin MacEachern, who was chief of the MacEacherns of Kilellan in 1493.

From the monuments it is quite clear that caskets, with metal mountings similar to those on the Eglinton and Fife examples, were well known in Scotland about the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth centuries ; and we may safely claim that our two surviving specimens date back at least to that period.  It is quite possible that they may even be somewhat earlier—how much I do not venture to suggest—but I do not think that their period.is so early as the eleventh or twelfth centuries, although many of the interlaced patterns on the boxes are worthy of the artists who designed and executed the crosses and cross-slabs of that time.  But in the pellets introduced into the spaces between the plaits on both caskets, and in the cross-hatching used to fill vacant spaces on the one from Fife, we encounter motifs which we have not met with on the early stones.  The same may be said with regard to the tripartite cords on the caskets, although we have been able to cite two examples on the early monuments, but the latter are abnormal ; also the cords on the caskets are distinctly flat, while those on the monuments are round.

Another question to be considered is, whether the caskets were used for ecclesiastical or secular purposes.  During the Middle Ages these objects were often mentioned in inventories of church properties ; but while it is quite likely that some may have been so used in Scotland, the testimony of the monuments is that they were familiar objects in the homes of the wealthy,[2] the same as such objects of domestic use as the shears, combs, trenchers, and other articles portrayed with them.  They are frequently associated with a sword on the gravestones of chiefs and warriors, but there is not a single instance of the occurrence of a casket on the twenty tombstones of ecclesiastics which I have seen figured from the west of Scotland.

A word may be added about the material—cetacean bone—of which the two caskets are made.  The kind of bone used may seem peculiar, but round the western and northern coasts of Scotland there has been no scarcity of whales' bones.  That they were very freely utilised in early times for the manufacture of implements, weapons, ornaments, and

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[1] Stuart, op. cit., p. 29, Pl. liv. ; White, op. cit., p. 95, Pl. viii.

[2] In one kirkyard alone, that of Kilmory of Knap, Argyll, there are three grave-slabs with metal-mounted caskets carved on them, and on the small island of Oronsay there are at least other three.

other objects, is very evident from the large numbers of such relics which have been found in earth-houses and kitchen-middens, dating to the early centuries of the Christian era, in the Hebrides and in Orkney. Their use would no doubt continue through the Middle Ages.

As may be expected, whale's bone was not the only material from which this kind of casket was made, and it is more than probable that wood of various kinds would be more frequently used; but, being more perishable, and obviously of less value, there was less chance of such being preserved. Still, two examples, which have survived, have come under my notice, one being preserved in the National Museum, and the other at Craignish, Argyll. The provenance of the first is not known, but it is not surprising that the second should still remain in a part of the country where representations of such relics occur so frequently on its monuments.

The two boxes are made of oak with bronze or brass fittings, and both have been saved from utter destruction by woodworms by preservative treatment in recent times. The specimen in the Museum measures $11\frac{7}{8}$ inches in length, $5\frac{3}{4}$ inches in breadth, and 4 inches in height, and the one at Craignish 13 inches by $6\frac{1}{4}$ inches by $5\frac{7}{8}$ inches.[1] Both of them have flat lids, the first with a bow handle, and the second with a ring fitted into the centre, for lifting them, and they are entirely devoid of carving. Neither of them is so carefully made as the bone caskets, and the one in the Museum is not dovetailed together. However, it has a "shottle," or small box in the upper half of the right-hand end, like those seen in farm servants' chests of modern times. Caskets of the size and shape of these two might be made at any period, but a glance at their metal mounts shows so many of the characteristics of form and disposition of those on the whalebone examples, that there seems to be little difference in their periods, although traditionally the Craignish box is claimed to be much older. The metal straps are broad and thin, but where they are tacked to the wood they have the same circular expansions which appear on the bone caskets; the mounts on the ends of the lids of both, and at the angles of the Museum specimen, are also scalloped, even the circular punched depressions in the scallops being repeated on the Craignish box. Further, the one in the Museum has a vertical strap in the centre of each end. All four caskets have the angle plates strengthened and kept in position by horizontal bands very similar in form and position, and every one of the locks has one keeper slot placed higher than the other.

[1] My information regarding the Craignish casket is obtained from *The Scottish Antiquary*, vol. viii. p. 78, where it is described and illustrated by a photograph.

### (2) A HIGHLAND BROOCH OF SILVER.

Last autumn a party of Boy Scouts, working under the expert super-
vision of Dr W. Douglas Simpson, F.S.A.Scot., commenced to excavate
the ruins of Kindrochit Castle, Braemar, Aberdeenshire.  On the first
day of their operations, while removing the rubbish from the surface
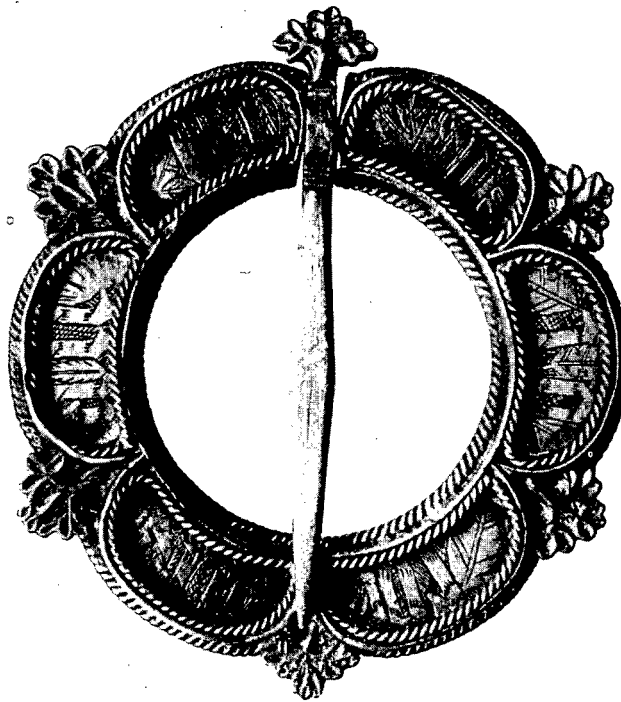inside the prison of the great tower, they unearthed, at a depth of



Fig. 11. The Kindrochit Brooch.  (⅓.)

18 inches, a very beautiful silver-gilt Highland brooch, of a type which
has not been recorded hitherto, in a perfect state of preservation.  Colonel
A. H. Farquharson of Invercauld, the proprietor of the castle, very kindly
presented the brooch to the National Museum, and to him the warmest
thanks of the Society are due for this handsome gift.

The brooch (fig. 11) has a flat ring, the outer edge cut in six scallops,
and the inner edge circular.  On the front of the ring, in each scallop, is

a large kidney-shaped bezel, with a vertical setting and wire-twist edge inside, set with a flat plate bearing an engraved inscription in Gothic ribbon letters and foliaceous designs. The outer and inner margins of the ring are bordered with a twisted wire of similar size to that in the bezels. At five of the junctions of the scallops are projections in the form of a triple sprig with trefoil ends, and a sixth is fixed to the front of the head of the pin, which is hinged between the remaining pair of scallops. The pin is of flattened fusiform shape, with a head of barrel-shaped section, split at the top (fig. 13, A), the ends gripped together again after being attached to the hinge of the brooch, and it bears an engraved design on the front of the stem. The whole of the brooch, back and front, with the exception of the engraved panels sunk in the bezels, is gilded.

The ornament measures $3\frac{3}{16}$ inches in diameter across the ring, and $3\frac{7}{16}$ inches across the projections, while the open space in the centre is $1\frac{3}{4}$ inch. The pin is $3\frac{1}{8}$ inches in length, and the sub-oval bezels are

Fig. 12. Inscription on the Kindrochit Brooch. ($\frac{2}{3}$.)

$1\frac{1}{16}$ inch long by $\frac{1}{2}$ inch broad, the mounts being $\frac{5}{32}$ inch high. The weight is 3 oz. 6 dwts. 10 grs.

Although nearly all the letters of the inscription are clearly engraved as will be seen from the drawing on fig. 12, the meaning of the inscription has not been determined. Possibly it may have some talismanic or magical significance.

Even though we pay no attention to the fact that the Kindrochit brooch was found in a Highland district, it is evident from its general appearance—the broad flat ring and the special method of attaching it to a garment—that we have to deal with a variety of the well-known Highland flat-ring brooches, in spite of the absence on it of the usual interlaced designs and grotesque animal forms which appear on them. But as it differs from all recorded examples, whether Highland or Lowland, in such details as its scalloped outer edge and inscriptions in sunk panels on the front, a comparison with dateable Scottish flat-ring brooches is required in the attempt to ascertain its approximate period. Three distinct groups of such ornaments are recognised—one belonging to the fourteenth, another probably to the sixteenth, and the third to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

There is no question of a fourteenth-century date for the Kindrochit brooch, because those made at that time have a narrow ring, generally

bearing talismanic inscriptions in Lombardic characters, and a different form of pin, one with a distinct flange or collar encircling it just under the hinge. Nevertheless, it is of interest to recall that one of the four-teenth-century brooches in the National Museum, found at Langhope, Selkirkshire,[1] which has a stout wire ring with applied rosettes on the front, has one of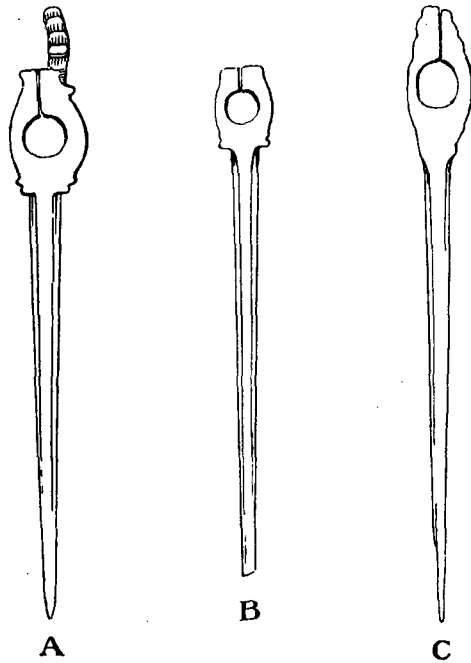 the rosettes fixed to the front of the head of the pin in much the same way as the trefoil attached to the head of the pin in the Kindrochit brooch.

Before considering the next group, the sixteenth-century brooches, it will be better to look at the seven-teenth- and eighteenth-century ex-amples. These brooches, with broad flat rings made of silver or brass, are amongst the most common and characteristic of Highland relics made in those times which have come down to us. The ornamenta-tion on them generally includes interlaced patterns and grotesque animals, and the pin has a long head of lenticular section, split at the top and clasped together again after being fixed to the pin (fig. 13, C). As none of these designs appears on the Kindrochit brooch, and as the head of its pin is of barrel-shaped, not lenticular, section (fig. 13, A), it would seem that we have to assign the brooch to a different period. Seeing that the Kindrochit brooch cannot be later than this group, it must be earlier than the seventeenth century.

Fig. 13. Pins of Highland Brooches. (⅓.)

We have now to examine the remaining group of brooches, which consists of five handsome jewelled specimens, named after the lands belonging to the Highland families in which they were or are preserved. These ornaments are known as the brooch of Lorne, the Lochbuy brooch, the Lossit brooch, the Ballochyle brooch, and the Glenlyon brooch; and though a greater antiquity has been claimed for some of them, it is unlikely that the oldest could have been made much earlier than the beginning of the sixteenth century. Indeed, the

[1] *Proceedings*, vol. lviii. p. 167, fig. 5, No. 2.

Lochbuy brooch bears on the back an inscription stating that, according to the family tradition, it was made about 1500 A.D. The first three may be ruled out of our survey, as the centre of each is set with a large crystal, and their ornamental designs and pins show little resemblance to these features on the Kindrochit brooch. The remaining two, however, do show certain points in common. The Ballochyle brooch has the same hexagonal form, with trefoil projections at the angles; but
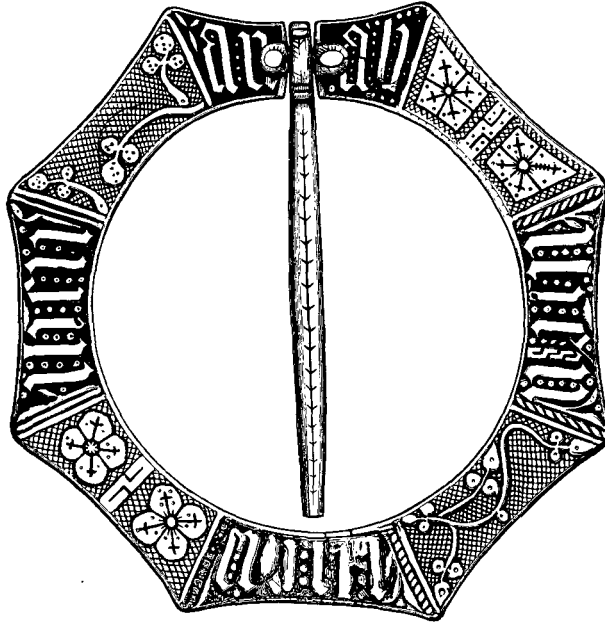


Fig. 14. Silver Brooch from Mull—Front. (¼.)

its sides are concave, not convex, and the trefoils have more the form of conventional fleurs-de-lys than natural leaves. As for the Glenlyon brooch, which has an open centre cut through by a flat cross-bar, like the one from Kindrochit it has a twisted wire edge on the outer and inner margins of the ring, and it bears an inscription—a talismanic one—in Gothic letters.

Before finally deciding on a probable date for our brooch, there is still another example, preserved in the National Collection, which invites comparison. Found at Kengharair, Kilmore, Mull,[1] it is made of silver, inlaid with niello, and ornamented on both front and back, its form

[1] *Proceedings*, vol. xvii. p. 76, fig. 1.

being octagonal with slightly concave sides. On the front of four of its sides are inscriptions in Gothic letters, which apparently are repeated on the opposite panels (fig. 14). Owing to the letters being badly formed, there is again difficulty in making out the meaning of the inscriptions. A suggested reading is IHSN and ANAN, which may possibly be a bungled and contracted rendering of IHESVS NAZAR[ENVS], which is met with so frequently on Scottish fourteenth-century talismanic brooches. The other designs consist of diapers, foliaceous designs, and grotesque weasel-like animals, some of which have human heads. The pin resembles that on the Kindrochit brooch inasmuch as its head is of barrel-shaped section split at the top (fig. 13, B).

In determining the period of the Kindrochit brooch, it is to be noted that although it is not so elaborate in form as the large sixteenth-century brooches we have referred to, yet more work has been bestowed on its manufacture than on those of the earlier or later periods with which it has been compared, and also that two of its features, the twisted wire edge and the trefoil projections round its circumference, are found only on brooches of the first-mentioned period. This is suggestive of a sixteenth-century date. But what is perhaps more important is the inscription which it bears, and the shape of the head of its pin. The form of the letters and the probability of its inscription being talismanic point more to pre-Reformation than to post-Reformation times, and the form of the pin seems earlier than the seventeenth century. It would thus appear that the Kindrochit brooch and the one from Mull may be assigned to the first half of the sixteenth century.

At the conclusion of Mr Callander's paper, on the motion of the Chairman, the Society decided to send their warmest thanks to Colonel A. H. Farquharson of Invercauld for so kindly presenting the brooch to the National Museum.