

## III.

NOTES ON SOME RELICS FROM ORKNEY EXHIBITED BEFORE  
THE SOCIETY. BY JAMES G. MARWICK, F.S.A. SCOT.

*A Norse Relic from Stromness.*—Relics of the Norse occupation of the Orkney Islands are scarce throughout the group, and apart from place-names, there are but few indications now remaining of the sojourn of the Norsemen in this northern archipelago, at least so far as this applies to small things usually picked up by an enthusiastic collector. In the summer of 1925 Mr Sigurd Grieg of the University Museum,

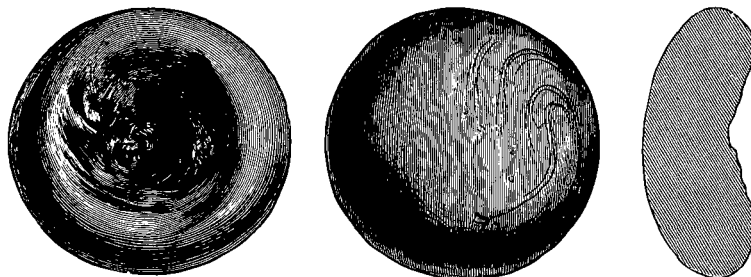


Fig. 1. Linen Smoother of Glass from Ballinaby, Islay.

Oslo, visited Kirkwall and Stromness in the hope of locating such relics of the Viking period. He looked round Stromness Museum but, although the collection housed there contains many relics of Orkney, there was nothing of particular interest to him.

In conversation with him later, I showed him a smoothing glass which was given me by the late Dr Grant, and which was found in a mound on the farm of Howe, Cairston near Stromness, about sixty years ago. Mr Grieg declared that it was one of the best evidences of the Norse occupation he had come across in Orkney. The article resembles the one illustrated in fig. 1, which was found in Islay. Several others have been found in Scotland. It measures about 4 inches in diameter, by  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inch in thickness. A circular piece of glass, it was used for smoothing linen, just as an ordinary iron is used to-day. Mr Grieg was much interested in the relic, and on his touring map I had to mark the exact spot where it was found, and he would have me write a short description of the place in his note-book.

The Hillock of Howe, where this relic was found is still a prominent

feature of the country-side, and it appears on charts as a landmark for the navigating of Cairston Roads, the western end of the world-famous Scapa Flow. Many years ago, this hillock was opened by the tenant of that time and a considerable number of relics were unearthed. For some reason or other the excavation was discontinued, and it remains to this day one of the unexplored mounds in this district, which is so rich in objects of antiquarian interest.

*Stone Ring from Stenness.*—A finely cut stone ring (fig. 2) was found in the parish of Stenness, Orkney. Being in perfect preservation, it is

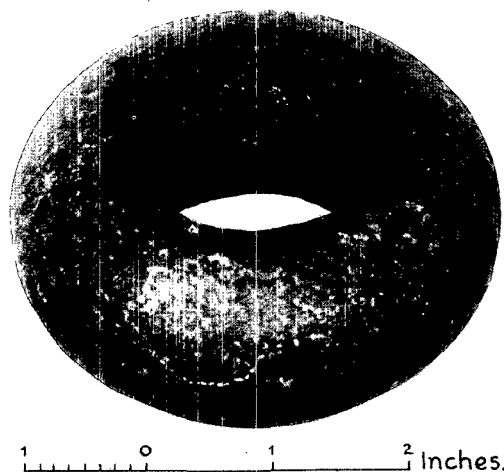


Fig. 2. Stone Ring from Howe, Cairston, Orkney.

an excellent example of its type. It measures  $3\frac{1}{8}$  inches in diameter and  $1\frac{1}{8}$  inch in thickness, and the hole is  $1\frac{7}{8}$  inch in diameter. In section the ring is D-shaped.

*Old Stone Lamp.*—An old stone lamp was used about one hundred years ago in the island of Flotta, Orkney, being the forerunner of the oily-cruise. The cruise was used in Orkney and in some parts of the north of Scotland less than fifty years ago.

*Perforated Stone from Sandwick, Orkney.*—A large perforated object of claystone was found near some old ruins in the parish of Sandwick, Orkney. It is discoidal in shape and measures  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches in diameter and  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch in thickness, the perforation, which is counter-sunk from both faces, being  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch in diameter at the mouth.