

6. A MASSIVE DOUBLE-LINKED SILVER CHAIN.

A massive double-linked Silver Chain (Pl. XCVIII, 1) of the Early Christian Period was found at Traprain Law in January 1938. The discovery was made by one of the workmen, when tiring the soil at the north-east end, near the quarry, between the 600 and 700 feet contour lines.

The chain, which was only about 2 feet from the surface and in a good state of preservation, consists of 19 pairs of circular rings, with a single ring at one end. Each one of the pairs measures $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch in diameter, and $\frac{5}{16}$ inch in thickness. The inner side of the rings, where they touch, is flattened, but the single ring at the end is plain and slightly larger than the paired rings, being $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch in diameter and $\frac{11}{16}$ inch in thickness. The chain weighs 53 oz. 15 dwt., and measures $16\frac{3}{4}$ inches in length.

There are now six examples¹ of such chains in the Museum—two from East Lothian (Traprain Law and Haddington), one from Berwickshire (Whitlaw, near Lauder), one from Lanarkshire (Whitecleuch, Crawfordjohn), one from Aberdeenshire (Parkhill, New Machar), and one from Inverness-shire (Caledonian Canal). Four more are known—two from Berwickshire (Greenlaw²

¹ For detailed information, see *Proceedings*, vol. x. pp. 321-347; vol. xv. pp. 64-70; vol. xxix. pp. 209, 210.

² Sir George Macdonald very kindly informed me of a reference in Pococke's *Tours in Scotland*, p. 350, Scottish History Society, vol. i., to a silver chain having been found near Home Castle. This

(Pl. XCVIII, 2) and Hordwheel on Lammermuir), one from Peeblesshire (West Linton?) not previously recorded,¹ and a portion of another from Nigg, Kincardine, which was presented to Aberdeen University in 1796.² The Nigg chain consists of three pairs of double links, with a single link at either end. All the links are flattened on one side, and measure $1\frac{5}{8}$ inch in diameter and $\frac{3}{8}$ inch in thickness.

Seven of the ten chains have come from the south of Scotland, but whether this has any special significance is not known. When complete, they all seem to have been of the same length and pattern. A complete chain would therefore have a single ring at one extremity and a penannular napkin-ring terminal at the other, through the open part of which the single ring would easily slip. The chain thus looped together would lie comfortably round the neck, and the suggestion that they were collars, which was made by Dr Joseph Anderson many years ago, has not been improved upon.

Occasionally the penannular terminal bears one or more of the symbols which are specially characteristic of the sculptured stone monuments of Scotland, and mainly of those in its eastern portion, north of the Forth. It is known that many of them were carved in Early Christian times, because they have been found on slabs bearing crosses and other sculpturings in relief, which have been derived from the "Bestiaries" or Early Christian symbolism. A tentative date for the chains would probably be from the sixth to eighth century A.D.

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