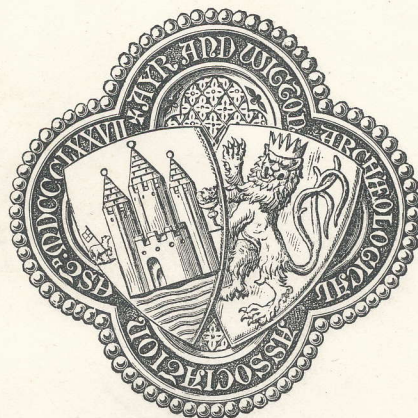


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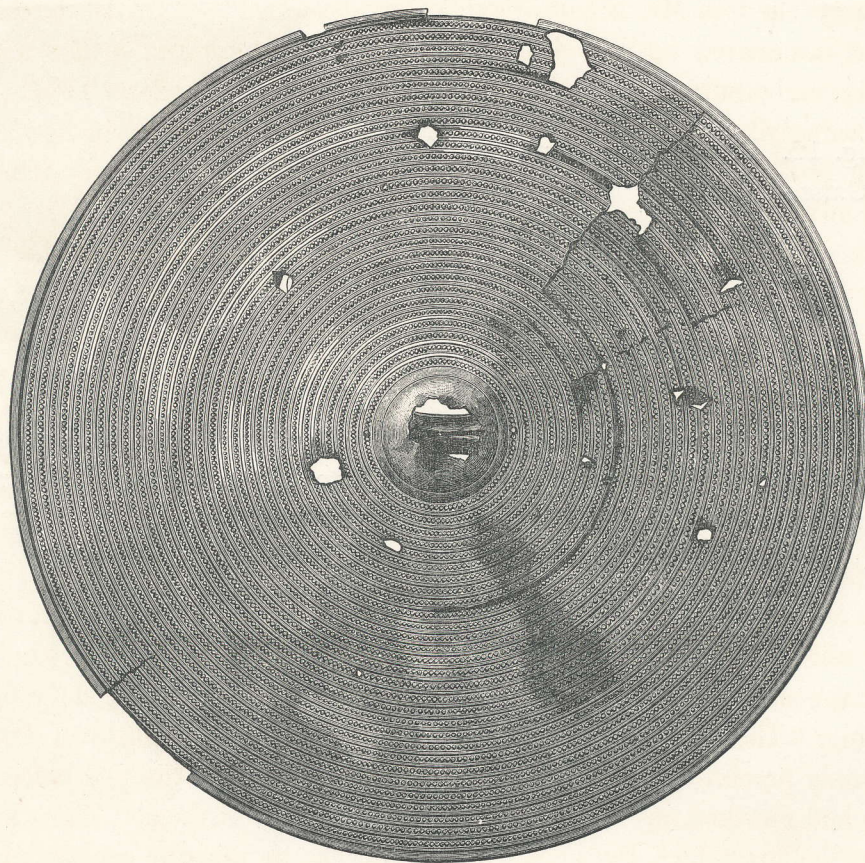


FIG. 1.—Bronze Buckler.

V.

NOTE ON A BRONZE BUCKLER FOUND ON LUGTON-
RIDGE FARM, IN THE PARISH OF BEITH.

IN the Museum of the Society of Antiquaries of London is a circular buckler of bronze, which, in the Catalogue compiled in 1847 by that distinguished

authority, the late Mr. Albert Way, is thus described :—"British buckler of bronze, designated by Sir Samuel Meyrick as the tarian; it has a semi-globular umbo, surrounded by twenty-nine concentric rows of small studs, with intervening ribs; diameter, $26\frac{3}{4}$ inches, diameter of umbo, $4\frac{3}{8}$ inches. It is almost precisely similar to the tarian in the Goodrich Court Armoury, found near Aberystwith."¹

Mr. Way then points out that this may possibly be the shield which was found in a peat moss on a farm called Luggtonrigge, near Giffin Castle, Beith (miswritten Brith), in Ayrshire; although, in the Minutes of the Meetings of the Society, the diameter is entered as having been about $15\frac{1}{4}$ inches only, possibly by an error of transcript. The minutes referred to are as follows :²—"Thursday, Nov. 17, 1791, Rev. Dr. Farmer in the chair.—Dr. Ferris presented to the Society a Shield dug out of a large Moss, about 12 years since, 6 or 7 feet below the surface, when the People who found it were casting peats on a Farm called Luggtonrigge, near Giffin Castle, in the Parish of Brith (*sic*) in Airshire, about 10 or 12 miles from the Town of Air, and 4 miles from Irvin. There were four or five more of the same kind dug out at the same time, and they were observed to have been regularly placed in a ring. The possessor of the estate, Mr. Baillie John Storie of Paisley, could only procure this, as the Labourers had disposed of the rest before Mr. Storie had received any information of the discovery of them. These are all the particulars which Dr. Ferris has been able to procure concerning the Shield, which is of Brass, circular, about $15\frac{1}{4}$ inches in Diameter, embossed in the middle, and hollow on the other side, to admit the grasp of the hand. Thanks were ordered to Dr. Ferris for this obliging communication and present."

Notwithstanding the discrepancy as to measurement, there can, I think, be little doubt that the shield, still preserved in the Museum of the Society of Antiquaries, is the identical specimen presented by Dr. Ferris; the only other buckler in the collection being of considerably smaller diameter than $15\frac{1}{4}$ inches, and its history being, moreover, known. It seems possible that the error in the measurement may have arisen from a rule 42 inches long having been used, and the inches read off from the wrong end. At all events, $26\frac{3}{4} + 15\frac{1}{4} = 42$. Of Dr. Ferris, the donor, I find no mention in the *Archæologia*, and even of the shield itself there is no record in that publication.

¹ *Archæol.*, vol. xxiii. pl. xiii.

² *Minutes*, vol. xxiv. p. 147.

A somewhat imperfect representation of the buckler has been given by Professor Daniel Wilson in his *Prehistoric Annals of Scotland*, but the illustrations now published will convey a much more accurate impression of its character and details.¹

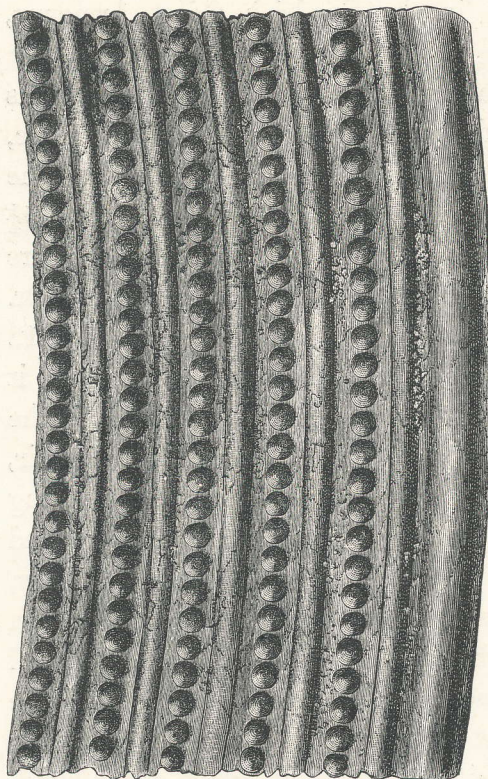


FIG. 2.

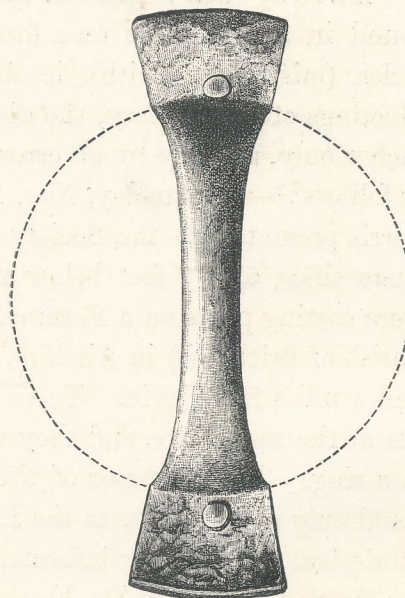


FIG. 3.

In Fig. 1 the whole of the buckler is shown on the scale of one-sixth linear measure, a section being represented below. A portion of the margin is shown full size in Fig. 2, and the handle across the inner side of the boss is given on the scale of one half in Fig. 3. These figures give so complete an idea of the original, that it seems needless to enter into further details. It is, however, well to call attention to the fact, that the handle of the buckler, which is made from a flat piece of bronze, is rendered more convenient to grasp, and at the same time strengthened, by its sides being doubled over, and thus made to present a rounded edge. It is secured to the shield by a rivet at each end. About mid-way between the edge of the umbo and that of the shield, but placed so that one of the rivets of the

¹ 1st ed. p. 267 ; 2d ed. vol. i. p. 397.

handle is in the same line, and mid-way between them, have been two rivets, each fastening a small button, somewhat like a short hour-hand of a clock, of which, at present, only one remains.

It will now be well to note the occurrence of similar and analogous examples in Scotland and elsewhere. Those which will first occur to the mind of every Scottish Antiquary are the two which were found in 1837 in a marshy field near Yetholm, about eight miles south of Kelso, and which have been described by the late Mr. William T. M'Culloch in the *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*.¹ This account is illustrated with woodcuts, exhibiting one of the shields and some of its details, and contains numerous references, of some of which I shall avail myself in the present brief notice.

One of the Yetholm shields is $23\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter, and has thirty concentric rows of convex knobs, alternating with projecting circles, or ribs; the other measures 24 inches, and has twenty-four rows of knobs and ribs. In the centre of each is a hollow circular umbo 4 inches in diameter, with a handle riveted across it.

Another shield of the same character was found in March 1870, at Yetholm,² near the place where the two others were discovered. The site appears to have been formerly occupied by a lake, which was drained some forty or fifty years ago. This third Yetholm shield is $22\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter, with twenty-nine concentric ribs, alternating with the usual small knobs. The boss is $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter. At the back of each of these shields, about midway between the centre and the rim, are riveted small movable tongues of bronze, which have been supposed to serve for the attachment of a leather strap, by which the shield might be slung round the body. Mr. Jeffrey, F.S.A. Scot., of Jedburgh, who described this third shield, has, however, pointed out that there is little room beneath the tongues for a strap of any kind.

So far as at present known, these are the only other instances of bucklers of this kind having been discovered in Scotland.

In England and Wales several such have been found. One was in the Meyrick³ collection, at Goodrich Court, and is now in the British Museum. It is about 27 inches in diameter, with nineteen concentric ribs, and circles

¹ Vol. v. p. 165.

² *Proc. Soc. Ant. Scot.*, vol. viii. p. 393.

³ *Archæol.*, vol. xxiii. p. 92. Meyrick's *Anc. Armour*, vol. i. pl. xlvii.

of knobs between, and in all respects like those already described. It was found about 1804, in a turbary near Aberystwith.

Another example of the kind was also in the Meyrick collection, and is now in the British Museum. It was found in a peat moss at Moel Sindbod, near Capel Curig, Caernarvonshire. It has twenty-seven consecutive rings.¹

Sir Samuel Meyrick had heard of another dug up near Newcastle-on-Tyne, which the owner, wishing to gratify all his friends, cut up like a cake, and sent to each a slice.

Fragments of two other shields of the same character were also found in Northumberland, in the parish of Stamfordham, about two miles north of the Roman wall. They were originally about 20 inches in diameter, and, like so many others, were discovered during draining operations.²

Another buckler of the same character was found in the Thames at London, and passed into the British Museum with the Roach Smith collection. This specimen is 21 inches in diameter, and has eleven rings of the small bosses upon it, separated by concentric ribs.³ Another, with twenty-six concentric circles of studs, was dredged up, together with a leaf-shaped bronze sword, from the bed of the Thames, off Woolwich, in 1830.⁴

Another, 26 inches in diameter, having twelve concentric raised rings, with the usual knobs between them, was also found in the Thames, between Hampton and Walton, in September 1864.⁵

In draining a meadow at Bagley, about five miles from Ellesmere, in Shropshire, another of these circular bucklers was found. This is 23 inches in diameter, with an umbo of 4 inches, and has twenty-six concentric circles, with the same rings of knobs between as on the other examples.⁶

Another, found on Barringham Common, Lincolnshire, in 1843, is 26 inches in diameter, with an umbo of $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and only nineteen concentric circles, with intermediate rings of knobs. The boss of this shield is conical, rather than hemispherical.⁷ It seems needless to cite other English examples; but I may mention that in some instances the knobs between the raised concentric rings are wanting, and in others they form much more important

¹ *Archæol.*, vol. xxiii. p. 95.

² *Arch. Jour.*, vol. xviii. p. 157.

³ *Horæ feræles*, p. 168. Roach Smith's *Cat. of Lond. Ant.*, p. 80.

⁴ Roach Smith, *ubi sup.*

⁵ *Proc. Soc. Ant.*, 2d series, vol. iii. p. 518; *Gent's Mag.*, Dec. 1865, p. 771.

⁶ *Proc. Soc. Ant.*, 2d series, vol. iii. p. 200.

⁷ *Arch. Assoc. Jour.*, vol. iv. p. 395; *Proc. Soc. Ant.*, 2d series, vol. iii. p. 200; *Proc. Roy. Irish Acad.*, 1874, p. 277.

features. In one found in the River Isis, near Dorchester, Oxon,¹ there are only two rings of knobs, with a raised bead between, though the shield is about 13 inches in diameter. The same is the case with an Irish shield, 14 inches in diameter, from Athenry, county Galway.²

Shields with the numerous concentric rings alternating with small knobs, are rare in Ireland. One, $27\frac{3}{4}$ inches in diameter, with an umbo of 6 inches, and six rings of small knobs alternating with projecting concentric rings, was found in a bog near Ballynamona, county Limerick, and is figured in the *Journal of the Royal Historical and Archaeological Association of Ireland*.³ Like nearly all the others this has the two movable tongues or buttons at the back.

As Mr. Franks has already remarked,⁴ bronze shields are of far less common occurrence on the Continent than in the British Isles. Though in some cases showing the same general character, none of them absolutely resemble the shield which forms the subject of this paper, and it is needless to refer to them.

With regard to the date to be assigned to these bucklers, it is to be observed that the shields which can with some degree of certainty be ascribed to the period when iron swords had begun to be used in Britain are as a rule of elongated form. Such are those from the river Witham and the Thames, which, moreover, are ornamented with coral and the red Celtic enamel. It may also be observed that in the case of the shield dredged up off Woolwich the sword which accompanied it was of bronze. It may be said that the collocation of the shield and sword was accidental, and that there is no actual evidence of their having been deposited in the river at the same time. Still the whole character of the ornamentation and workmanship is more in accordance with the bronze age than with the late Celtic or early iron period, though probably such bucklers belong to the close of the bronze period rather than to its beginning or even middle.

Circular bucklers or targets no doubt remained in use until a considerably later period, but it seems probable that some other material than a thin plate of bronze was used for their manufacture. Professor Wilson⁵ remarks that on the gold coins of Tasciovanus, Cunobeline, and others of the native

¹ *Arch.*, vol. xxvii, p. 298; *Horæ feræles*, p. 167.

² *Horæ feræles*, p. 167.

³ 4th Series, vol. ii, p. 118.

⁴ *Horæ feræles*, p. 166.

⁵ *Prehistoric Ann. of Scot.*, 2d ed. vol. i. p. 398.

rulers contemporary with the first intercourse with Rome, the shields borne by the warriors are either long and double-pointed, or, if round, large and dished, and of very different construction from the Luggtonrigge shield. On one coin of Cunobeline, however (Evans, pl. xii. 14), the horseman bears a circular buckler, which, so far as can be judged from so diminutive a representation as that given on the coin, would be about 2 feet in diameter. On two small gold coins of Verica,¹ recently published, the horseman carries a target of about the same proportions. Somewhat smaller circular bucklers are carried by the horsemen on certain Spanish coins,² probably of the second century B.C. One of these shields shows four smaller bosses arranged in cruciform order around the central boss; another seems to be plain, except the umbo and a projecting rim.

This buckler is no doubt the Cetra or Cætra (*καίτρεα*, Hesych.) in use among the people of Spain and Mauretania, which was usually made of hide, among the latter people sometimes of that of the elephant. Cæsar³ speaks of the "cetratæ Hispaniæ cohortes," and Tacitus⁴ mentions the Britons as armed "ingentibus gladiis sine mucrone et brevibus cetris." It does not appear that the Romans ever wore the cetra,⁵ which has been by Livy compared to the pelta of the Greeks and Macedonians. The clipeus appears to have been larger in size, and to have been held on the arm rather than by the hand only.

But whatever shields may have been in use in this country at the time of the Roman invasion, I am inclined to refer these circular bucklers to a somewhat earlier date, as already, in Cæsar's time, iron was fully in use for swords and for cutting purposes generally; and, as has already been observed, the shields with which the early iron swords are found are of a different form. As is the case with the bronze swords, such bucklers very rarely, if indeed ever, are found accompanying interments; and those discovered seem to have been lost in the water or hidden in bogs, rather than buried as accessories for the dead. The skill requisite for the production of such bucklers must have been great, and the appliances at command by no means contemptible. The whole of the work is *repoussé*, and wrought with the hammer, and not improbably the original sheet of bronze from which a

¹ *Num. Chron.*, N. S., vol. xvii. pl. x. Nos. 7 and 8.

² See *Arch. Journ.*, vol. xiii. p. 187.

³ *Bell. Civ.* i. 39, 48.

⁴ *Agric.* 36.

⁵ See Smith's *Dict. of Ant.*, s. v. "Cetra."

shield was made was considerably less in diameter and also much thicker than the finished shield. To produce so large a casting of such even substance and yet so thin would, I think, be beyond the skill of most modern brassfounders, and there is no appearance in the shields of the metal having been cast in the form in which it now appears.

The presence of the buttons at the back, and the absence of holes for the numerous rivets which would have been necessary for securing a wooden back to these shields, afford an argument against their having been thus strengthened. It may, however, have been the case that some method was known by which a backing of stiff hide could be made to adhere to the bronze. Without such a backing they appear to afford but a poor defence against the stroke of a spear or sword, and even an arrow would find its way through them. Possibly the buttons at the back may have been connected with some system of lining them, but I have not sufficiently studied them to express any decided opinion as to their use. It is to be hoped that future discoveries may throw some light upon this subject.

JOHN EVANS.

NASH MILLS, HEMEL HEMPSTED,
May 1878.