

Cloonfinlough, near Strokestown ; presented by Mrs. Ferns, of Strokestown, through Pakenham Mahon, Esq.

The following articles, presented by his Grace the Duke of Northumberland, from the collection of Roger Walker, Esq. : A portion of the worm of a still ; a sword handle ; a beadle's mace-head ; a male dress ; a woman's dress ; a brogue or shoe ; a shop or slave badge ; an iron mounting of a spade ; an iron sickle ; crolats or ring of bells ; a lump of wax ; a scull cap.

An ancient chambered iron swivel cannon, made of bars, secured by means of hoops ; found on the coast of the county Wexford ; presented by Matthew E. Talbot, Esq.

A small miscellaneous collection of Irish antiquities, consisting of articles of stone, bronze, and silver, collected by the late Leslie Ogilby, Esq., and presented in his name by his executors.

A silver seal (apparently a bishop's seal, having a pall quartered with the arms) ; presented by Abraham Warburton, Esq.

An ancient iron arrow-head, found in the icy regions of Dorrefeldt, Norway ; presented by William T. Potts, Esq.

A series of drawings of the designs on the stone cross at Moon, county Kildare ; presented by Thomas Chandlee, Esq.

A vote of thanks was then moved to the several persons by whom the foregoing donations were presented to the Museum.

The Lord Chief Baron, in putting the motion, said that their thanks were especially due to the Duke of Northumberland and all other persons who, finding articles of more interest to others than to themselves, sent them forward to their proper homes, where their value would be duly appreciated.

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Dr. Aquilla Smith read the following account of certain Scotch coins and counterfeits found in Ireland :—

“ In the month of April, 1852, a few coins were found near Pettigoe, in the County of Fermanagh; Mr. Barton, on whose property the coins were discovered, left them with Mr. Clibborn, who placed them in my hands, and informed me that Mr. Barton would be obliged by any information respecting them.

“ The lot consists of fourteen coins—three groats of David II., along with nine groats and two half-groats of Robert II.; all the groats are of the type of the Edinburgh mint, and the half-groats are from the mint at Perth.

“ Scotch coins of an early period are frequently found in Ireland, and though many hundreds of them have passed through my hands, I never met with or heard of any similar to the coins I am about to describe. Ten of those coins are forgeries of a very peculiar kind, fabricated with a degree of ingenuity well calculated to impose on the rude and ignorant people of the fourteenth century. Two of the groats, and the two half-groats, are genuine silver coins. The specific gravity of one of the groats is 10·6. Each of the false groats consists of two very thin discs of silver, having interposed a piece of copper of somewhat smaller diameter, and much thicker than the silver, and they seem to have been struck between dies in the usual manner. As to the means by which the different metals were made to adhere, I found on attempting to separate one of the discs of silver from the copper, that it was detached without much difficulty, and that the metals had been united by solder, which has been corroded at the margin so as to expose the mode of fabrication.

“ The dies from which these coins were struck, though well executed and bearing a very close resemblance to the dies of the genuine coins, retain the marks as if of a file, and the surface of the coins has a streaked appearance. The letters are not sharp and well defined like those on the genuine silver coins, a defect owing to the want of solidity arising from the different metals not being perfectly soldered together.

“Of the ten spurious coins, five are from different dies, a fact which proves that forgery was carried on to a great extent, and in a systematic manner; nor is it at all surprising that they should be found associated with genuine coins, for one of the most notorious swindlers of the present day is in the habit of offering for sale genuine coins mixed up with forgeries.

“The spuriousness of those coins is at once detected by the separation of the metallic discs at the margin, but independent of this evidence, their deficiency in weight would enable a well-informed numismatist to pronounce without hesitation that they were not genuine regal coins. The central piece of copper was evidently intended to impart weight and solidity, yet, even with this addition, most of them are little more than half the legal weight of the groats of David and Robert, which should be about sixty-one grains, whereas the average weight of the ten false coins is a fraction less than thirty-seven grains, the heaviest being forty-eight grains, and the lightest thirty-one; of the four genuine coins, one groat weighs fifty-seven grains, and one of the half-groats weighs thirty grains.

“To determine, as near as possible, the period at which these forgeries were fabricated, it is necessary to refer to a few particular dates. David II., when only five years old, succeeded to the throne of Scotland in 1329. He was dethroned within a couple of years and retired to France, from whence he was recalled in 1342. On the 17th of October, 1346, he was taken prisoner at the battle of Neville’s Cross, and committed to the Tower of London, from which imprisonment he was released in 1357, by Edward III., for a ransom of 100,000 marks. He died in 1371, and was succeeded by his maternal uncle, Robert II., who died in 1390.

“In 1347, it was ordained by Act of Parliament that all good money of England should be received within the realm of Scotland, according to its true value in England.

“In 1358, David, King of Scotland, came in person to

London, and petitioned King Edward, that the coins of England and Scotland might be interchangeably current in both kingdoms upon equal terms, which request was granted in consideration of the great humility of the King of Scotland.

“ In 1365, a new coinage was ordered in Scotland, to be made equivalent and conformable to the current money of England in weight and fineness, and to have a notable sign on it to distinguish it from all other money already struck.

“ In 1367, the standard of the coinage in Scotland was reduced to £1 9s. 4d. the pound tale, the money to be of the same fineness as the last coinage, or that of England: the effect of which was, to reduce the weight of the groat from 72 grains to 61·36.

“ So much light foreign money had been brought into England in 1367, it was found necessary to issue an order that no money of the coin of Scotland, or of any other country, except the king's coins in gold and silver, should be current in the kingdom.

“ The Scottish money was again cried down by proclamation in England in 1372, which was rendered necessary by the advantage which the Scotch had taken of the difference in intrinsic value between their money and that of England; for they collected the latter, and coined it into their own money, which was of less weight. It seems, however, that this ordinance was insufficient to check a practice from which a considerable profit accrued; for in the following year (1373), the Commons petitioned ‘that four pence Scotch should go for no more than three pence English, and, if the Scotch should diminish their money on that account, that the current value of it should be again brought down’ (Ruding, vol. ii. p. 208, second edition, 8vo.), which petition was granted, an Act passed in the following year (1374), and proclamation was made to that effect in Berwick-upon-Tweed; and similar ordinances were made in 1381 and 1387.

“ Mr. Lindsay observes, that there are ‘ many mint and privy marks (probably the notable signs directed by the Act of 1365), particularly on the larger coins’ of David II. ; and that the coins of Robert II. ‘ resemble in type those of his predecessor, but exhibit fewer privy marks or ornaments, the only remarkable one being the letter **B** behind the king’s head on several of the groats’ (View of the Coinage of Scotland, p. 20 and 22).

“ The signification of this letter **B** has given rise to much discussion, but Mr. Lindsay, with much probability, conjectures that it is the initial of Bonachius of Florence, who was moneyer of Robert III. in 1393.

“ Five of those spurious coins exhibit the ‘ notable sign’ or privy mark, as it is usually called. The groat of David, No. 3, has a small **D** along with the pellets, in the quarter of the reverse corresponding with the letters **VILL**. Two of Robert’s groats, Nos. 4 and 5, have a cross behind the king’s crown. No. 6 has a large **B** in the same situation ; and No. 7 has the small **B** (the only mark noticed by Mr. Lindsay), which also occurs on the Perth half-groat, No. 13, which is a genuine coin, very nearly of the standard weight.

“ The existence on the coins of Robert of two privy marks (the cross and large **B**), which have not been observed on his genuine groats, is remarkable. That similar marks were used by the authorized moneyers, and that the originals will be discovered, may be assumed, for it is not to be supposed that forgers who so closely imitated the types and varieties of the regal coins would venture to adopt marks which were intended to distinguish the coinage of 1365 from all other money already struck, or, in the words of the Act: ‘ And ane notable sign sal be upon it, quhereby it may be evidently knawen fra all other money alreadie striken’ (Cardonnel, Numismata Scotiæ, Appendix, No. V.)

“ It now only remains to attempt to fix, with as much

precision as possible, the period at which these coins were fabricated.

“In 1365 the coinage of Scotland was equivalent, in weight and fineness, to the current money of England, at which time the weight of the English groat was seventy-two grains. In 1367 the weight of the Scotch groat was reduced to about sixty-one and a half grains, and no further change took place from that time to 1385, when money was ordered to be made of the same standard as in 1367.

“The coin of Scotland and other countries was forbidden in 1367 to be current in England, so much light money had been brought into the kingdom; and in 1373 it was ordained that four pence Scotch should pass for no more than three pence in England; and similar ordinances were made in 1381 and 1387.

“From the evidence of these Acts, and the coins themselves, it appears that the weight of the money of Scotland had been much reduced during the reign of Robert II. That these coins were fabricated subsequent to the year 1371 there can be no doubt, and if Mr. Lindsay’s conjecture as to the signification of the letter B, used as a privy mark, be admitted, it is probable they were made towards the close of the reign of Robert, who died in 1390; only three years before we find mention of Bonachius (*monetarium nostrum*) who possibly may have been employed some years previously in the royal mint.”

LIST of Fourteen Scotch Coins (*chiefly forgeries*), which were discovered in April, 1852, near Pettigoe, in the County of Fermanagh, on the property of Mr. Barton.

DAVID II., 1329–1371.

- |    |        |            |        |    |         |          |
|----|--------|------------|--------|----|---------|----------|
| 1. | Groat. | Edinburgh. | weight | 47 | grains. | Genuine. |
| 2. | ”      | ”          |        | 57 | ”       | ”        |
| 3. | ”      | ”          |        | 35 | ”       | False.   |

D in the quarter of the reverse, corresponding with the letters  
VILL.

## ROBERT II., 1371-1390.

4.	Groat. Edinburgh.	weight $31\frac{1}{2}$ grains.	False.	✠ behind the crown.
5.	„	„	31	„ „ ✠ „
6.	„	„	34	„ „ B „
7.	„	„	$37\frac{1}{2}$	„ „ B „
8.	„	„	$33\frac{1}{2}$	„ „
9.	„	„	$37\frac{1}{4}$	„ „
10.	„	„	$47\frac{1}{2}$	„ „
11.	„	„	$32\frac{1}{2}$	„ „
12.	„	„	48	„ „
13.	Half-groat, Perth.		30	„ Genuine.
14.	„	„	25	„ „ B behind the crown.

Nos. 4 and 5 are from the same dies.

Nos. 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12, are from the same dies.

An Edinburgh groat of Robert II., weight 58 grains, and an Aberdeen penny of David II., weight 16 grains (both genuine), were found at the same time, in the vicinity of the fourteen coins above described.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 30th, 1852. (Stated Meeting.)

THOMAS ROMNEY ROBINSON, D. D., PRESIDENT,  
in the Chair.

ON the recommendation of the Council, the following were  
elected Honorary Members of the Academy :—

*In the Department of Science.*

ELIE DE BEAUMONT.

M. V. REGNAULT.

AUGUSTIN-LOUIS CAUCHY.

*In the Department of Polite Literature.*

WILLIAM H. PRESCOTT.

RIGHT HON. THOMAS B. MACAULAY.

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The Secretary of Council made the following statement of  
the grounds on which the recommendation was made :—

“Although I occupy the place of the Secretary of the  
Academy, who is unavoidably absent to-night, it is in the  
performance of my proper function, as Secretary to the Council,  
that I undertake on this occasion to lay before the Academy  
some information respecting the individuals whom the Council  
has recommended to your notice as worthy of being elected  
Honorary Members of our body. During the last President’s  
tenure of office a very important change was made in the  
regulations respecting the admission of Honorary Members.  
In those past times, which are sometimes improperly called  
‘good old times,’ it was our custom to elect as Honorary  
Members persons who happened to be recommended by two or  
three influential Members of the Academy; and these persons  
were admitted to what ought to be a high honour without  
due consideration of their pretensions to it. In consequence  
of this practice very serious evils arose; the dig-