

'Personal Ornaments in Silver': Day's Collection of Viking-Age Silver

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Robert Day amassed a fine collection of Viking-age silver objects from various locations in Ireland which was dispersed at his London sale in 1913. This paper will give an account of each of these objects, providing an archaeological overview for them. It will also explore the history of the individual finds and, where possible, identify their present locations.

Silver was the principal medium of economic exchange throughout the Viking World which, ultimately, stretched from Russia in the east to the North American continent in the west. Though coin usage and minting did develop at different times in different parts of this vast region, generally silver was used as currency in non-numismatic form in a bullion or metal-weight economy, while imported coins were generally valued by weight. Therefore ornaments of various types, as well as ingots, sometimes cut-up into what is termed 'hack-silver', served as a form of bullion currency. Ornaments, such as arm- and neck-rings, as well as brooches, also served a dual purpose in that they could also be used as display and status items. But an assortment of hacked-up ornaments and ingots could be just as valuable to a Scandinavian, in commercial terms, as a pristine neck-ring. It is partly due to the fact that Viking settlement in Ireland adopted a predominantly urban form, combined with the fact that the activities of the Hiberno-Scandinavians became increasingly commercial in character, that very large amounts of Viking-age silver have been found in this country. In fact, well in excess of one hundred hoards of ninth- and tenth-century date are known from Ireland, representing a concentration of wealth that is not equalled elsewhere outside of Scandinavia during this period: these were probably, in the main, deposited for purposes of routine safe-keeping. Single-finds of Viking-age silver objects are also on record from Ireland, and these most likely represent individual losses rather than deliberate depositions.

The nineteenth century was a great period of discovery of Viking-age hoards in Ireland. Between 1840 and 1880, for instance, almost thirty hoards containing non-numismatic material, such as ornaments, ingots and hack-silver, are known to have been uncovered; in addition coin hoards and single-finds were unearthed. While some of these finds were acquired by the Royal Irish Academy's museum, many others entered the private collections of antiquarians. Sometimes the hoards were divided up, with the individual components circulating amongst antiquarian collectors. The components of a hoard of six silver rings, for instance, discovered in 1848 at Castlelohort Demesne, Co. Cork, were quickly dispersed within three years, by which time some had changed ownership twice among Cork-based or Cork-linked antiquarians and at least two had been sold into the antiquities trade through London auction houses.¹ Sometimes items such as

these circulated from one antiquarian's collection to another's, or to an auction house, over periods of several decades. It is not surprising, therefore, that Robert Day, the great Cork collector, whose interest in antiquities appears to have begun in the early 1860s,² was in a position to acquire a fine collection of Viking-age silver objects from various locations in Ireland. He published a small number of these objects, references to others are contained in his account book and notebooks,³ and all are in the catalogue of his 1913 London sale,⁴ but in overall terms he appears to have recorded rather little information about the backgrounds of the components of this important silver collection.

On the fourth day of Day's 1913 London sale this silver collection was sold in ten lots. In the sale catalogue the collection was captioned *Personal Ornaments in Silver*, and the material in it was assigned in a sub-caption to the *Late Celtic and subsequent periods*.⁵ It comprised thirteen individual objects, from eleven separate locations. Twelve of the items are of Viking-age date,⁶ five of which are known to have derived from three hoards. The majority of the objects are of Scandinavian or Hiberno-Scandinavian cultural background, though some are Irish. This paper will give an account of each object, in the order in which they appear in the Day sale catalogue, providing an archaeological overview of its type, background and date, as well as the current state of knowledge of the history of the find. The sale catalogue entries for the objects are as follows:

452 A massive ARMLET, of silver, *about 4½ in. diam.*; four lengths of graduated wire tightly twisted together to form a cable; a large knob fixed at one end, a long loop of thin wire at the other; found at *Fenit, Co. Kerry*; *very rare*

453 A massive BRACELET, of silver, *about 2¾ in. across*; made from a flat band of silver, diminishing in thickness and width towards the opening; found at *Fenit, Co. Derry [sic]*, *together with the preceding piece*

454 A VERY FINE NECKLET (?ARMLET), of silver, composed of several lengths of graduated wire twisted together to form a plaited cable pattern; hook and loop fastening of fine wire; found at *Athlone*; *very fine and extremely rare*

455 A plain silver ARMLET, *about 3¼ in. long*; a hoop of massive circular wire, tapering off towards the ends; *Carrigaline, Co. Cork*; *very rare*

456 A similar ARMLET, smaller and not so massive, *about 2 in. across*; the ends of the hoop very little tapered; found near *Cloyne*; *also very rare*

457 A larger ARMLET of silver, *about 3 in. long*; the hoop of quadrangular section and diminishing in thickness towards the ends, where it is drawn out into thin circular wire which originally formed a sort of hook-and-eye fastening; near *Tralee, Co. Kerry*; *very rare*

458 A remarkable PIN and CHAIN, of silver; the pin, *about 3 in. long*, has a hole pierced through the flat sides of the faceted head, and is fitted with a loose ring; to the ring is attached a small chain, made of fine wire twisted into long double loops, the ends twisted tightly round the centre of each loop or link; from the *Dunshaughlin Crannog*, 1867. And a long PIN (or BODKIN) of later date, also of silver, with small spherical head and a spiral line engraved around the stem; from a *Co. Galway Crannog*; *the first piece very interesting and rare*

459 A large and remarkably fine and rare penannular BROOCH, or FIBULA, in silver; *the ring about 3¼ in. long, the pin 5½ in. long*; the upper side of the flat ring rounded off and terminated by two large plates, each with a projecting cone in the centre and lines

of large pellets around; the loop of the pin boldly moulded; *Lisburn; from the Stephenson collection; extremely rare and very fine*

460 Two RING MONIES, of silver; the massive circular hoops tapering in width towards the ends, which are brought very closely together; around the centre of the outer side of each piece is engraved a double line; on one specimen the space between the lines is filled in with parallel cross-linings; found by turf-cutters near to *Armagh*, 1832; *weight 337 grs. and 307 grs.*; judging from the colour, each appears to have a perceptible quantity of gold mixed with the silver; *very rare*

461 A similar RING MONEY, of mixed silver; the hoop flattened on the upper and lower sides, on each end is engraved a pile of six dots; *Fork Hill (borders of Co. Armagh and Louth)*, 1887; *wt. 189 grs.* And the end of a long bar-shaped Ingot; *Co. Westmeath*; *weight 1153 grs.*; *both rare*

ITEMS 452–453: FENIT (RECTE BRENNAN'S GLEN), CO. KERRY, HOARD

This hoard first came to public notice at a meeting of the Royal Historical and Archaeological Association of Ireland (later the RSAI) in Cork, in October 1880, when it was exhibited by Day on behalf of its owner.⁷ He subsequently published an illustration of the find (Fig. 1) and gave the following account of it:

I am also enabled, by the courtesy of their lady owner, to exhibit a silver armlet and bracelet which have quite recently been dug up in the county Kerry. I regret that I cannot *now* give the detailed particulars of their finding. The bracelet is a plain, heavy, flattened penannular band of silver, which was probably worn as such . . . The longer of the two is of twisted silver, and may have been worn as an armilla or necklet; it tapers from the points where it is brought together, and secured with a silver loop, and swells out to its fullest proportions in the centre. This is an extremely fine example of its kind.⁸

The 'lady owner' of the hoard may be confidently identified as Miss Lucy Anne Thompson, of Fenit House, Co. Kerry, on the basis that this woman is recorded as having exhibited 'A Twisted Armlet or Torc with a Massive Pennannular Bracelet, both found in the Co. Kerry' in the archaeology and ethnology section of the Cork Industrial Exhibition in 1883.⁹ At some stage, perhaps following on from this event, or from the occasion of Miss Thompson's death in 1892, Day acquired the find, and in 1893 he included it in a display of his 'unique and magnificent collection' at a meeting of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society. Here the hoard was described as comprising a 'torc of twisted silver and a massive silver armlet, found together at Brennan's Glen, Beaufort, Co. Kerry'.¹⁰ It was not until twenty years later, in the sale catalogue of Day's collection, that it was stated for the first time in print that the find-spot of the hoard was 'at Fenit'.¹¹ However, it is clear that some of the reported provenances ascribed to other silver



Figure 1: Robert Day's drawing of the hoard from Brennan's Glen, Co. Kerry (Courtesy of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland)

ornaments in his collection, including that of the 'near Tralee' arm-ring (*see below*), relate to the places from where Day actually acquired these objects rather than their true find locations. In this case, given that the find was in the ownership of Miss Thompson of Fenit, from whom Day apparently acquired it, he appears to have occasionally associated this hoard with Fenit, despite having being aware of its discovery at Brennan's Glen. Indeed, this evident lack of close interest in matters to do with provenance is possibly the reason why the location of Brennan's Glen is incorrectly given as 'Beaufort' in 1893.

It is proposed that the 'Fenit' hoard be re-provenanced to Brennan's Glen. This is a well-known local place-name, though not a townland name, associated with a location situated about 6km north of Killarney. It is a short, narrow, wooded ravine, through which runs the Gweestin River, a tributary of the Laune, overlooked by low ridges on which several ring-forts are located. It lies within the barony of Magunihy, much of which formed part of Lord Kenmare's estate in the nineteenth century. Interestingly, one of his land-agents was a John Thompson, who lived in Dromadeesirt House, in Brennan's Glen.¹² On the basis that this is a rather uncommon surname in Kerry, it may well be the case that Lucy Anne Thompson and John Thompson, both of whom were land-agents, were related in some way.¹³ This offers a possible explanation for the Fenit woman's acquisition of the hoard from Brennan's Glen, some 40km distant from her home. The glen is located close to the northern boundary of the early medieval kingdom of Eóganacht Locha Léin.

The hoard was sold, in two lots, at Day's 1913 sale. It is recorded in an annotated copy of the sale catalogue in the National Museum of Ireland (NMI) that both lots were purchased by 'Permain'. Undoubtedly, this is William Permain, a London-based dealer in art and antiquities. He frequently acted as a buyer for William Randolph Hearst, the wealthy American newspaper magnate who was responsible for assembling one of the largest and most impressive private collections of European art and antiquities ever brought together. Permain served as Hearst's main agent in London for several decades, indeed he has been described as 'Hearst's private London buyer'.¹⁴ He is known to have acquired very important antiquities for Hearst, including a unique collection of Egyptian material and one of Canova's *Venus Italica*.¹⁵ While some of Hearst's immense collection was displayed in his various stately homes in the United States, much of it was housed from 1919 onwards in a five-storey building on the Southern Boulevard, the Bronx, New York.

An archive of Hearst's Southern Boulevard collection has been curated at Long Island University, Brookville, New York, since 1975. This consists of many boxes of files, thousands of sale catalogues and 170 albums which detail the vast collection. The albums record Hearst's acquisitions, and generally contain a table of contents listing the items recorded within. Each piece is recorded with a photograph, a description, and its known provenance, as well as a record of its purchase price, shipping destination, and subsequent sale.¹⁶ The production of a searchable online database of the archive is currently in progress, and at present only the indices to the collection are available.¹⁷ These contain fifty-four objects from Ireland, ranging from stone axe-heads to a complete seventeenth-century staircase, amongst which, in Album 107, are the following two objects:¹⁸ Item 70, 'A massive armlet of silver'; Item 71, 'A massive bracelet of silver'. The wording of these entries is virtually identical to the opening words of the descriptive entries in the Day sale catalogue for the two items that constitute the Brennan's Glen hoard, nos. 452–53: 'A massive ARMLET, of silver' and 'A massive BRACELET, of silver'. These are certainly records of the two items that constitute



Plate 1: Photograph from Album 107, S.B. Lot No. 999, William Randolph Hearst Archive, Long Island University, showing the neck-ring and arm-ring from Brennan's Glen, Co. Kerry (Art # 166, #167), the arm-ring from Carrigaline, Co. Cork (Art # 168), the pin and chain from Lagore, Co. Meath and the pin from Co. Galway (Art # 206, # 207) (Courtesy of the B. Davis Schwartz Memorial Library, Long Island University)

the hoard, confirming that Permain purchased them on behalf of Hearst, and this can be verified when the records of the Southern Boulevard collection are considered. These contain a photograph which includes both the neck-ring and arm-ring from Brennan's Glen (Pl. 1, nos. 166, 167), in addition to a card for each which relates them to 'S.B. Lot No. 999' and refers to the 1913 Sotheby's sale, naming William Permain as the vendor.

Thus, it may be demonstrated that the Brennan's Glen hoard was acquired by Hearst and joined his great treasury of antiquities in New York. His colossal business empire was threatened with bankruptcy in 1937, and consequently it had to undertake a court-mandated reorganization. Many of its assets



Plate 2: The neck-ring from the hoard from Brennan's Glen, Co. Kerry (Courtesy of Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore)

were liquidated, and Hearst was forced to sell off a great deal of his private collection. At the various auctions that followed between 1937 and 1942 many of his pieces were acquired by prestige galleries and museums in Europe and the United States. It is on record that the neck-ring from Brennan's Glen was purchased by a group of philanthropists at one of Hearst's sales in New York, in 1941, some of whom were members of the Board of Trustees of the Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, Maryland, to which it was subsequently presented.¹⁹ There it now forms part of the *Migration & Early Medieval Art* collections (Pl. 2).²⁰

The Brennan's Glen arm-ring may be identified, on the basis of Day's published description and illustration of it,²¹ as an unornamented example of a Hiberno-Scandinavian broad-band arm-ring. Rings of this type form the most characteristic product of Ireland's Hiberno-Scandinavian silver-working tradition and were mainly produced during the fifty-year period of c. 880 to c. 930.²² The records of the Southern Boulevard collection reveal that the Brennan's Glen example was sold in New York on 28 February 1941, being purchased by the Gimbel brothers, then owners of the largest department store corporation in the world, as well as the proprietors of Gimbels Art Gallery, New York. Unfortunately, it is not currently possible to track its present location, though it seems likely that it is in the United States, perhaps still in private ownership.²³

The Brennan's Glen neck-ring is, in some ways, a more interesting piece, as Viking-age neck-rings are of rather uncommon occurrence in Ireland. It is formed of three tapered rods, twisted together (Pl. 2). At one terminal one of these rods is extended and bent to form a loop, while the other terminal takes the form of a solid, dome-shaped knob. While the former feature occurs on many Viking-age neck-rings, the latter one is certainly very unusual. Among the few known occurrences of this general type of arrangement, for instance, is the neck-ring from Mönsterås, Småland, Sweden, which has a globular terminal.²⁴ However, the closest known parallels for the Brennan's Glen ring's dome-shaped terminal, from anywhere in the Viking world, are found on an unprovenanced neck-ring in the Hunt Museum, Limerick, where both terminals are of this form.²⁵

Neck-rings occur throughout the Viking World, though they are a particular feature of Scandinavia itself from where several hundred examples are on record.²⁶ It is likely that they served as status symbols in Scandinavian society though, like other types of silver ornaments, discussed below, they could also be reduced to hack-silver for commercial convenience when occasion demanded. They were manufactured throughout the period of the Viking Age, though the majority of examples appear to date to the tenth century. A number of Viking-age neck-rings are known from outside of Scandinavia, though there are only a few examples on record from Ireland: one of these was found at Miltown Malbay, Co. Clare,²⁷ another, also from the Day collection, is provenanced to Athlone, Co. Westmeath (see below), a third forms part of an unlocalised hoard from Co. Galway,²⁸ while a fourth is an unprovenanced and apparently a single-find.²⁹ The latter two examples are of simple form, and may well be of Hiberno-Scandinavian manufacture, while the Athlone, Miltown Malbay and Brennan's Glen examples share certain characteristics with neck-rings from Norway and, on the balance of probability, are likely to be tenth-century imports.

ITEM 454: ATHLONE, CO. WESTMEATH, NECK-RING

This fine neck-ring (Pl. 3), like the example in the Brennan's Glen hoard, is probably a tenth-century Scandinavian import. Measuring 12.7cm in diameter, and weighing c. 88gm,³⁰ it is

made from twisted pairs of rods, tapering in thickness towards the ends, the thickest of which forms the terminals; one of these is simply looped, while the other forms a hook which is rolled in swan-neck form. The hoop-and-loop clasping arrangement belongs to one of the more common types of neck-ring from Scandinavia, and is strongly represented in Denmark and southern/eastern Sweden.³¹ Only one example of this type is on record from Norway, suggesting that the Athlone neck-ring is of southern Scandinavian derivation.

It is recorded in an annotated copy of the Day catalogue in the NMI that this neck-ring was purchased at the 1913 sale by 'Wheeler Belfast'. That same year it was acquired by the Belfast Municipal Museum and Art Gallery,³² now the Ulster Museum. Given that the museum also acquired a number of prehistoric gold artefacts from Wheeler that year,

which had also been purchased by him at the Day sale (see Cahill, this volume), it may be assumed that he was acting on behalf of the Belfast Municipal Museum and Art Gallery.

There is no known record concerning how or from whom Day acquired this neck-ring, though the sale catalogue records that it was found at Athlone and it is known that he occasionally purchased antiquities from 'Flynn, Athlone' (see Murray, this volume).³³ This is one of a number of Viking-age silver and gold finds that were discovered in this area during the nineteenth century, including five hoards,³⁴ one of which is the large and unique gold one from Hare Island,³⁵ though there is no evidence to connect the silver neck-ring to these finds. Even though Glover ascribes the object to Athlone, Co. Roscommon,³⁶ there is no indication, in either the Day sale catalogue or in Bøe's record of the object,³⁷ to indicate which side of the Shannon it was found on. As the principle side of the town lies to on the eastern bank of the river, it seems more likely that the find was of Westmeath provenance.



Plate 3: Neck-ring, from Athlone, Co. Westmeath
(© National Museums Northern Ireland. Collection
Ulster Museum)

ITEM 455: CARRIGALINE, CO. CORK, ARM-RING

From its description and illustration in the Day sale catalogue this object, the present location of which is unknown, may be identified as a single-rod arm-ring of penannular form. It is undecorated and was formed from a rod of circular or approximately circular cross-section, which tapers in thickness towards the terminals. Single-rod arm-rings are of common occurrence in Scandinavia's Viking-age hoards, where they originated in the ninth century. They may occur in annular or penannular form, are formed from rods of various types of cross-section, though circular/approximately circular is the most

common, and are normally plain and undecorated.³⁸ Penannular examples are of rather uncommon occurrence in the western Viking world, where examples from hoards include fragments in the finds from Cuerdale, Lancashire,³⁹ and Dysart Island, Co. Westmeath,⁴⁰ both deposited in the first decade of the tenth century, as well as complete examples from Rathmooley, Co. Tipperary,⁴¹ and Kilbarry, Co. Cork (to be discussed below). In addition, an example forms part of the gold hoard from Vesnoy, Co. Roscommon.⁴²

It is not known when Day acquired this ring, but it may well be the 'pennannular armlet from the County Cork' which was exhibited by him in the archaeology and ethnology section of the Cork Industrial Exhibition of 1883.⁴³ Its Carrigaline provenance in the Day sale catalogue must be accepted at face value. However, given that some of the 'provenances' ascribed to other silver objects in this source relate to the places from where Day acquired them, rather than their actual find locations,⁴⁴ it is possible that this may also be the case in this instance. In this regard, it is interesting to note that Carrigaline was the home of Ralph Westropp,⁴⁵ a collector with whom Day had connections and, indeed, whose membership of the *Historical and Archaeological Association of Ireland* was proposed by Day in 1868.⁴⁶

It is recorded in the annotated copy of the Day catalogue in the NMI that this arm-ring was purchased at the 1913 sale by 'Permain', followed by the supplementary note 'Chicago'. Clearly this is William Permain, the London-based dealer who has already been noted above in relation to the Brennan's Glen hoard. At the Day sale he also acquired a fine silver pin and chain from Lagore (see below), which is also annotated 'Permain' and 'Chicago Mus' in the catalogue. The apparent association of this latter purchase with 'Chicago Museum', and of the Carrigaline arm-ring acquisition with 'Chicago', may simply have resulted from a ruse by Permain to deflect attention from his association with William Randolph Hearst. Certainly there is no evidence that any of this material ever ended up in a Chicago museum.⁴⁷

Given that it is known that Hearst acquired the Brennan's Glen and Lagore objects from Permain following the Day sale, it seems worth considering whether he also acquired the Carrigaline arm-ring. In Album 107 of the Hearst Archive, item 72, which immediately follows the entries for the objects from the Brennan's Glen hoard and precedes that for the Lagore pin and chain, is described as 'A plain silver armlet'.⁴⁸ The wording is exactly the same as the opening words of the descriptive entry in the Day sale catalogue for the Carrigaline arm-ring, no. 455, 'A plain silver ARMLET', suggesting that the wording used in the Hearst album was derived directly from the Day catalogue. This, within the context of the preceding and following entries, seems to indicate that Permain also purchased the Carrigaline arm-ring on behalf of Hearst. The records of Hearst's Southern Boulevard collection contain a photograph of an object (Pl. 1, no. 168) which appears identical to the only known image of the Carrigaline arm-ring, that published in the 1913 Day sale catalogue. The associated archive contains a record card which relates this object to 'S.B. Lot No. 999', refers to the 1913 Sotheby's sale, and names William Permain as the vendor. Clearly, this is the Carrigaline ring. The card reveals that it was sold in New York on 28 February 1941, being purchased by the Gimbel brothers, who also, as noted above, purchased the arm-ring from the Brennan's Glen hoard on this occasion. Unfortunately, the present location of the arm-ring is unknown, though it may well be in private ownership in the United States.

ITEM 456: 'CLOYNE' (RECTE KILBARRY), CO. CORK, ARM-RING

Kilbarry is a townland on the north side of Cork, c. 2.5km from the modern city centre, which was located within the hinterland controlled by the Hiberno-Scandinavians of Cork. A silver hoard was discovered there in 1844, as described in a letter from Richard Sainthill, the Cork numismatist, to Thomas Crofton Croker, the Cork antiquarian, which is transcribed in the records and correspondence of John Windele:

I got intelligence on Friday of Mr Wise of Kilbarry, north side of Cork having discovered nine pieces of silver ring money in digging a drain. I saw Mr Wise and he confirmed it; he fortunately was standing by. They were about 4 feet below the surface and were thrown up together. Mr S. Barry of Foaty being his landlord, he sent him six . . .⁴⁹

Sainthill later published another account detailing the hoard's discovery, in his *Olla Podrida*, in which he recorded the weight of seven of the rings.⁵⁰ Other antiquarian and newspaper accounts concerning the find circumstances and size of the hoard differ in their details, as has been noted by Rockley,⁵¹ with some of the earlier accounts stating that it was a much larger and more significant find. This appears to be simple hyperbole, however. All nine of the Kilbarry rings and fragments are illustrated in two separate sections of the Windele manuscripts,⁵² and from these illustrations it is clear that all were of the same simple form with three occurring as large fragments.

Following its discovery, six of the hoard's rings were received by William Maunsell Reeves, the legal advisor and agent of James H. Smith Barry of Fota House, the landlord of the Kilbarry property. In due course he dispersed these and they circulated in Cork's antiquarian circles for some years – including in the ownership of Thomas Crofton Croker, William Wrixon Leicester, Richard Sainthill, and John Windele – and rings from the find were exhibited at several meetings of Cork's Cuvierian Society.

Today, only one of the Kilbarry rings may be identified with certainty, having been recognised by James Graham-Campbell and Stephen Briggs as item 456 in the 1913 Day sale catalogue, where it is erroneously provenanced to 'near Cloyne'.⁵³ This single-rod penannular arm-ring, formed from a plain rod of circular cross-section, tapering to straight-cut terminals, now forms part of the collections of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford (Pl. 4).⁵⁴ In the Ashmolean Museum it was formerly mounted on a card which states that it was 'found near Cloyne' and was 'presented' to Day by 'Mr Leicester 1887 Dec 28'. This Leicester is presumably the same 'W. Leicester' who was recorded by Windele as owning one of the Kilbarry rings in 1844, and he may be identified as William Wrixon Leicester, of Ennismore, Montenotte, Cork, owner of the Cork Steam Packet Company, who died in 1887.⁵⁵ The annotated copy of the Day 1913 sale catalogue in the NMI records that it was purchased by Spink, meaning Spink and Son Ltd, the London-based dealer/auction house. It was subsequently presented to the Ashmolean Museum, in 1932, complete with its annotated mounting card, by A. Walters-Welch, of Oxford.



Plate 4: Arm-ring from the hoard from Kilbarry, Co. Cork (Courtesy of Ashmolean Museum, Oxford)



Figure 2: Arm-ring from near Ballybunion, Co. Kerry: *above*, from Day's Notebook No. 4 (Courtesy of National Museum of Ireland); *below*, from Sotheby's Day Collection sale catalogue

ITEM 457: 'NEAR TRALEE' (RECTE
'NEAR BALLYBUNION'),
CO. KERRY, ARM-RING

The evidence for this find is contained in the minutes of an 1864 meeting of Cork's Cuverian Society:⁵⁶

Mr R. Day Jun. exhibited a silver armlet undecorated but joined at either end by a succession of spiral ornaments, found last year near Ballybunion, Co. Kerry.

Rockley has suggested that this is very likely to be the ring, weighing 1oz. 3dwt (c. 36gm), which was purchased by Day from Hilliard, a Tralee jeweller, in July 1864, as recorded in Day's Notebook No. 1.⁵⁷ A sketch of it is contained in Day's Notebook No. 4, where it is captioned: 'Silver Armlet found near Ballybunion C^o. Kerry. July 1864. Wt. 1oz 3 dwt.' It is also sketched in Notebook No. 2, with an accompanying note: 'No. 43 Silver Arm Torc plain foursided and tapering to the Ends which are joined in a triple twist on which are two moveable rings. Found near Tralee 1861.' Its provenance to 'near Tralee' in this source, which is repeated on the 1913 Day sale catalogue,⁵⁸ rather than the 'near Ballybunion' provenance given at the Cuverian Society meeting and in Notebook No. 4, as well as the differing

dates of discovery, 1861 and 1864, appears to indicate that Day was either confused or not overly concerned about these details. It is clear that only one arm-ring is involved here, as the object sketched in Notebook No. 4, the 'near Ballybunion' ring (Fig. 2 *above*), is undoubtedly the same object as that photographed in the sale catalogue, the 'near Tralee' ring (Fig. 2 *below*), and, furthermore, the description of the 'near Ballybunion' ring exhibited to the Cuverian Society in 1864 is fully in accordance with the catalogue's entry for the 'near Tralee' ring. Given that only one ring is evidenced, and that it is afforded a 'near Ballybunion' provenance in two of the three earlier references to it, one of which was a report of a public meeting,⁵⁹ it is concluded that this item is much more likely to be of Ballybunion provenance. It seems probable that the confusion simply resulted from the fact that the ring was purchased by Day in Tralee, as is recorded in his account books, and that he consequently came to associate it with that town. As a result of it being given a Tralee provenance in the 1913 sale catalogue, this ascription subsequently adhered to it in later records.

At the Day sale the Ballybunion arm-ring was purchased by William Talbot Ready, a well-known London dealer with connections with Rollin and Feuardent/Feuarent Frères, a firm dealing in antiquities in London and Paris.⁶⁰ At the sale he was acting on behalf of Dublin's National Museum of Science and Art, now the National Museum of Ireland, though it is clear that he was also buying material 'for stock' (see Cahill, this volume). It appears that the Ballybunion ring was acquired by him as part of this 'stock', and it was subsequently obtained by Captain John Henry Ball. Cahill has published an important study involving this individual, who was in the employ of the Marquess of Londonderry before serving as a Royal Naval Air Service officer during World War I.⁶¹ Following the war he became a successful arms dealer. He amassed a very large private collection, including fine and decorative arts as well as archaeological material, much of which was on loan to the Hertfordshire County Museum, St Alban's, a short distance north of London. It is known that he was occasionally somewhat dubious in his dealings with antiquities, and that he was not adverse to 'improving' or even forging archaeological material. Cahill's paper fully explores his involvement, for instance, in the production of a collection of fake gold ornaments of purported Irish provenance, including the so-called Strangford Lough hoard.

In 1938 Ball died, and part of the St Alban's collection was subsequently acquired from his estate by John Hunt. In 1940, having recently moved to Ireland, Hunt offered the material for sale to the NMI.⁶² This was accompanied by an inventory of the material which included an entry for No. 206: 'Bracelet. Silver. Kerry. nr. Tralee'. This almost certainly is to be equated with the entry for '1 \diamond section bracelet' contained in the *Catalogue of the John Ball Collection of Antiquities now on loan to The Herefordshire County Museum St. Albans*, where the ' \diamond ' symbol refers to the lozenge-shaped cross-section of the arm-ring. In the event, the NMI's efforts to purchase this collection were unsuccessful and the material was returned to Hunt in 1948. A photographic record of the collection, which was made in the museum in 1940, includes an image of arm-ring No. 206, and this has 'Day Sale 457' written on its back, indicating that this is the Ballybunion arm-ring. Interestingly, the terminals of the ring in the photograph, which are depicted as unwound in the illustrations in Day's notebooks and sale catalogue (Fig. 2), have been modified and tidied up. This is likely to have been the handiwork of Ball, who had a reputation, as noted above, for 'improving' archaeological objects.

It is not known what Hunt did with the arm-ring following the return of the Ball Collection material to him. In 1968, however, Dr Kurt Ticher, an expert on early modern silver who occasionally also dealt in antiquities, and who was a friend of Hunt,⁶³ sent a number of photographs to William Seaby, Director of the Ulster Museum, one of which featured a 'silver Viking armlet of square section and said to have come from Tralee'. Subsequently, Seaby sent a letter to Hunt enquiring if he still had this ring, among other objects, and if they were available for sale. Hunt's reply, which did not address this question, included an attachment which contained the following information:

A silver bracelet formed from a tapering bar of diamond section, thickest at the centre, the ends recurved and twisted round each other. . . . The silver bracelet said to have been found at Tralee.

The arm-ring was not seen by James Graham-Campbell when he inspected the Hunt Collection in the early 1970s,⁶⁴ and its present whereabouts are unknown.

On the basis of the illustrations of the Ballybunion arm-ring it may be identified as an example of a single-rod arm-ring. Unlike the Carrigaline and Kilbarry arm-rings discussed above, this example is of annular type and is formed of a rod of lozenge-shaped cross-section. The overall hoard evidence indicates that this type originated in ninth-century Scandinavia, even if it did not come into widespread use before the mid-tenth century. It seems likely that

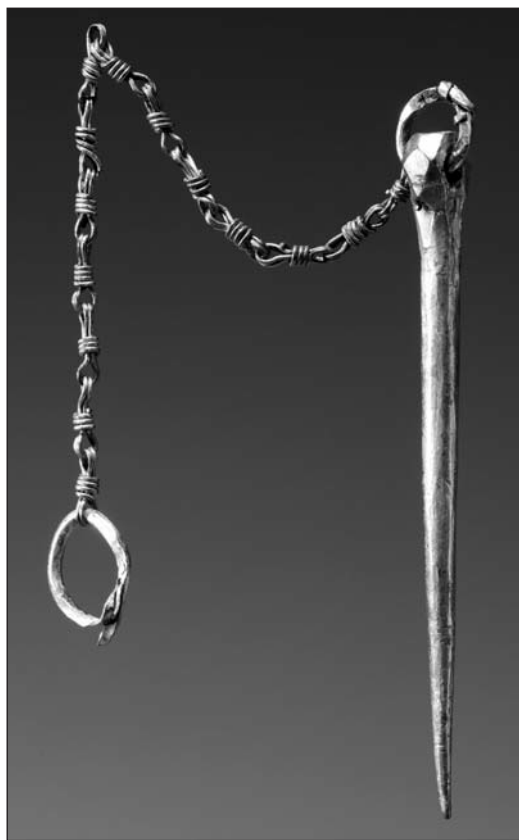


Plate 5: Pin and attached chain from Lagore crannóg, Co. Meath (Courtesy of Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore)

arm-rings of this variety found in Britain and Ireland derive from Scandinavia, perhaps specifically from Norway. There are several examples in the hoard from Cuerdale, Lancashire,⁶⁵ which was deposited c. 905–10, while rings of this type are also on record from a small number of hoards in Ireland, including those from Garron Point, Co. Antrim,⁶⁶ and Tynan Demesne, Co. Armagh.⁶⁷ In summary, the 'near Ballybunion' arm-ring is probably a Scandinavian import, dating to the later ninth or first half of the tenth century.

ITEM 458: LAGORE, CO. MEATH, PIN AND CHAIN

This silver chain and attached pin (Pl. 5) are reported in the 1913 Day sale catalogue as being from 'Dunshaughlin Crannog, 1867', undoubtedly a reference to the well-known crannóg at Lagore, near Dunsoughlin, Co. Meath. This, unfortunately, is the only known reference to a Lagore provenance for this highly unusual piece, as the object is not mentioned in Day's notebooks and it is not known how, or from whom, he acquired it. In the annotated copy of the Day sale catalogue in the NMI it is noted that the pin and chain were purchased by 'Permain', followed by the note 'Chicago Mus'. This refers to William Permain, the dealer who also

acquired the Brennan's Glen hoard and the Carrigaline arm-ring at the Day sale (see above). Given his associations with William Randolph Hearst, it is not surprising that the Lagore object subsequently turn up in the United States as part of the Hearst Collection. It was acquired by Joseph Brummer, on 20 November 1940, at one of the Hearst sales in New York. He was a Serbian-born art dealer and collector, with galleries in Paris and New York. Following his death, in 1947, much of his collection was acquired by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, with the remainder sold by auction at New York's Parke-Bernet Galleries. The Lagore piece formed part of this sale,⁶⁸ where it was acquired by the Walters Art Museum, Maryland, and now forms part of its *Migration & Early Medieval Art* collections.⁶⁹

Lagore crannóg, the find-spot of this object, was *Loch Gabhair*, the centre of the Southern Brega kings during much of the early medieval period. Consequently, given its royal status, it is not surprising that it has produced a wide array of high-quality artefacts, both prior to and during its archaeological excavation.⁷⁰ In fact, it has produced the only recorded single-finds of Viking-age silver from Southern Brega, the pin and chain under discussion and an arm-ring fragment.⁷¹ There is a noticeable tendency for finds of Viking-age silver to cluster around some Irish royal centres, as is also evidenced in the kingdoms of Northern Brega, Northern Uí Néill (see below) and, most exceptionally, the Clann Cholmáin royal centre at Lough Ennel, Co. Westmeath.

The Lagore silver pin, with its polyhedral-shaped head, slip-knot ring, and attached chain, is a unique find from Ireland. The chain consists of fourteen links, made from two-stranded wire rolled up into spirals, so that there is a loop at each end to which the next link is attached. There are rings at each end, formed from plain rods, from one of which the pin is suspended. The pin is formed from a tapered rod of circular section, 8.5cm in length, and is perforated through the flat sides of its polyhedral-shaped head to accommodate the attachment loop.

There are a number of Viking-age silver pins on record from Britain and Ireland, including those from Adare, Co. Limerick,⁷² and the ninth-century boat burial at Killoran Bay, on Colonsay.⁷³ There is also a variety of Viking-age silver chains on record from Britain, in some cases with attached rings,⁷⁴ several of which are of Trichinopoly-work (chains of woven silver wire), and are consequently likely to be Insular, rather than Scandinavian, in manufacture. Like the example from Lagore, one of the chain fragments in the Cuerdale hoard is of figure-of-eight looped form,⁷⁵ and a similar chain from a Scandinavian burial, near Arklow, Co. Wicklow, was apparently suspended between a pair of Scandinavian oval brooches.⁷⁶ Another chain of this type, made of copper alloy, is attached to an early Irish house-shaped reliquary, now in Bologna,⁷⁷ though scholarly opinion is divided as to whether this is an original or secondary attachment. Such chains were also occasionally used to suspend the scale-pans of Viking-age balances, as on the example from Jåtten, Rogaland, Norway,⁷⁸ and on the recently excavated example from a boat grave at Lø, Steinkjer, Nord-Trøndelag.⁷⁹ While it has been argued that these chains may be of western origin it may be significant that few, if indeed any, occur as original features on Irish material, while they are undoubtedly a feature of several Scandinavian contexts in Britain, Ireland and Norway.

Pins attached to chains, apart from the Lagore example, are also a small but significant feature of burials and hoards from the Viking west. The lost hoard, for instance, from Garron Point, Co. Antrim, contained a pin attached by means of a small ring to an elaborate chain of Trichinopoly-work.⁸⁰ The silver pin from a woman's grave, of ninth/tenth century date, at Ballinaby, Islay, Hebrides, with a pin-head formed from a filigree-decorated bead of well-known Scandinavian type, was attached by means of a small ring to its associated Trichinopoly-work chain.⁸¹ The Vale of York hoard, Yorkshire, which was deposited c. 927–8, features a brooch pin linked by a chain to a barrel-shaped bead.⁸² A small number of pins with chains are also on record from Scandinavia; from Gotland, for example, is a copper-alloy pin surmounted by an attachment ring from which is suspended a chain of coiled wire links.⁸³ Kershaw has demonstrated that brooches with suspended chains and attached tools represent a uniquely Scandinavian and Baltic fashion during the Viking Age,⁸⁴ and it may be that the Lagore pin and chain represent an aspect of this style in Viking-age Ireland.

ITEM 459: 'LISBURN', CO. ANTRIM, BROOCH

The Day sale catalogue suggests a provenance of Lisburn, Co. Antrim, for this brooch, an example of the bossed penannular type, noting that it derived from the 'Stephenson collection'. This is a reference to George Stephenson, a Lisburn solicitor,⁸⁵ and it may be that the Lisburn connection with the item simply relates to Stephenson's association with that town rather than reflecting its actual find-spot. Day acquired it at an auction of Stephenson's antiquities in Belfast in 1868, and it is very probably to be identified with the 'brooch of tenth-century work, found in the County Antrim, near Lisburn' which was exhibited by him at the Cork Industrial Exhibition of 1883.⁸⁶

Irish brooches of early medieval date are generally of copper alloy, though a number, for the most part of Viking-age date, are of silver. The latter mainly comprise penannular brooches of the bossed and ball-types, as well as some pseudo-penannular examples. The bossed penannular type is defined by Johansen as featuring unconnected terminals decorated with bosses as an essential element of its decoration.⁸⁷ About fifty examples are known, for the most part from Ireland, though examples are also on record from northern Britain, Iceland and Norway. The type developed in Ireland during the second half of the ninth century, the period when quantities of silver first became available to Irish craftsmen due to the economic and political activities of the Scandinavians, and continued in use into the first half of the tenth century. While it is strongly fixed in the Irish brooch tradition, aspects of the bossed penannular variety display influences from Scotland and England in terms of form and ornamentation. Its distributional pattern suggests that the development of this brooch-style may have taken place in the northern part of Ireland.⁸⁸

Johansen assigns Day's bossed penannular brooch to his subgroup E, examples of which are defined as having sub-triangular or sub-rhombic terminals with more than half of the terminal surface occupied by a pellet pattern.⁸⁹ Since then Graham-Campbell has demonstrated that one of the brooch fragments from the Cuerdale hoard may also be accommodated in this subgroup if the definition is extended to include brooches with sub-circular terminals.⁹⁰ Thus, it appears that there are four examples of subgroup E brooches on record from Britain and Ireland, those from Cuerdale, Lancashire, Portna, Co. Antrim,⁹¹ Kildimo, Co. Limerick,⁹² and Day's example, from Lisburn, Co. Antrim.

From the photograph illustrating the Lisburn brooch in Day's sale catalogue (Fig. 3 *right*), it is evident that it bears remarkable similarity to another subgroup E bossed penannular brooch, that from Portna, on the River Bann (Fig. 3 *left*), which was in the collection of John Bell, of Dungannon, in the 1850s.⁹³ This is a unique brooch in that it is the only known bossed penannular which is of bronze.⁹⁴ The similarities between it and Day's brooch were sufficient to suggest to the compiler of the Ulster Museum register that the Portna brooch 'Seems to be a bronze copy facsimile of the silver one sold in Day Sale 1913 . . .'. Since then, however, the brooch has been inspected by Cormac Bourke who concludes that it is an authentic early medieval artefact, particularly because of the manner in which the shanks of its bosses penetrate the terminals and are finished flush at the back.⁹⁵ Unlike Day's brooch, the present location of which is unknown, the Portna example is available for examination, and it is significant that it does not display any obvious signs of being of early modern manufacture. In addition, it may be of consequence that it was recorded, illustrated and published, with what appears to be a faultless provenance, some ten years before the first record of Day's brooch emerges, when he acquired it from the Stephenson collection in

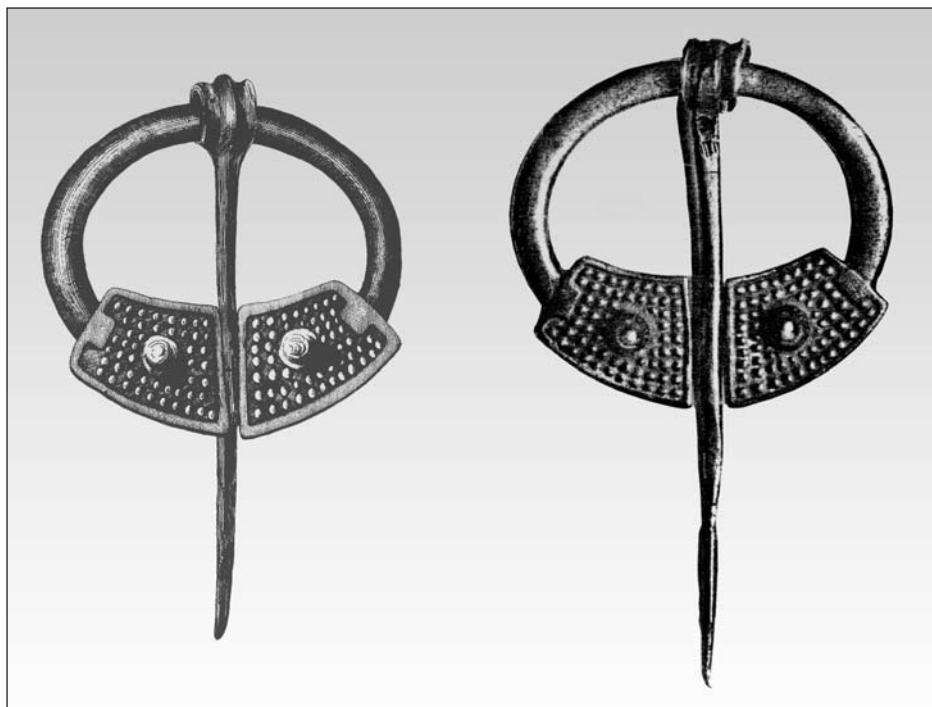


Figure 3: Bossed penannular brooches from: *left*, the river Bann, at Portna, Co. Antrim/Derry (from the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, 1857); *right*, 'Lisburn', Co. Antrim (from Sotheby's 1913 Day Collection sale catalogue)

1868. All of this implies that there is no reason to regard the Portna bronze brooch as a facsimile copy of the Lisburn silver brooch.

What, then, of the alternative? Is it possible that the Portna bronze brooch was copied in silver, either on behalf of Bell, its owner, or Stephenson, the owner of the silver brooch, or by the unrecorded person who supplied Stephenson with it, sometime between 1857, the year of its discovery, and 1868, the year of Stephenson's death? Replicas and fakes of a variety of artefacts are known to have been produced for the antiquities market in Ireland during the nineteenth century, including in Ulster,⁹⁶ although no obvious candidate emerges for the manufacture of the Day brooch. It should be noted, however, that the production of copies of silver brooches had begun in Ireland by the mid-nineteenth century, with jewellers copying items in the museum of the Royal Irish Academy and private collections.⁹⁷ Thus, the potential for copying an item such as the Portna brooch certainly existed during the period of its acquisition by Day.

If Day's Lisburn brooch is a copy, and it is not possible to definitively conclude that it is, it clearly was not produced by the process of casting it from a mould of the Portna brooch, for there are a number of important differences between the two items. For instance, the dimensions of the two brooches differ by over a centimetre, there are variations in the number of small raised bosses on the leading edges of their terminals, and the

central bosses of the Lisburn brooch are set within collars, unlike those on the Portna brooch. Therefore, it may well be the case that these are two distinct brooches of early medieval date. If so, due to their similarities, they are likely to have been produced in the same workshop. However, they are the only known bossed penannular brooches which are in such close concordance with one another. Alternatively, the Lisburn silver brooch may be a nineteenth-century copy of the bronze one from Portna, though not an exact cast replica. Unfortunately, given that its present whereabouts are unknown, this brooch cannot be subjected to XRF or other forms of metallurgical testing which could resolve the question of whether it is early medieval or early modern in date. However, the wear or damage that is apparent just below the head of its pin in the Day catalogue photograph may suggest that, in fact, it is an authentic early artefact.

It is recorded in the National Museum of Ireland's annotated copy of the Day sale catalogue that the Lisburn brooch was purchased by 'Feuardent', undoubtedly a reference to Rollin and Feuardent/Feuardent Frères, a firm dealing in antiquities in London and Paris. As has been noted above, Ready, a dealer with connections with Rollin and Feuardent/Feuardent Frères, was present at the Day sale and perhaps it was he who actually bid for the brooch. It may now be in a private collection.

ITEM 460: 'NEAR ARMAGH', CO. ARMAGH, HOARD

The only known evidence for this find, which was first recognized as a Viking-age hoard by James Graham-Campbell,⁹⁸ is contained in the sale catalogue of the Day collection where it is noted that it was 'found by turf-cutters near to *Armagh*, 1832'. Unfortunately, there is no indication how, or from whom, Day acquired the find, and it is not mentioned in his various notebooks. Neither, regrettably, is it illustrated in the sale catalogue. From the description in the catalogue, however, it is apparent that the find consisted of two penannular silver arm-rings. Their hoops, of unknown cross-section, tapered towards the terminals, which were positioned close together. On both examples a double line was 'engraved' around the outer face and, in the case of one of the arm-rings, the space between these lines was infilled with some form of cross-hatching. Even though they are described as having 'massive' hoops, the weights of the rings, 307 and 337grs., which convert to c. 20 and c. 22gm respectively, indicates that they are fairly modest rings. It is not possible, on present evidence, to assign these two objects to any particular type of Viking-age arm-ring. It is not known what form the cross-section of their hoops took, and the ornamentation, as described, is rather unusual.

In the annotated copy of the Day sale catalogue in the NMI it is noted that the rings were purchased by 'Feuardent'. No doubt this refers to Rollin and Feuardent/Feuardent Frères, already noted above in relation to its purchase of the 'Lisburn' brooch at the sale. As has also been noted, in relation to the Ballybunion arm-ring, William Talbot Ready, a dealer with connections with Rollin and Feuardent/Feuardent Frères, was present at the sale, and it is possible that it was he who conducted the acquisition. The subsequent fate of the Armagh hoard is unknown.

The 'near Armagh' hoard lies within the early medieval kingdom of Northern Uí Néill. There are seventeen Viking-age silver hoards on record from this region, five of which are from, or close to, the Inishowen peninsula, fairly close to Ailech, the royal centre of the Northern Uí Néill kingship prior to its move to Tullaghogue during the late tenth/eleventh century.⁹⁹ Another grouping of hoards in Northern Uí Néill is formed by four finds from the

vicinity of Armagh, including the one discussed here, and this concentration may be explained by the close association of this important ecclesiastical centre with the Uí Néill dynasty, as well as its primacy within the early medieval Irish Church.¹⁰⁰

ITEM 461: FORKHILL, CO. ARMAGH, FINGER-RING

This unusual penannular finger-ring, 2.8cm in diameter, is formed from a rod of circular section which is hammered flat on its upper and lower faces. Its terminals, butt-ended, almost touch, and their outer faces are decorated with six punched dots disposed so as to form a triangle. Single-rod finger-rings are essentially miniature versions of the single-rod arm-rings. Both annular and penannular versions occur, rods of various cross-sections are used (for the most part circular), and they are usually unornamented. The punched decoration on the Forkhill example marks it out as unusual.

According to Day's sale catalogue this ring was found at Forkhill, Co. Armagh, in 1887. Unfortunately, no further information is provided, and there is no mention of the object in his various notebooks. In the NMI's annotated sale catalogue it is recorded as having been purchased by 'Spink', meaning Spink and Son Ltd, the London-based dealers in numismatics, oriental art and antiquities. Its subsequent history has recently been traced by James Graham-Campbell,¹⁰¹ and is only repeated in summary form here. It appears to have been acquired from Spink and Son by W. Shaw, whose collection was sold at Sotheby's in 1924. Shaw added it to his small collection of material from the Cuerdale hoard, leading to the Armagh ring being regarded for most of the twentieth century as forming part of that great Lancashire find. In 1943 the Shaw material was acquired, having passed through a number of owners, by Dr Philip Nelson, the Liverpool antiquarian and numismatist. Following Nelson's death, in 1953, the City of Liverpool Museums, now the National Museums Liverpool, acquired his collection, including the Forkhill finger-ring.¹⁰²

ITEM 461: CO. WESTMEATH, INGOT TERMINAL

This item, the present location of which is unknown, is clearly a piece of hack-silver – cut fragments of silver items, so-rendered as bullion before melting down or for use as currency in a weight economy. Although hack-silver of Roman type is on record from Ireland, it is much more likely that this piece is of Viking-age date, simply because hack-silver is of such common occurrence in Ireland's Viking-age silver hoards, especially in the midlands area.

The provenance given in the Day sale catalogue for this item is 'Co. Westmeath'. Day is known to have acquired artefacts from at least two dealers in this county, Flynn, of Athlone, and Fegan, of Killucan,¹⁰³ and it is possible that this ingot fragment was sourced through either of these individuals. In the NMI's annotated copy of the 1913 sale catalogue the object is recorded as having been purchased by 'Spink', meaning Spink and Son Ltd, who also acquired the finger-ring from Forkhill in the same lot. The Westmeath ingot terminal, however, did not accompany the Forkhill item into the Shaw collection (see above), and its present location is unknown.

The weight of the item recorded in the sale catalogue, 1153grs, converts to approximately 75gm. This is rather weighty for a piece of Viking-age ingot-derived hack-silver from Ireland, which often occurs in highly fragmented form. For instance, the average weight of the hack-silver pieces from the recently discovered Viking-age *longphort* at Woodstown, Co. Waterford, is just under 5gm, while that of hack-silver in the hoards

from throughout Munster is a little over 10gm.¹⁰⁴ Clearly, the implication is that Day's fragment may have been cut from a rather large ingot. In this regard, it is interesting to note that the largest recorded Viking-age silver ingots from Ireland, by far, are from Westmeath, forming the massive hoard from Carrick, Lough Ennel.¹⁰⁵

CONCLUSIONS

The study of the Viking-age silver objects in the Robert Day collection is of interest in a number of different respects. The most important of these, of course, is the archaeological information that is yielded concerning the activities and impact of the Scandinavians on Ireland. However, the study is also important in terms of the light it throws on the poor appreciation and understanding that the antiquarians, collectors and dealers of the past had regarding the overall importance of archaeological artefacts. Clearly, they often saw their value purely in terms of the objects themselves, as display items that could be bought and sold, assembled and dispersed, altered and adjusted, without any need to adequately describe and record them for posterity. This is illustrated by what is currently known concerning the assembly and, indeed, the dispersal of the Viking-age silver elements of the Day collection (Fig. 4). Few efforts were made to investigate or even note the precise find-locations and associations of the objects, and they were often recorded, if at all, in a rather cursory manner. Robert Day was no different to most of his contemporaries and forerunners in these matters.

The range of Viking-age silver artefact-types represented in the collection is of some interest, with Irish, Scandinavian and Hiberno-Scandinavian types present. It is of interest to note, however, that the objects in the collection are not truly representative of the more commonly occurring types of Viking-age silver artefact from Ireland. Broad-band arm-rings and ingots, whether in complete or hack-silver form, dominate the silver hoards from Ireland, yet only one example from each category is included in Day's silver collection. Five examples of the single-rod type of arm-ring, on the other hand, which are of relatively uncommon occurrence in Ireland, feature in it. This might suggest that Day was somewhat selective in his acquisitions, opting for the more unusual types of artefacts. Such might also be intimated by the presence of two fine neck-rings in his collection, for these are rare in the Irish context, with only five complete examples on record. The unusual pin and chain from Lagore, and the minutely-ornamented finger-ring from Forkhill, both unique forms in Ireland, also seem to imply that Day's apparent selectivity in his approach to collecting Viking-age silver was both conscious and deliberate. Consequently, while it is true that his private museum was second only to that of the national collections in Dublin at the time, as was frequently observed, it is also the case, in terms of Viking-age silver, at least, that the national collections were more truly representative of Ireland's archaeological material culture.

Day was not the first notable Cork figure to dispose of an important antiquarian collection by auction in London, having been preceded by important individuals such as Joseph Leybourn, William Chadwicke Neligan, Thomas Crofton Croker, John Lindsay and William Wrixon Leicester. Day's sale, as has been demonstrated in this paper, resulted in the wide dispersal of his Viking-age silver collection. Four of the twelve items were purchased for a private collection of world-class standard in the United States, some were procured by private collectors in Britain, and only one piece, the Athlone neck-ring, was acquired by an

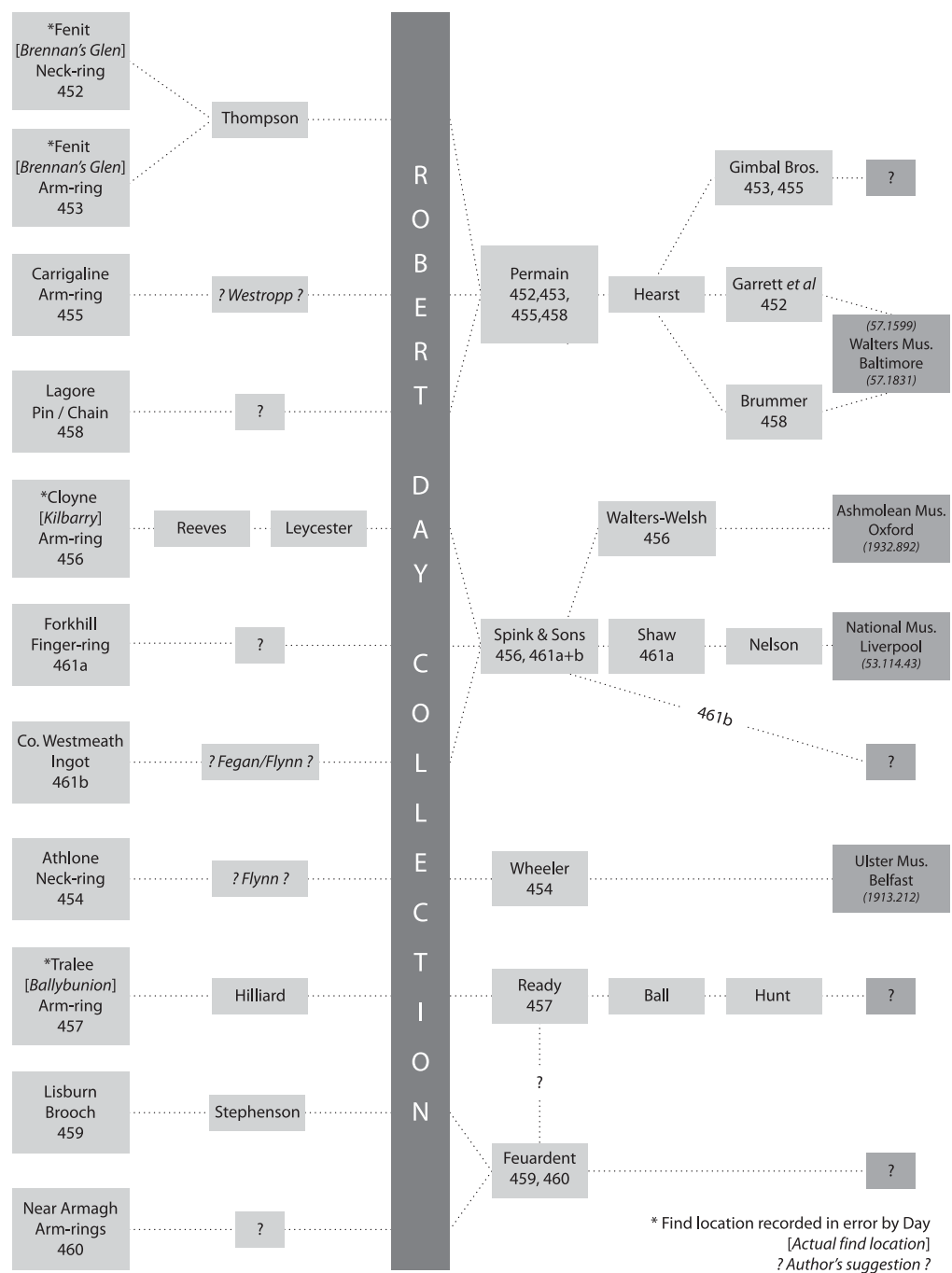


Figure 4: Flow diagram depicting the assembly and dispersal of the Viking-age silver elements of the 1913 Day Collection

Irish museum. The subsequent histories of a number of the pieces that entered private collections following the Day sale are presently unknown. Fortunately, some items, even if they amount to less than half of the silver items in the Day collection, are now in museums and galleries, though all but one of these institutions are in America and Britain.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author is very grateful to the following for information relating to various aspects of this paper: Cormac Bourke, formerly Ulster Museum; Mary Cahill, Irish Antiquities Division, National Museum of Ireland; James Graham-Campbell, formerly Institute of Archaeology, University College London; C. Griffith Mann, formerly Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore; Griffin Murray, Department of Archaeology, University College Cork; Greer Ramsey, National Museums Northern Ireland. He is particularly grateful to Dr Catherine Larkin, B. Davis Schwartz Memorial Library, Long Island University, for information on the Hearst Archive. He is also thankful to Nick Hogan, Department of Archaeology, University College Cork, for preparing the illustrations, especially Fig. 4.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

- 1 Sheehan, J., 'Deposition, discovery and dispersal: a Viking-age hoard from Castlelohort Demesne', *Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society (JCHAS)* 118 (2013), pp. 39–59.
- 2 Rockley, J., *Antiquarians and Archaeology in Nineteenth-Century Cork*. BAR British Series 454 (Oxford, 2008), p. 75.
- 3 See Cahill, this volume, for an account of these sources. In this paper Cahill's numbering system for Day's notebooks is followed.
- 4 Sotheby, Wilkinson and Hodge, *Catalogue of the Irish stone and bronze implements, personal ornaments &c. formed by the well-known antiquary Robert Day which will be sold by auction, May 19th–22nd 1913* (London, 1913).
- 5 Sotheby, Wilkinson and Hodge, *Catalogue of the Irish stone and bronze implements, personal ornaments &c.*, pp. 66–67, pls xvii, xviii, xix.
- 6 The thirteenth object, which is not further considered here, formed part of lot 458. It was described as 'a long pin (or bodkin)', from a crannóg in Co. Galway. At the sale it was purchased by William Permain, on behalf of William Randolph Hearst.
- 7 The hoard and its components have been recently discussed by the author: 'Kerry's Viking-age silver: the legacy of collectors, antiquarians and dealers', in Murray, G. (ed.), *Medieval Treasures of County Kerry* (Tralee, 2010), pp. 19–32, at pp. 22–28. Since then further documentation relating to the find has emerged, leading to the identification of its find-location and its original owner, and additional information has come to light concerning the fate of the arm-ring following Day's 1913 auction.
- 8 Day, R., 'Proceedings,' *Journal of the Royal Historical and Archaeological Association of Ireland (JRHAAL, later JRSAI)* (4th ser.) 5 (1880), pp. 346–47, fig. 4.
- 9 *Cork Industrial Exhibition, 1883, Official Catalogue* (Dublin, 1883), p. 300, no. 33. Miss Thompson (1843–1892), daughter of Robert Acheson Thompson, of Sandville, Castleisland, and Christina Frances Bland, of Derryquin Castle, Sneem, is perhaps best remembered as the agent of the Conway-Hurly landlords, of Fenit. She notoriously evicted many tenants in the Lyreacrompane area in the 1880s, and her activities resulted in an attempt on her life and the assignment to her of a guard of six RIC policemen. See *Freemans Journal*, 1 February 1883; House of Commons debate, 12 May 1884.
- 10 Anon, 'Proceedings of the Society', *JCHAS* 2 (1893), pp. 257–59, at p. 258.
- 11 In Day's Notebook No. 2 there is an undated sketch of the hoard which is captioned: 'Nos 147, 148. Silver wristlet and armilla both of silver found near Fenit Co Kerry'.
- 12 Bary, V., *Houses of Kerry: Some Historical, Genealogical, Architectural Notes* (Whitegate, 1994), p. 100.
- 13 There are less than twenty-five occurrences of this surname in Kerry listed in Griffith's Valuation, 1852. It may be significant that another Kerry Thompson, David P. Thompson, was the land-agent

- of Lord Ventry's estate on the Dingle peninsula. I am grateful to Breandán Ó Cíobháin for this information.
- 14 Larkin, C., 'A reappraisal of the William Randolph Hearst Archive at Long Island University: information, preservation, and access', *Visual Resources: An International Journal of Documentation* 25:3 (2009), pp. 239–57, at p. 251.
 - 15 Hardwick, T., 'Five months before Tut: purchases and prices at the MacGregor sale, 1922', *Journal of the History of Collections* 23.1 (2011), pp. 179–92, at p. 184; Caruso, C. and Hahn, K., 'The third version of Canova's *Venus*', *The Burlington Magazine* 135, no. 1089 (1993), p. 828.
 - 16 Larkin, 'William Randolph Hearst Archive at Long Island University', pp. 240–42.
 - 17 See http://www.liucedarswampcollection.org/betahearst_indexes.php?albumid=107 [Accessed December 12 2013].
 - 18 Long Island University (LIU), William Randolph Hearst Archive, Album 107, p. 43.
 - 19 The trustees were Robert Garrett, B. Howell Griswold, Jr., George C. Cutler, Philip B. Perlman and Morgan C. Marshall. See: Ross, M.C., *Arts of the Migration period in the Walters Art Gallery* (Baltimore, 1961), p. 116. In this publication the neck-ring is incorrectly attributed as being 'Irish' and of '6th to 8th century' date.
 - 20 Garside, A., *Jewelry: Ancient and Modern* (New York, 1980), no. 413. Walters Art Gallery reg. no. 57.1599.
 - 21 Day, 'Proceedings', fig. 4.
 - 22 For a recent discussion of arm-rings of this type see Sheehan, J., 'Hiberno-Scandinavian broad-band arm-rings', in Graham-Campbell, J., *The Cuerdale hoard and related Viking-age silver and gold, from Britain and Ireland, in the British Museum* (London, 2011) pp. 94–110.
 - 23 In 'Kerry's Viking-age silver', p. 23, I suggested that this arm-ring might be identified with a silver ring from Ireland which appeared in the catalogue of an anonymous collection sold at Sotheby's in 1920. Given the information contained in Album 107 in the Hearst Archive, discussed above, this suggestion is now withdrawn.
 - 24 Hårdh, B., *Silver in the Viking Age: a regional economic study* (Stockholm, 1996), p. 46, fig. 5.
 - 25 Sheehan, J., 'Neck-ring', in Armitage, H. (ed.), *The Hunt Museum: essential guide* (London, 2002), p. 113. The Hunt Museum neck-ring may be from the north of Ireland. While there is little doubt that it is a genuine Viking-age object, some doubt might be cast on the authenticity of its terminals; see Sheehan, 'Kerry's Viking-age silver', pp. 22–28.
 - 26 Hårdh, *Silver in the Viking Age*, pp. 41–83.
 - 27 Sheehan, J., 'Viking-age silver and gold from county Clare', in Ó Murchadha, C. (ed.), *County Clare Studies* (Ennis, 2000), pp. 30–41, at pp. 36–37.
 - 28 Bøe, J., *Norse Antiquities in Ireland* (Shetelig, H., ed.), *Viking Antiquities in Great Britain and Ireland*, 3 (Oslo, 1940), p. 112.
 - 29 Bøe, *Viking Antiquities*, p. 122, fig. 84.
 - 30 This weight is based on a conversion of 3oz., 2dwts, the weight of the neck-ring as recorded by Bøe, *Viking Antiquities*, p. 136.
 - 31 Hårdh, *Silver in the Viking Age*, pp. 45–53.
 - 32 Ulster Museum reg. no. 1913.212.
 - 33 See, for instance, Day Notebook No. 1 for the purchase of bronze axeheads from Flynn, of Athlone, in 1869.
 - 34 For these hoards see Sheehan, J., 'A Viking-age silver arm-ring from Portumna, Co. Galway', *Journal of the Galway Archaeological and Historical Society* 42 (1989/90), pp. 125–30, at pp. 127–29.
 - 35 Graham-Campbell, J., 'A Viking-age gold hoard from Ireland', *Antiquaries Journal* 54 (1974), pp. 269–72.
 - 36 Glover, W., 'Irish antiquities from the eastern midlands in the Ulster Museum', *Journal of the Old Athlone Society* 2.5 (1978), pp. 45–51, at p. 50. It should be noted that the photograph of the neck-ring from Athlone in this paper (Pl. 1) is incorrectly captioned (as a prehistoric gold torc from Roscommon).
 - 37 Bøe, *Viking Antiquities*, p. 136.
 - 38 Sheehan, J., 'The Rathmooley hoard and other Viking-age silver from Co. Tipperary', *Tipperary Historical Journal* 1992, pp. 210–16.

- 39 Graham-Campbell, *The Cuerdale Hoard*, p. 103, fig. 5.14; no. 55, p. 214.
- 40 Ryan, M., Ó Floinn, R., Lowrick, N., Kenny, M. and Cazalet, P., 'Six silver finds of the Viking period from the vicinity of Lough Ennell, Co. Westmeath', *Peritia* 3 (1984), pp. 334–81, at p. 341, no. 99.
- 41 Sheehan, 'The Rathmooley hoard', p. 213.
- 42 Sheehan, J., 'A Great Famine discovery of Viking gold: Vesnoy, Strokestown, Co. Roscommon', in Crowley J., Smyth, W.J., and Murphy, M., (eds), *Atlas of the Great Irish Famine* (Cork, 2012), pp. 630–31.
- 43 *Cork Industrial Exhibition, 1883, official catalogue*, p. 300, no. 29.
- 44 See, for example, the 'Fenit' hoard, which is actually from Brennan's Glen (some 40km from Fenit), and the 'near Tralee' arm-ring, which is actually from near Ballybunion (some 30km from Tralee).
- 45 Though born at Monkstown, Westropp (1813–96) lived at Ravenswood House, Carrigaline. For his acquisition of a prehistoric gold ring in the 1850s, apparently from John Windele, see Cahill, M., 'John Windele's golden legacy: prehistoric and later gold ornaments from Co. Cork and Co. Waterford', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy (PRIA)* 106C (2006), pp. 219–337, at pp. 239–40. In Day's Notebook No. 1 there are a number of sales recorded to Westropp between 1867–69, mostly of ethnographic material.
- 46 Later to become the *Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*. See: Anon., 'Proceedings', *Journal of the Historical and Archaeological Association of Ireland* (3rd ser.) 1 (1868), pp. 139–63, at p. 139.
- 47 See Cahill, this volume, for similar 'Chicago Mus' associations with some of Permain's purchases of prehistoric gold at the Day sale.
- 48 LIU, Hearst Archive, Album 107, p. 43.
- 49 Royal Irish Academy (RIA), John Windele MSS, MS 12.C.2, fol. 589–90.
- 50 Sainthill, R., *An Olla Podrida or Scraps Numismatic, Antiquarian and Literary*, vol. 2 (London, 1853), p. 17.
- 51 Rockley, *Antiquarians and Archaeology in Nineteenth-Century Cork*, pp. 101–02.
- 52 RIA, Windele MSS, MS 12.C.1, fol. 226–27; 12.I.7, fol. 210–11.
- 53 Graham-Campbell, J. and Briggs, C.S., 'Some neglected Viking-age silver hoards from near Athlone and Co. Cork', *Peritia* 5 (1986), pp. 309–16, at p. 312.
- 54 Ashmolean Museum, reg. no. 1932.892.
- 55 It seems unlikely that Leycester 'presented' the Kilbarry ring to Day in 1887, as stated on the Ashmolean label and in Day Notebook No. 2 (under No. 146). This was the year of Leycester's death, and elsewhere Day notes that he acquired a gold disc, from near Ballyvourney, Macroom, which had been 'in the possession of the late Mr. Wm. Wrixon Leycester, of Ennismore, Cork, shortly after whose death I acquired it' (see: Day, R., 'Gold plates and discs found near Cloyne, Co. Cork', *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland (JRSAI)* (5th ser.) 9 (1899), pp. 413–16, at p. 415). In the Day Notebook No. 2, under No. 144, Day records that he also acquired a gold pin and a gold 'mamilliary fibula' from the Leycester collection on this occasion, which he dates to 28 December 1887. This would suggest a strong likelihood that Day also acquired the Kilbarry ring after Leycester's death. Little is on record about the latter's collecting activities, though it is known that he obtained three silver ingots and twelve coins from the Cuerdale hoard in 1846 (Graham-Campbell, *The Cuerdale Hoard*, pp. 32–33). He may have been more interested in coins than antiquities, as he was described by Richard Sainthill in 1845 as 'a Young Gentleman, who has an immense Collection of Coins' (Graham-Campbell, *The Cuerdale Hoard*, p. 32). His numismatic library was sold by auction at Sotheby's in November 1888.
- 56 University College Cork, MS U221a, 296, Cuvierian Society Minutes, 11 October 1864.
- 57 Pers. comm., July 1995.
- 58 In the Day sale catalogue the illustration numbers for two arm-rings were inadvertently switched. The description for lot 457, the Ballybunion arm-ring, perfectly matches no. 455 in pl. XVII.
- 59 It is worth noting that in a newspaper report of the Cuvierian Society meeting the find-spot of the arm-ring is recorded as being 'near Ballybunion, Co. Kerry'.
- 60 For Ready's connection with Rollin and Feuardent see: 'List of possible dealers who Pitt-Rivers dealt with over collecting career', no. 75, at <http://web.prm.ox.ac.uk> [Accessed December 2013].
- 61 Cahill, M., 'The strange case of the Strangford Lough hoard.' *JRSAI* 135 (2005), pp. 5–118.

- 62 O'Connell, B., *John Hunt: the Man, the Medievalist, the Connoisseur* (Dublin, 2013), p. 85.
- 63 O'Connell, *John Hunt*, p. 290.
- 64 Pers. comm., James Graham-Campbell, February 2010.
- 65 Graham-Campbell, *The Cuerdale Hoard*, pp. 102–03, pl. 40.
- 66 Graham-Campbell, *The Cuerdale Hoard*, p. 121, fig. 6.11; Grey, W., 'Ancient silver personal ornaments (found near Garron Point, Co. Antrim, and lent by Sir Hugh Smiley)', *Belfast Municipal Art Gallery and Museum Quarterly Notes*, 1907, p. 6.
- 67 Paterson, T.G.F., 'An unpublished Viking hoard', *JRSAI* 92 (1962), pp. 78–79.
- 68 *The Notable Art Collection Belonging to the Estate of the Late Joseph Brummer, 1*, Parke-Bernet Galleries, New York, May 11–14, 1949, no. 276.
- 69 Walters Art Museum reg. no. 57.1831. See: Ross, *Arts of the Migration Period*, p.108, no. 52, where the Lagore object is incorrectly dated to the sixth century, and Garside, A., (ed.), *Jewellery: ancient to modern*, no. 407. A brooch-pin from Ballinderry crannóg, Co. Westmeath, a zoomorphic pennanular brooch, and a spiral-headed pin, from Armagh, followed exactly the same route from the Day collection to the Walters Art Museum (reg. nos 54.2340, 2341, 2342).
- 70 This site was the source of many finds of antiquities during the nineteenth century: see Briggs, C.S., 'A historiography of the Irish crannog: the discovery of Lagore as prologue to Wood-Martin's *Lake Dwellings of Ireland* of 1886', *Antiquaries Journal* 79 (1999), pp. 347–77, at pp. 351–52, 356–66. The crannóg was excavated in the 1930s, for which see: Hencken, H., 'Lagore crannog: an Irish royal residence of the seventh to tenth century A.D.', *PRIA* 53C (1950), pp. 1–248.
- 71 For this arm-ring fragment, NMI reg. no. E14:214, see Hencken, 'Lagore crannog', p. 87, fig. 23.
- 72 Fanning, T., *Viking Age Ringed Pins from Dublin*. Medieval Dublin Excavations 1962–81, Ser. B, vol. 4, (Dublin, 1994), p. 30. See p. 50 for the Lagore pin and chain, which Fanning interprets as a probable Scandinavian import.
- 73 Graham-Campbell, J., *The Viking-Age Gold and Silver of Scotland (AD 850–1100)*, Edinburgh, 1995, p. 157, pl. 74c.
- 74 Graham-Campbell, *The Cuerdale Hoard*, pp. 123–24.
- 75 Graham-Campbell, *The Cuerdale Hoard*, p. 124 and p. 226, fig. 6.15, pl. 50.
- 76 Ó Floinn, R., 'Two Viking burials from Co. Wicklow', in Corlett, C. and O'Sullivan, A. (eds), *Wicklow: Archaeology and Society*, vol. 1, (Bray, 1998), pp. 29–35, at pp. 31–33, pl. 2.
- 77 Blindheim, M., 'A house-shaped Irish-Scots reliquary in Bologna, and its place among the other reliquaries', *Acta Archaeologica* 55 (1984), pp. 1–53, at p. 29.
- 78 Petersen, J., *Viking Antiquities in Great Britain and Ireland*, vol. 5 (Oslo, 1940), p. 160, no. 21, fig. 133. Historisk Museum Bergen, reg. no. 4772.
- 79 Grav, E.J. and Grønnesby, G., 'Gravenepå Lø: versikt over haugerogfunn', *Vitark: Acta Archaeologica Nidrosiensia* 8 (2012), pp. 13–200 at pp. 21–23, fig. 13.
- 80 Graham-Campbell, *The Cuerdale Hoard*, p. 121, fig. 6.11.
- 81 Graham-Campbell, *Viking-Age Gold and Silver of Scotland*, pp. 155–56, pl. 74a, b.
- 82 Department of Portable Antiquities and Treasure, British Museum, *Portable Antiquities and Treasure Annual Report 2007* (London, 2009), pp. 112–14, at p. 113, no. 9.
- 83 British Museum reg. no. 1921:1101.323.
- 84 Kershaw, J., 'Culture and gender in the Danelaw: Scandinavian and Anglo-Saxon brooches', *Viking and Medieval Scandinavia* 5 (2009), pp. 295–325, at p. 300.
- 85 Stephenson contributed several items to the Belfast exhibition in 1852; see *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Collection of Antiquities and other objects Illustrative of Irish History exhibited in the Museum, Belfast, on the occasion of the twenty-second meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, September, 1852* (Belfast, 1852), pp. 43–45, 49–50. In the Day Notebook No. 1 it is stated that Day purchased material from the Stephenson collection 'by auction in Belfast', which included '14 bronze celts' and '12 spear heads'. In Notebook No 2 is a drawing of the 'Lisburn' brooch with a caption which notes that it was 'purchased at the sale of Mr Stephenson Collection . . . 1868'. In Notebook No. 5 it is noted that 'Mr Stephenson resided at Lisburn and his collection was mainly Irish'.
- 86 *Cork Industrial Exhibition, 1883, catalogue*, p. 301, no. 35.
- 87 Johansen, O.S., 'Bossed penannular brooches: a systematization and study of their cultural affinities', *Acta Archaeologica* 54 (1973), pp. 63–124.

- 88 Ó Floinn, R., 'Secular metalwork in the eighth and ninth centuries', in S. Youngs (ed.), *The Work of Angels: Masterpieces of Celtic metalwork, 6th–9th centuries AD* (London, 1989), pp. 72–91 at pp. 89–90; Johnson, R., 'The development of Irish brooch forms and pins in the Viking Age, c.850–1170', *Peritia* 15 (2001), pp. 321–62, at pp. 327–31.
- 89 Johansen, 'Bossed penannular brooches', p. 80.
- 90 Graham-Campbell, J., 'Bossed penannular brooches: a review of recent research', *Medieval Archaeology* 19 (1975), pp. 33–47, at p. 35.
- 91 Johansen, 'Bossed penannular brooches', p. 85, refers to this brooch as being from Portglenone, Co. Antrim. There is no other source which indicates this provenance, and the Ulster Museum has no recorded find-location for this brooch. It appears that Portglenone may simply be Johansen's mistaken rendering of the place-name Portna (which is not a townland name, and thus does not appear in the sources that are normally consulted in provenancing exercises).
- 92 National Museum of Ireland, ex Petrie Collection, reg. no. P.742. This example was listed as unprovenanced by Johansen, but has now been satisfactorily provenanced to Kildimo, Co. Limerick. See: Cahill, M. and Ó Floinn, R., 'The reprovenancing of two silver kite-brooches, probably from Co. Limerick', *North Munster Antiquarian Journal* 36 (1995), pp. 65–82, at pp. 76–77.
- 93 This brooch, Ulster Museum reg. no. 203.1955, may be confidently identified as the one illustrated in Anon., 'Antiquarian notes and queries', *Ulster Journal of Archaeology* (UJA) 5 (1857), pp. 345–352, at pp. 347–48, where it was noted as being in the collection of John Bell, of Dungannon. It was acquired by the Ulster Museum in 1955 as part of a collection from R.B. Giveen. Portna is the location of one of the navigation locks and side-channels constructed during the Bann drainage scheme of 1847–58, indicating that the discovery of the brooch was most likely associated with these works.
- 94 Johansen, 'Bossed penannular brooches', at p. 85, fig. 57.
- 95 Pers. comm., Cormac Bourke, January 2014.
- 96 Pers. comm., Green Ramsey, January 2014. See, for examples of Ulster forgers working in bronze: Gray, W., 'Proceedings', *JRHA* (later *JRSAI*) (4th ser.) 2 (1872–73), pp. 122–23; Megaw, J.V.S., 'Two axes of the fake 'Glencar' class in the County Museum, Armagh', *UJA* 34 (1971), pp. 107–08.
- 97 McCrum, E., 'Irish Victorian jewellery', *Irish Arts Review* 2:1 (1985), pp. 18–21.
- 98 Graham-Campbell, J., 'The Viking-age silver hoards of Ireland', in Almqvist, B. and Greene, D. (eds), *Proceedings of the Seventh Viking Congress, Dublin 1973* (Dublin, 1976), pp. 31–74, at p. 66.
- 99 This tendency for finds of Viking-age silver to cluster around royal centres is also represented by the finds from Lagore, discussed in this paper.
- 100 Purcell, E. and Sheehan, J., 'Viking Dublin: enmities, alliances and the cold gleam of silver', in Hadley, D.M. and Harkel, L.T. (eds), *Everyday Life in Viking-Age Towns: Social Approaches to Towns in England and Ireland, c.800–1100* (Oxford, 2013), pp. 35–60, at pp. 39–40, 50, fig. 3.3.
- 101 Graham-Campbell, *The Cuerdale Hoard*, p. 172, p. 271, fig. 2.5 (Appendix 2).
- 102 The Forkhill finger-ring is registered in National Museums Liverpool as LM:53.114.43.
- 103 In Day's Notebook No. 1, 'Fegan of Westmeath' is mentioned, while in Notebook No. 4 this individual is further identified as Pat Fegan, Killucan, Co. Westmeath, who 'died in the Spring of 1868'.
- 104 See Sheehan, J., 'Silver', in Hurley, M.F. and Russell, I. (eds), *Woodstown: A Viking-Age Settlement in Co. Waterford*, (Dublin, forthcoming).
- 105 Ryan, M. *et al.*, 'Six silver finds of the Viking period from the vicinity of Lough Ennell', pp. 335–36, pls 1–2. It must, however, be emphasised that these massive ingots are completely non-Scandinavian in character. Their form and weight are clearly very different from the range present in Viking-age hoards from around the Irish Sea, as well as those from Scandinavia, so that the Carrick find – in consisting exclusively of these ingots – is self-evidently a hoard of native Irish wealth, even if the silver itself would have reached Irish hands as a result of Scandinavian activity.