



Society of Antiquaries
of **Scotland**

The Scottish Antiquarian Tradition: Essays to mark the bicentenary of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland 1780-1980

Edited by A S Bell

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Erratum

In the original publication of *The Scottish Antiquarian Tradition* plate 4 'Sir George Steuart Mackenzie, 7th Bt, of Coul' was attributed to Sir John Watson Gordon. However it is now attributed to Sir Henry Raeburn.

The Museum, its Beginnings and its Development

Part II: the National Museum to 1954

R. B. K. Stevenson

We plead for the accumulation of antiquarian objects in our own and other public collections. The Museum has been gifted over by the Society of Antiquaries to the Government — it now belongs, not to us, but to Scotland — and we unhesitatingly call on every true-hearted Scotsman to contribute, whenever it is in his power, to the extension of this museum, as the best record and collection of the earliest archaeological and historical monuments of our native land.

Professor Sir J. Y. Simpson MD, January 1861*

The seven years of transition after the Conveyance of 1851, before the collections could be transferred, housed and financed by the Government, helped to disguise the contradictions and disadvantages inherent in the simple pragmatic solution that had been provided. The distinction between 'our Museum' and the Government's was blurred in practice; but in such a way that the troubles of being a step-child in a marriage of convenience were to be recurrent, and ultimately made necessary another legal status for it. The Society, effectively its Council, co-operating with the Secretary of the Board of Manufactures over plans for accommodation and staff, treated the Museum as a trust while the conditions for the transfer were unfulfilled. Once Government money was voted, and the Society began to exercise the 'charge and management' on the Board's behalf, everything went on much as before. The advantages, obvious at the start, were not only financial, though the very prospect of being freed of the expenses of accommodating the Museum and itself was enough to allow the invaluable

* For a general bibliographical note, see p. 210. As explained on p. 31 above, detailed references to sources, largely related to the Society's own minute-books and records, will be inserted in a copy in the Society's Library.

yearly *Proceedings* to be started, as we have seen. The Museum remained a *raison d'être* for the Society, as Lord Buchan had wished, adding some prestige by its new status; and it in turn benefited enormously from the regular publication and from the growing number of members throughout the country (250 Fellows in 1860), who formed as it were its body of Friends.

Settling in at The Mound, 1859-69

The curious fact that for thirty years from its reopening in November 1859 the Museum had two names in regular use, betrays two continuing points of view. In welcoming the signature of the Conveyance, Daniel Wilson had written that 'the establishment of a Museum of Historical Antiquities in the Scottish Capital, such as will supply to the scientific Archaeologist the elements of unwritten history, is an object that cannot be achieved by the most zealous private exertions', so that the collections formed by the Society were not yet 'fit to constitute a National Archaeological Museum'. Neither of these possible names, however, seems to have won support during the transition. From the reopening onwards, the official address was Museum of Antiquities, Royal Institution; but the Society's own address was shown on the monthly billets, beginning March 1860, as National Museum of the Antiquaries of Scotland. This version was expanded at the same time, in a circular to schoolmasters, by inserting 'the Society of', and the *Catalogue of Antiquities* published in 1863 had this fuller form on the title-page — without the prefix National. The title on the spine of this small book is CATALOGUE OF ANTIQUITIES — ANTIQUARIAN SOC. SCOTLAND, corresponding to what was probably the most frequent spoken form, Antiquarian Museum (used as a heading in the 1849 catalogue). The form National Museum of Antiquities, used in the *Edinburgh Courant* on the eve of the opening in 1859, came into regular official use at the time of the move in 1890. One of the earlier occurrences, the heading of a newspaper advertisement for the post of Keeper in 1869, suffered the unfortunate misprint NATURAL.

In the world of cultural institutions in which the Museum had to find its position, much happened in Edinburgh between 1851 and 1859. The Act of Parliament in 1850 which provided for a National Gallery of old master pictures as well as for the modern pictures of the Royal Scottish Academy and its life class, all within buildings that were to be erected on The Mound, ensured that there would be space again in the Royal Institution for the Museum. It also made the expensive development of

the National Gallery the centre of the Board's interests, instead of the School of Design. Though the only Government body in Scotland suitable to be entrusted with the Museum, the Board had no reason to be enthusiastic about it, even supposing that the friction of a few years before had left no mark, and they clearly stated that no extra charge on their funds should be incurred. The idea of letting the Antiquaries look after the antiquities while the Board in whom they were vested concentrated on art, was evidently welcome to both parties. It also left the Museum in a weak position, which was weakened further by the Treasury Minute of 25 February 1858 intimating the funding for 'the reception and exhibition (free) to the public of this rare collection' and for 'a proper staff of officers to manage and take charge of this Museum'; for it ruled that the Board would have to pay out of their own funds the £300 p.a. for running costs and whole-time staff. (The Society continued to have curators and a librarian among its own office-bearers.) The Board did not get their own way entirely over the Royal Academy either, as the Treasury made them responsible for the whole cost of maintenance of the new building, and insisted that the part-time salaried Curator of the National Gallery should be chosen from among the Academicians, thus recognising their special knowledge and their contribution of pictures.

Meantime pressure from Edinburgh, following the foundation in London of museums of industrial art and science because of the success of the Great Exhibition of 1851, resulted in the Industrial Museum of Scotland being established in 1855. It formed part of the Department of Science and Art (at that time under the Board of Trade). Its Director was appointed first Regius Professor of Technology in Edinburgh University, and the University gave to the Department its Natural History Museum, by then very important; to this a large part of the Royal Society's Museum, excluding geology, was added in 1859. After the Department had been transferred from Trade to Education, Parliament in 1858 voted money for a new building which would house both its Museums, combined in 1864 under the name of the Edinburgh Museum of Science and Art — now the Royal Scottish Museum.

As fostering art in industry had been one of the important functions of the Board of Manufactures and the original purpose of its School of Design, it was logical that in 1858 the School should be placed under the central control of the Department. The arrangements for the National Gallery and for the Museum were not disturbed, one reason presumably being that to collect and exhibit pictures and antiquities

was not considered part of education in the same sense as the School and the other Museum, perhaps because connoisseurship rather than training was involved. Probably also it seemed natural to the Treasury for administration in Edinburgh to be like that in London, for the Industrial Museum within a Government Department and for the National Gallery under Trustees. The British Museum, under Trustees, included a Department of Antiquities (so called since 1833). As none of the Government's museums in London, other than the Gallery, was called National, and as the Industrial Museum in Edinburgh was in that sense no less national than the Museum of Antiquities — for which another possible name, 'Museum of National Antiquities', may have been thought unduly restrictive, considering its sizeable foreign element — the plain-jane name was probably not due to discrimination by the Board, but rather to adherence to precedents in what had become a complex situation. The Antiquaries' self-assertive alternatives were unfortunate but understandable.

It was not back to the series of small rooms at the sides of the Royal Institution, where the building was divided into two floors, that the Museum and library moved in 1859, though this was the intention in 1851. They were allotted the three lofty principal rooms along the centre, entered from the pillared portico on Princes Street and across the entrance hall; there the Board's porter took sticks and umbrellas at one penny each, and on some days sixpences for entry, and supervised the Museum's turnstile. The Royal Institution no longer used the building called after it, and by 1860 existed only nominally. The Board's School of Design remained on the East side with its Statue Gallery, upstairs above the Board's offices. The Royal Society, on the West, had a side door of its own. From the entrance hall one went straight into the Museum's first room, an octagon 29 feet each way and 18 feet up to the cornice. (The present long flight of steps leading up to pairs of large rooms the full width of the building, above smaller rooms partly below ground level, all date from the total interior reconstruction in 1909.) In line with the octagon there was an octagonal gallery of the same breadth but 62 feet long. This was followed by another octagon. Above the cornice a high coved ceiling rose to central rooflights from which there hung gas chandeliers, so that all of the wall-space was usable for exhibits as well as the 3,240 sq. feet of floor-space. After considerable argument the height of the wall-cases, modelled on those of the British Museum, was fixed at 10½ feet. They were entirely of wood rather than partly metal, as would have been

preferred but for cost. Floor-cases were added over several years. The further octagon was fitted for the library with book-shelves and a gallery. It was also the hall where the Society normally met, though on special occasions the Royal Society allowed the use of its hall. The library was also the office, with stationery cupboards by the fireplace, and a safe into which trays of coins and other precious exhibits were moved at night. The general ventilation of the Museum and its hot-water heating was unsatisfactory and was examined by a member of the Council's museum sub-committee, Thomas Stevenson, R. L. S.'s father.

As Keeper, with a salary of £150 p.a. from January 1859, the Council appointed William Thomson M'Culloch, a former apprentice of David Laing's, who had become librarian of the Edinburgh Subscription Library, then in the same building in George Street as the Society, and so had been able to do occasional clerical work for it, with the office of assistant librarian in 1849. He helped in arranging and preparing articles in the Museum for exhibition, and in copying and making facsimiles, 'having always had a turn for mechanical contrivances'. After appointment he continued in his own time to be assistant secretary and librarian of the School of Arts, as well as to do some additional work for the Society, paid from its own funds. He sometimes gave popular lectures on Edinburgh, illustrated by photographs from old drawings and engravings 'exhibited by oxy-hydrogen light'. His thorough history of *The Maiden* was published posthumously in the *Proceedings* (1867-68). From May 1859 one Robert Paul, paid £50 p.a., was his assistant, with duties ranging from lighting fires and stoves, dusting and carpentry, to arranging objects. There was also a cleaner at £10; other expenses such as heating and lighting and taxes were estimated at £90.

A considerable committee was concerned with the arrangement, and with considering a report by the Keeper on the many objects of natural history and spurious antiquities not suitable for the purposes of the Society. (It was not minuted what these things were, nor what happened to them.) The committee included J. M. Mitchell, James Drummond, J. A. Smith, Joseph Robertson as librarian, and Cosmo Innes. Advice, which was largely followed, was sent by A. H. Rhind, recently elected an Honorary Fellow at the age of 24. The office of curator of coins was filled again, after George Sim WS joined the Society in 1860 and undertook the rearrangement of the Scottish and English coins.

Details of the arrangement are given in the catalogue published in 1863, after considerable rearrangement and completion of labelling. This was briefer in its entries than that of 1849, and unillustrated. Two thousand copies were printed, and another thousand in a revision about 1866. The plan which it records may be said to be in some ways more old-fashioned than that devised by Daniel Wilson. Instead of placing foremost their speciality the Scottish antiquities (which Wilson in 1851 had claimed to be much greater in extent and value than the native antiquities in the British Museum), they gave pride of place to Egypt, and to the classical, Indian, and other foreign exhibits, as in London though on a far smaller scale. The reason was partly the accident that the smaller room suitable for them had to come first, but principally the recent acceptance of A. H. Rhind's collection from his excavations at Thebes in Egypt, where he had gone from Caithness for the sake of his health. It numbered over 600 items of many kinds, ever-popular mummies as well as important papyri. Significantly, Rhind discussed the use of bronze and iron in Egypt and its 'relevance to general archaeology' in a paper read to the Society.

When it came to the large room — British Antiquities etc — the catalogue abandoned the attempt to separate Stone and Bronze Periods. As a principle that could be applied to Scotland it had met with considerable disagreement within the Society, and Wilson's great collection of the available information in his *Archaeology and Prehistoric Annals of Scotland* (1851) had not managed to make it clear. (His wish to be comprehensive and his use of comparisons led him to be discursive, and to include linguistic and historical evidence, and racial concepts, under the broad umbrella of archaeology.) So the hazardous word Celtic, previously applied to all the prehistoric material, had been dropped entirely, and Anglo-Saxon very nearly; only the Romans were left to link early antiquities with history. However the new arrangement was, very patchily, chronological clockwise round the room. Several useful innovations were made. There was a more detailed classification of objects by type, the foreign and ethnographical parallels being placed alongside the Scottish. With this went a tentative beginning to the Museum's individual system of class-letters and numbers, rather like modern car-registration numbers. Stone objects came first in the wall-cases, though it was thought that the battle-axes and hammers could scarcely have been bored for their handles except by iron. Flints occupied one of the floor-cases; very soon they included two

implements out of the Somme gravels from Joseph Prestwich, who with John Evans had authenticated their geological age only a few months before, the event that, with the publication of the *Origin of Species*, made 1859 an *annus mirabilis* in human studies. A small section was called 'Articles found in "Picts' Houses", Crannoges, Tumuli etc', noteworthy as the start of identifying and exhibiting settlement sites — but the intrusion of burials into domestic ruins and the presence of domestic refuse in burial chambers, as well as the minute size of the sample as yet examined, led inevitably to confusion. This was followed by another new grouping, sepulchral remains — skulls, urns with associated finds, iron objects from graves — which came before Bronze Implements etc. The splendid collection of gold, silver and bronze personal ornaments, prehistoric to Norse, was shown in the second floor-case.

Sculptured stones formed a considerable group, for in addition to originals the series of casts was growing, related to Stuart's corpus of early *Sculptured Stones* of which volume II was still to be published (1867); some were made by Henry Laing, cataloguer of Scottish seals. J. Y. Simpson gave casts of Scottish early Christian inscriptions, and various striking new discoveries were brought to public notice in the same way; the tomb-shrine at St Andrews (early ninth century), the Govan sarcophagus (c 1000), and the runic inscriptions in Maeshowe, Orkney (eleventh century). This didactic use of copies was also normal at South Kensington, but in contrast the British Museum was specifically opposed to casts. Next came medieval and later stone carving, much of it from Edinburgh owing to Daniel Wilson's activities; the casts of carvings from Trinity College featured in 1849 had, however, all but one been removed.

With a wide range of Romano-British items from sites in England as well as Scotland there was now a good series of Roman inscriptions and some sculpture. The more adequate space becoming available had induced Sir George Clerk of Penicuik to give three altars and statue-bases, a relief of Brigantia and other carvings, collected in the early eighteenth century by Sir John Clerk from the Walls of Hadrian and Antoninus, and from Birrens in Dumfriesshire. The Advocates had already passed on two altars from Newstead and Cramond.

The main range of medieval and later exhibits was grouped by subject, subdivided more than before, though 'Jacobite relics' were no longer a group. The small amount of costume started with the academic gown worn by Alexander Henderson in mid-seventeenth

century and ended with Sir Walter Scott's volunteer helmet. The Maiden and several small cannon stood out on the floor. The floor-cases must have been quite large, for the third held finger-rings, brooches, watches, charms and so on, as well as over thirty seal-matrices, notably the beautiful twelfth century seal of Brechin Cathedral and the Privy Council's recent gift of the silver matrices of the Scottish Great Seal of George III (used for the Society's Charter), and the quarter-seal of William IV. The fourth floor-case had series of coins, Anglo-Saxon, Scottish and English, tradesmen's tokens, royal and miscellaneous historical medals. Weights and balances, and no less than 128 dies for striking the coins of Charles II received newly from the Exchequer, were in a wall-case. On the end wall to the right of the entrance a subdivided case exhibited weapons, ecclesiastical items including finds from bishops' graves in Orkney, Ross-shire and Glasgow, a cast of the skull of king Robert Bruce, and a domestic miscellany. The larger 'iron weapons' and armour, flags, wood carvings, 'horns and skulls of animals', portraits, paintings including seventeenth-century panels, and two copies of the National Covenant of 1638, were arranged round the walls, beginning above the stone axes. This room thus contained a remarkably wide-ranging, truly national and for its time comprehensive exhibition, in which ancient and recent past were not arbitrarily cut off from one another. For general information there were only the headings in the catalogue, but its preface claimed 'each Article in the Museum has a label, stating the place where, and date when found, also by whom presented' — an ambition that has persisted. It was all no doubt rather like the photographs of thirty years later (pl. 2-3), only less crowded.

The preface of the catalogue also carried a notice about 'Treasure Trove etc, appertaining to the Crown', dated January 1859:

The Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury having been pleased to authorise payment to finders of ancient coins, gold or silver ornaments, or other relics of antiquity in Scotland, of the actual value of the articles, on the same being delivered up for behoof of the Crown, I now give notice to all persons who shall hereafter make discoveries of any such articles, that on their delivering them, on behalf of the Crown, up to the Sheriffs of the respective counties in which the discoveries may take place, they will receive, through this department, rewards equal in amount to the full intrinsic value of the articles.

John Henderson, Q. & L.T.R.

This was repeated in the Society's eleven-page letter, illustrated with woodcuts from the *Proceedings*, sent to the Schoolmasters of Scotland

in 1860 — a distant predecessor of schools' broadcasts, probably inspired by Danish success in enlisting teachers' help in rescuing and recording national antiquities. Three thousand five hundred copies were printed. The Exchequer also circulated its notice, not only to Procurators Fiscal but to be put up in all post offices in Scotland. Evidently proposals discussed by a deputation from the Society with the Lord Advocate in 1847 had been fully accepted at last. Over the next twenty-five years in particular, this move to a positive and equitable use of the common law of Scotland, which differs widely from the narrower version which is the law of England, resulted in finds of many kinds being added to the national collections. As coins of base metal were an important part of Scotland's currency from much earlier than in England, it was fortunate that those, as well as the pots that contained hoards, could be included in 'treasure trove etc'. After 1858 the Museum was normally given first choice because of its new status; coins not selected were returned to the finders, as is still the case, and so increasingly reached collectors rather than the melting pot. One of the most important hoards known in Scotland came just in time for the re-opening, the treasure of Norse tenth-century silver ornaments and coins found in 1858 at Skail in Orkney, mostly secured through the exertions of George Petrie, who persuaded 'the finders to rely on the recent enactment' on rewards.

The re-opening address was given on 23 December 1859 by Lord Neaves, of the Court of Session, to an invited audience of three hundred ladies and gentlemen, among them representatives of public bodies, in the hall of the Royal Society. They then moved to inspect the Museum and its library, where tea and coffee were served. It was much less grand than the opening of the National Gallery and Royal Scottish Academy with two military bands, but an enormous step forward not only from George Street but from the earlier circumstances at The Mound.

The most obvious result was the rapid increase in visitors. The attendances averaging under 20,000 in the late 1850s, and in the smaller rooms at The Mound in the early 1840s, became almost 80,000 in the first complete twelve months in 1860-61. They averaged nearly 88,000 for the next five years. The public opening days soon became Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday 10.0 a.m. to 4.0 p.m. and Saturday evening 7.0 to 9.0. On Thursday and Friday, to match the National Gallery's copying days, admission cost sixpence, except for design students, members of the Antiquaries and friends introduced personally; as this

was extra opening, and the money did not go to the Government, it was not held to violate the condition of free exhibition. (That, incidentally, though only one word in brackets in the Treasury Minute of 1858, was considered to be a sufficient impediment to change to require removal by Statutory Order following the Museums and Galleries Charges Act (1972), which was soon repealed.) Some 2% of visitors came on paying days, providing in 1861 £45 for purchases of books, coins and relics, and 10% on Saturdays — August attendances were much higher than other months except January, around 20% of the total in each case; on public holidays, New Year in particular, barriers had to be erected outside the front of the building to control the crowds. In George Street 1,330 visitors had been recorded in 1851 on New Year's Day, but in 1873 there were 11,271 to Museum and Statue Gallery. The cocoa-matting on the Museum floor had not been intended for such hard wear, and in 1864 was replaced by Kamptolicon (a predecessor of linoleum). During each November the Museum was shut for cleaning, rearrangement and other work; until 1864 this was also the only chance the Keeper had for a holiday.

A short annual report was sent to the Board for the Treasury from November 1860 onwards, and printed as part of the Society's annual general meeting in the *Proceedings* until 1907. It included the monthly attendance figures, number of items donated and purchased for the Museum and library, and mention of the principal donors and their gifts.

The late 1850s and 1860s saw the spade and pickaxe being accepted as, in J. Y. Simpson's words, 'indispensable aids to some forms of archaeology', 'quickened with the life and energy of the nineteenth century'. The results were not as spectacular as those in foreign lands, but they provided factual evidence, with relics that would in due course yield relative dates. They revealed the remarkable masonry as well as the later runes at Maeshowe, the full plan of the Callanish stones in Lewis, the early Christian cemetery at the Catstane near Edinburgh, and the grave of James III at Cambuskenneth Abbey, all without small finds for the Museum. More productively for it they uncovered the plans and contents of broch sites, not only in the counties of greatest concentration, Orkney, Caithness and Sutherland where work was stimulated by a £400 fund from Rhind's bequest, as reported in a series of papers in *Archaeologia Scotica* V.2 in 1874. Isolated brochs were cleared out near Stirling, near Dundee and in Berwickshire, and similar finds recovered from underground chambers in Forfarshire. The per-

plexing houses at Skara Brae in Orkney produced a quantity of stone and bone objects, many of which also seemed comparable. A major part of the finds from these widespread excavations came to be preserved in the Museum. Canon Greenwell's incursion into Argyll, however, lost Scotland the finest (neolithic) pot recovered from a chambered tomb, and finds from some of those in Caithness were lost entirely by the Anthropological Society of London. The uncertainty of local custody was underlined by the sale of Kirkwall Museum in 1862; its archaeological portion was fortunately rescued by an Orcadian landowner, and entrusted to the national collection.

Awareness of what was being done in Europe helped to direct enquiry. Samples of animal, bird, fish and molluscan remains, named by species as far as possible, figured prominently among the excavated material given to the Museum as listed in the reports. Bits of reindeer antler identified among broch fauna and stray finds in Scotland were discussed by J. A. Smith when a number of other objects were received in 1869 from Lartet and Christy's excavations in the Dordogne cave of *l'âge du renne*. He followed this with a series of papers on elk, cattle and other animals. A report on Dowalton loch in Galloway (1865) was accompanied by a paper by John Stuart on Scottish and Irish crannogs of Roman and later date, with comments from Dr Keller in Zürich, an Honorary Fellow, contrasting their construction with that of the Swiss lake dwellings.

Despite an instruction to Fiscals from the Exchequer in 1847 specifically on finds from railway construction sites — following the loss of a 4½ foot gold torc discovered near Edinburgh (fortunately represented by a replica) — only a few things were recovered officially and given in 1864: a cinerary urn from Banff, a spearhead from Hawick, and a silver-inlaid sword from Morayshire. Later a fine gold lunula (early bronze age) was also recovered from the Strathspey line, apparently from the spot where a grave was found in 1863 containing large gold ear-ornaments, one of which was accidentally rescued from a jeweller in Aberdeen. A few Roman finds from Castlecary fort on the Antonine Wall cut through in 1841, were given to the Museum by the proprietor ten years later. By then other Roman material had come from railway work at Newstead and part of an alabaster jar from Falkirk. The hoard of Pictish brooches and ornaments unearthed at Rogart in Sutherland in 1868 was dispersed, the two finest being bought by the Museum in 1888.

The Exchequer seems to have been more successful over coin hoards.

Two of them had the added value of dating associated gold, silver and jet ornaments — the still unparalleled group of coins of David I and Stephen, from Bute, and an Edwardian cache from Dumfriesshire. Starting with these and others in 1864, George Sim published hoard reports in the *Proceedings* at intervals for twenty-three years, and selected specimens for the Museum. Two bequests in the 1860s added considerably to the collection, Scottish coins and miscellaneous medals (and other valuables) from W. W. Hay Newton, and from an unknown John Lindsay (living in Perth not Cork) a large number of mainly English and foreign coins, many of them gold. Gifts of lead and white metal communion tokens began a quasi-numismatic collection, of rather limited appeal.

After 1,500 items had been added to the library from the Rhind bequest in 1863, additional shelves, and glazing of the old ones, were approved by the Treasury. Then the weight of exhibits given or promised in the next two years threatened excessive floor-loading. An eight-foot square relief of Assur-nasr-pal II from Layard's excavations at Nimrud, gifted by J. Y. Simpson, had to have support built from the foundations, but was never included in any printed catalogue. Four Roman altars from Birrens, formerly in the C. K. Sharpe collection, were given by Edinburgh University, and about the same time the only Roman milestone from Scotland, long kept in the College from Sir Robert Sibbald's lost seventeenth-century collection, came via the Museum of Science and Art. Two massive granite Pictish symbol stones from Aberdeenshire were bought, and the handsome 1597 pulpit from Parton in Kirkcudbrightshire was donated. Finally the Bell collection of over 1,400 antiquities, mainly Irish but Scottish-owned, was purchased by a special Government grant of £500, and needed further cases. Sanction was given in 1868 for a major reconstruction. The floor in all three rooms was lowered 32 inches 'to its original level' with additional supporting walls. A range of desk-cases was added below the tall wall-cases; the idea of adding a gallery had come to nothing. A hatch was made in the library floor for storage; previously some casts and old benches were kept under part of the Board's premises. Additional gas branches and wall-brackets were fitted. The replaced heating system was less satisfactory than ever.

After this upheaval M'Culloch rearranged the collections 'in an admirable manner' and he was to prepare a new edition of the catalogue, but he died in May 1869. His post was not pensionable, so members of the Society purchased an annuity for his widow and his sister.

Joseph Anderson and a scientific basis for archaeology in Scotland, 1869-91

It was clear that the new Keeper of the Museum ought to be much more than a skilled custodian of the fast-growing collections. The need was for the archaeological finds to be interpreted and organised for study, following the lead not only of Scandinavia and Switzerland but of England. There John Evans, Thurnam and Wollaston Franks were beginning period studies in classification, and since 1851 Franks had been developing in the British Museum a room of British and Medieval Antiquities into a Department (combined with European archaeology and world ethnography). The Council were supremely fortunate in being able to select, from the written applications, Joseph Anderson who, after seven years as teacher in Arbroath and Constantinople, had for eight years edited the *John o'Groats Journal* in Wick. Having excavated chambered cairns in Caithness for the Anthropological Society of London, he had been elected in 1866 a corresponding member of the Antiquaries. (The Society had become more sparing of this form of free membership, using it as a step towards honorary membership for men outside Scotland, and a recognition for particular local field-workers and donors to the Museum; the honorary grade of Lady Associate was instituted in 1869.) Anderson had submitted what Angus Graham in a recent study of his archaeological publications has characterised as clear and logical reports 'quoting English and Continental analogies with great facility'. He had also excavated several brochs for the Society's Rhind fund.

Anderson took post in August 1869. The salary which he accepted was still only £150 p.a. There was one assistant, recently replaced, at £60 plus £20 for cleaning duties. Both posts were un pensioned, unlike those of the Gallery's assistant and the Board's staff other than teachers; the question of what sort of examination should be undergone to obtain the necessary certification by the Civil Service Commission was resolved by the Treasury withdrawing the examination option from what it called the Society's Museum, without comment from the Council. In 1873 the Treasury was persuaded to improve (but out of the Board's funds) the 'very inadequate' salary of the Keeper, to £200. The Society had been supplementing it by up to £60, also making £10 grants for visits to the museums in Dublin and the Scandinavian capitals. The assistant's pay rose to £70; he worked for 47 hours a week and had three weeks' holiday.

When Anderson became also the Society's Assistant Secretary, a new post in 1877, the annual supplement became a firm honorarium. Sooner or later this also involved being editor of the *Proceedings*, which in 1879 changed into a stout annual bound volume, of some 400 pages or more. As the editorship was undertaken by holders of some more formal office it was rarely mentioned, but probably both David Laing and J. A. Smith, certainly active in 1876, continued so more or less until they died in 1878 and 1833. Because of some printing problem David Douglas, a publisher, was in 1874 made 'one of the joint editors'. His predecessor as Treasurer wrote in 1871 that £500 a year was being spent on publication and purchases.

As curator of coins George Sim arranged, in 1872 and subsequently, the transformation of the coin collection. He negotiated the purchase from the Faculty of Advocates of the collection they had bought in 1705 from James Sutherland. The offers accepted were £300 for the Roman, English, Anglo-Saxon and foreign coins and medals, and £500 for those relating to Scotland, among them some extreme rarities (all less £16 8s 0d for items acquired by gift), £33 12s 0d for various gold rings, seal matrices etc, and also £50 for the finely ornamented French cabinet which produced an important sequel in 1881.

To finance this expenditure three members of Council advanced £150 each, and the general fund the balance. Then duplicates were selected from the combined collections, of which that of the Antiquaries probably contributed the largest part, formed as it was from several private collections, treasure trove hoards (not all of which were ever regarded as reclaimable loans), and nearly a hundred years of isolated gifts from which the sale of duplicates had often been proposed. There were two auctions at Dowell's authorised by the Treasury — one in April 1873 of Scottish coins (77 gold, 347 silver, 381 base) with 47 English gold, realised £741; the other in June 1874 included some more gold, much more Scottish base metal, medals, 1150 English silver and nearly 4,000 Roman gold, silver and copper alloy, and came to £428, and this was paid into a separate account for the purchase of coins, medals and numismatic books. The catalogue of the first sale was by Edward Burns, whose offer to catalogue the Scottish collection was also accepted; but he was possibly not consulted over the selection by Sim and Carfrae, the other curator concerned, because coins were sold which he would, later on at least, not have considered to be duplicates, and many more which modern interest in base coinage and minutiae regrets. The solid foundations of that interest were laid during

the next dozen years by Burns, using as the second major source for his *Coinage of Scotland* (published posthumously in 1887) the re-formed Antiquaries' collection, in addition to that of his patron Thomas Coats to whom his purchases at the sales of duplicates probably went. Sim, in editing the second part of Burns's work, acknowledged the help of Joseph Anderson without which it 'might never have been completed'.

Although a proposal in 1867 to move the library through the wall into one of the Royal Society's rooms had been found impracticable, pressure of new accessions (such as half a 45-foot dugout canoe from Kirkcudbrightshire) made extension of the Museum's exhibition into the library's octagon ever more desirable. So the idea was very seriously considered by all concerned in 1875, when the Royal's lease was coming up for renewal. The Antiquaries stated that the collections were now worth at least £150,000, and had been visited in the present premises by nearly one and a half million people. (The 1870-74 yearly average was 118,968 — the public were avid for museums: Science and Art recorded almost 456,000 in 1875). The Royal Society renewed an idea that the Museum should be moved into the Science and Art's buildings being constructed in Chambers Street, mooted in 1868 to a Commission on Science and Art (Ireland) by the Director, who thought it would be economical to absorb the Antiquarian Museum. The main argument against this was that 'to incorporate the National Collection in a section of general antiquities in another institution was calculated to destroy both its scientific value and its public utility, by depriving it of its distinctively national character'. Counsel's opinion was taken on the Societies' rights, and the matter left with the Royal a lasting impression that the Antiquaries had wished to have them turned out of the building. The Board's compromise, that the Antiquaries should have the use of the Royal's tea-room but for their meetings only, was declined as it would not free the octagon from the books.

Though the Keepership of the Museum was to be for many years the only professional archaeological post in Scotland, there was at the time of Anderson's appointment an ambitious scheme for a combined Government inspectorship of ancient monuments and lectureship in archaeology connected with the Antiquaries, to be held by John Stuart at the same rate as his £400 p. a. post in H. M. General Register House. (The regius professorship in connection with the other Museum was not mentioned, but was presumably in mind.) This was submitted to the Treasury over the signatures of office-bearers of the Society headed by the Duke of Buccleuch, supported by a dozen dukes, earls, peers

and MPs, the Lord Provost of Edinburgh, Principals at St Andrews and Aberdeen, Hill Burton, Cosmo Innes and others. But it was effectively still-born and is not mentioned in the *Proceedings*.

Later the Society expressed approval, in 1872, of the general aims of Sir John Lubbock's long series of attempts to get his Ancient Monuments Protection Bill passed. In 1879 they objected strongly, however, in a letter to the Home Secretary signed by the Marquess of Lothian, to the British Museum Trustees' being made responsible for the whole country: moveable sculptured stones such as had been presented to the National Museum came within the scope of the Bill, and the Board of Manufactures would be the proper body for Scotland. In the end neither was made responsible under the rather emasculated Act of 1882, from which special Scottish provision was removed after most Scots MPs had gone home on the Friday when it was debated. Afterwards the Society was occasionally consulted, through the Board, by the inspector for Britain, General Pitt-Rivers.

It had been hoped that the scheme for a lecturer-cum-inspector might anticipate and improve upon the lectureship funded by A. H. Rhind's bequest to the Society, which was still inoperative because of a life-rent on the capital, over £5,000. Rhind had originally intended to found a professorship of archaeology and history in Edinburgh University, but stated in his will in 1862 that because of changes there, including the endowment of a chair of history, he had entrusted the Society with the project. The wide terms of reference for annual courses, open to the public, on archaeology, ethnology, or allied topics, are such that they have attracted many distinguished lecturers, more often than not on subjects relevant to the Museum. For many years the name of the lecturer and his subject followed the list of Council at the beginning of the *Proceedings*.

The first Rhind lecturer in 1876, appointed for three years unlike his successors, was Arthur Mitchell MD, inspector of lunatic asylums, a frequent contributor to the *Proceedings* and to the Museum, and one of the Society's Secretaries — the senior Secretary, John Stuart, had declined because of health and age. Published as *The Past in the Present* (1880), the lectures were a product of the great mid-Victorian debate on evolution and progress. Mitchell took examples of 'neo-archaic' objects, obsolescent and sometimes degenerate survivals from old methods and ways of life, such as the single-stilted plough, the hand-quern, the spindle and whorl and Hebridean pottery, illustrated by what he had collected, and often given to the Museum, or by

Hebridean houses drawn and surveyed by his friend Captain Thomas RN. He was interested in what happened when old and new ways met with users of equal intelligence, in how the rudely chipped stone implements of Shetland were not palaeolithic though older than the brochs, how the primitive was not necessarily ancient, and how one could understand the past by working back from the present. Unlike the great folk-museum movement launched contemporaneously by Hazelius in Sweden, from which country-life studies everywhere have grown, only sporadic collecting resulted from Mitchell's work. Here there were no picturesque survivals (Highland dress apart) to draw a wider public — or Mitchell himself — to take interest and pride in a whole way of life for its own sake; his lectures after the first year went on to propound a philosophy of civilisation.

In complete contrast the Rhind lectures from 1879 to 1882 by Joseph Anderson (in two two-year appointments) were a systematic and concise ordering of the facts of Scottish archaeology, traced backwards in time following Mitchell's precept. They were the result of ten years' study of the Museum's collections and their records (he had re-written the catalogue, published in 1876), of the few excavations he had been able to undertake as Keeper, notably the unusually complete examination of a bronze age cairn at Collessie in Fife, and of some travel and much reading. The first two volumes, *Scotland in Early Christian Times* (1881), dealt with architecture as well as moveables and sculpture, and were stimulated by the Irish material in John Bell's collection as well as by the newly acquired St Fillan's crozier from Canada and St Fillan's bell back from England. The second two, *Scotland in Pagan Times, The Iron Age* (1883) and *The Bronze and Stone Ages* (1886), started with Viking times and formed, as Gordon Childe noted fifty years later, a comprehensive and scientific view of Scottish prehistory such as then existed in no other country. Two of his papers in the *Proceedings* had been as it were preparatory studies: Notes on the evidence of spinning and weaving in the brochs (which followed a notable study by a medical student in 1871, helped by Anderson, Sir William Turner and others, of the physical and practical aspects of long-handled combs and ethnographical examples in the Museum, and elsewhere — the author and illustrator Millen Coughtrey emigrated and was lost to archaeology); and Notes on the relics of the Viking period of the Norsemen in Scotland (1874), which Anderson himself had preceded by editions of the Orkneyinga Saga and of Low's Tour of Orkney and Shetland. He had contributed an earlier paper to a

series on brochs that was published in 1874 (*Archaeologia Scotica* V.1; V.2, pp. 285-364, appeared in 1880). He had also written a family history of the Oliphants. His understanding of artistic craftsmanship and of art history, and of the importance of plentiful good illustrations, had no doubt been fostered by James Drummond, curator of the National Gallery and long one of the Society's curators, whose fine coloured drawings of sixteenth to eighteenth-century Scottish weapons, powder-horns and accessories he edited and annotated for publication (by David Douglas) after Drummond's death in 1877. (Drummond bequeathed his own collection to the Society. His drawings of arms, and of West Highland sculptured monuments later published by the Society, were added by the generosity of over seventy Fellows, as were those of Old Edinburgh in a single gift. The influence of artists in the Council was continued after his death by Fettes Douglas, and by Noël Paton, for long one of the members from the Board.)

Anderson was, in the ground he covered in the lectures, much less ambitious than Wilson in the *Prehistoric Annals*, concentrating on archaeology in the narrower sense of the study of evidence from the material remains, from which a clearly structured view of the past could be formed, made up of ages and periods of indefinite length. The new evidence obtained in the thirty years since Wilson wrote, much of it from excavations, made it possible for Anderson to lay a far more thorough and secure foundation for future workers, both field-workers and users of the Museum's pre-eleventh-century collections. Because he saw no scientific way by which broad periods could be given a quasi-historical chronology, he considered attempts to do so to be un-archaeological guesses, even though he did not doubt that the same processes of change had gone on in prehistoric as in historic centuries. To achieve as clear a view as possible he did not try to bring in either Roman archaeology or fully historic times; he simply omitted some problematic subjects, such as cup-and-ring sculptures (already very fully treated by J. Y. Simpson and Romilly Allen in the *Proceedings*), or Skara Brae where the stone tools and the sophisticated furnished houses, which he described only in a footnote, doubtless seemed hopelessly contradictory, as they did for fifty years more. Having no Old Stone Age in Scotland, as is still the case, he could ignore the controversies on the antiquity of Man. He concentrated strongly on Scottish evidence, and except for Christian art used his knowledge of wider similarities mainly to recognise local peculiarities. These and the nature of the evidence, rooted in its own area, more than justified in his

opinion the call to create and maintain Scotland's 'own school of investigation', with which he concluded this series of Rhind lectures. In stressing the scientific inductive method in archaeology, while avoiding technological and ethnographical theories of progress, he did not fail also to remind his audience of the individual human reality which the dusty evidence represents: 'in the varied phenomena of their burial customs, the preparation of the funeral pile, the fabrication of the finely ornamented urns, and the costly dedication of articles of use or adornment . . . we realise the intensity of their devotion to filial memories and family ties, to hereditary honour and ancestral tradition'.

From 1881 until 1893, when the Coin Cabinet Fund was exhausted, the average annual expenditure on purchases for the Museum (with separate funding for the library) was higher than during the following sixty years. This came about by the sale to a collector, believed to be French, of the Louis XV cabinet that had held the Sutherland collection, after offers unexpectedly received from two quarters had risen from £2,100 to £3,500, the Society's negotiators being Arthur Mitchell and Robert Carfrae. Treasury authorisation was necessary because the cabinet, bought without Government money in 1872, was national property by the terms of the 1851 Conveyance; and the Treasury rejected the Society's suggestion that the Faculty of Advocates should receive for their Library £1,000 of this windfall. (Amends were made when valuable books were gifted to the National Library in 1949.) It was agreed, however, that the Council should use the proceeds for the purchase for the Museum 'of objects, or collections of objects, illustrative of the unwritten history of Scotland'. Money not immediately required was to be invested in the names of the Secretary of the Board of Manufactures and of the Queen's Remembrancer. After the Secretary had challenged payment for Polynesian canoe paddles, the Treasury accepted that such ethnographical items, as well as European prehistoric and later objects, might be bought out of the Fund when suitable for the comparative collection. This was not then a local or outmoded eccentricity, for even forty years later on prehistory and ethnography were taught as one subject at Oxford, as T. D. Kendrick has recalled.

Up to 1881 purchases had mainly been acquired, as we have seen, as gifts from individual Fellows, or from the proceeds of the second sale of coin duplicates, or from pay-day fees. In 1877 payment of 500 dollars (£100) had been made on the Society's behalf to Alexander Dewar for St Fillan's crozier (p. 39), he himself having remitted 200 dollars of the

agreed price, so becoming joint-donor. There are figures for 1879-80 when admissions came to £87 18s 6d, and the museum and library fund was credited with catalogue sales of £26 12s 6d; while purchases exceeded receipts by £28 11s 7d. (The strength of the library was being built up steadily over the years, with attention to foreign books.) The Society's total income, excluding the Rhind bequest, was £770, of which £375 had been spent on publication and £116 on working expenses. The general fund had £1,200 invested.

A purchase committee was appointed in 1881, to meet every Saturday and to consist of the curators, treasurer, librarian and secretaries with a quorum of three, to purchase objects under £100 and to recommend others; and the Keeper might spend up to £5 on his own. Despite the amount available and the average of over £300 spent during the twelve years, small sums predominated and quantity rather than quality. There were a few notable exceptions: the eighth-century Hunterston brooch, still the finest goldsmith work in the Museum, for which £500 was paid in 1891; the two rather later Rogart brooches (£200) and eleven of the Lewis chessmen (£105). These last were bought at auction for less than half the expected sum, and other prices for important pieces were also relatively low, such as the unique enamelled Romano-British patera from West Lothian for £15. On the other hand £1,200 was vainly sought from the Government in 1892 for the Arbutnot Missal, which went elsewhere and came to belong to Paisley. A couple of hundred pounds all told was spent on coins, rather lower amounts on foreign prehistoric items, on ethnography and more recent foreign exhibits, on reproductions and casts, and on Scottish prehistoric metal objects, pottery and associated groups, notably the pottery etc from the chambered tomb at Unstan in Orkney (£45); small contributions from what was left of the Rhind Excavation Fund continued to acquire finds from other northern sites. When the Museum at Lerwick was sold up in 1882, £70 was spent on most or all of its exhibits. About £500 went on adding to the medieval and recent collections, particularly the latter — a pair of brass Highland pistols dated 1614 was however declined, while mainly ordinary weapons were acquired; but there was a fine targe for £56 14s 0d, and the finest silver-inlaid basket-hilt for a sword for £7 7s 0d. No provision was made against the possibility that the two medieval harps from Dalguise, deposited on loan in 1880, might be put up for sale.

It was perhaps unfortunate that collections of flint implements, small ornaments and so on, picked up from the coastal sands near Glenluce

in Wigtownshire, and from Morayshire including the Culbin Sands, had been the subject of recent papers and donations. At any rate the existence of the purchase fund stimulated a constant trade from those areas which went on for decades; one man retired to Forres for the purpose, and spent seven years collecting at Culbin. Unassociated flint and stone implements from there and elsewhere in Scotland accounted for about one-third of the Cabinet Fund. The Assistant Keeper visited Culbin in 1890 and published a report of localities and finds, but otherwise as Callander noted in 1911 there was no scientific exploitation or control; the difficulty of so doing except on selected sites was shown in the 1950s by an unsuccessful expedition to Luce Bay from Edinburgh University. Already in 1883 it was a matter of pride to Anderson that 'there is no collection in Europe which at all approaches the Scottish collection of arrowheads and small-sized implements of flint', and no series of polished stone implements that he had seen, unless that of Denmark, exceeded that of Scotland in extent and variety. R. W. Cochran-Patrick reported to the Glasgow Archaeological Society in 1887 that the National Collection of objects of purely national interest comprised: implements and ornaments of stone 25,104, of bronze etc 1,394; sepulchral remains from graves etc 959, domestic remains from hut-circles, brochs, lake-dwellings etc 4,137; ecclesiastical, medieval [and recent] etc 7,107; miscellaneous (for use in comparing etc) [foreign ?] 7,192. By 1892 the printed catalogue summarises 25,000 stone items from Culbin alone, and over 8,000 from Glenluce; as yet little archaeological use has been found for them.

There seem to have been two main weaknesses in Anderson's conception of archaeology. One was this over-emphasis on the accumulation of artefacts, major basis for archaeological knowledge though that certainly was. The reason in his case was probably not the collector's instinct, but rather a reverence for the available evidence; and was thus linked to the second weakness — failure to realise how the science would develop through the further evidence associated with artefacts to be got by close observation and recording particularly in excavations, and by new techniques. The extensive article which he wrote on Archaeology, along with short articles on specific topics, for the *Chambers Encyclopaedia* published in 1895, is valuable as a summary of his mature views, and for showing that, though he went on to treat mostly of prehistoric times, he retained for archaeology an unlimited time-span, and for the Museum Buchan's aim of comparing the past with the present state of Scotland. Three separate extracts are

particularly relevant to us:

History deals with events and incidents as manifestations of human motive and action; archaeology deals with types and systems as expressions of human culture and civilisation. The archaeology of a historic period may be capable of illustrating and supplementing the records of contemporary historians by disclosing a multiplicity of unchronicled details relating to the common life of the people, of which we should otherwise be left in ignorance.

The professed antiquary of the 18th century, bound by the tradition of scholarly research, did little in the way of original investigation; but he unconsciously laid the foundation of the science by his passion for collecting.

The basis of all scientific knowledge of archaeology in every national area must be such a general collection of the remains of its human occupation as will be completely representative of all the various manifestations that have characterised the progress of its people towards the existing culture and civilisation. . . . As the scientific knowledge disclosed by the national collection [of monuments and relics of the progress and development of the national culture] must necessarily increase in precision and value according to the nearness of the approach of the collection to a thoroughly exhaustive representation, the science must be progressive in its results . . . When the several national collections have reached the stage of representative completeness, a new departure of the science in the direction first of comparative archaeology, and secondly of general archaeology, will become possible.

As Anderson finished his Rhind lectures an Ayrshire doctor, Robert Munro, who had been excavating three crannogs there, published his reports in a book, *Ancient Scottish Lake-Dwellings* (1882), and, Anderson commented, 'systematised the whole subject in a manner that leaves nothing to be desired'. The finds from his first excavation are preserved in Kilmarnock Museum, but those from the others, notably the post-Roman site at Buston, were given to the national collection, which already had among its comparative material several hundred items from the very different Swiss sites. Munro retired early from medical practice and became one of the Secretaries of the Society. He boldly turned to comparative archaeology, and in the remarkably wide-ranging *Lake Dwellings of Europe* (1890 — the Rhind lectures for 1888) founded the important tradition of international prehistoric archaeology in Edinburgh.

The Move to Queen Street, 1883-91

The complicated crisis which resulted in the Museum being moved into the building which still houses it in Queen Street took place in 1883

and 1884. It was initiated by the Board of Manufactures who wished more space, to begin with for the School of Art, as in 1844, and the Museum's needs took second place to the similar needs of others. By then it was the Council's view that the Museum's accommodation in the Royal Institution had been 'for years past quite unsuitable for the public exhibition of the collections', even if it might 'for some time serve its present purpose as a store-house'—there was only a small amount of true storage, in an unventilated inaccessible cellar. It was said that the 2,500 square feet of the Museum contained 50,000 objects, 20,300 (mainly very small) added in the previous three years. Large objects in the passage-ways rendered one side of the show-cases inaccessible to the public, boxes were packed under the desk-cases and classified objects were heaped on one another. The Council's priorities put increasing and preserving the collections ahead of exhibition, even with an annual average of 110,000 visitors over the past ten years; it is not surprising that this fell to 80,000 at the end of the eighties.

From the Antiquaries' minutes it might appear that the trouble began over security. The Council represented to the Board that the Museum was insufficiently protected from fire and burglary, in a building which had a score of open fires and two caretakers housed in the south end as the only overnight protection. The Board's Secretary replied that fire-extinguishers had been introduced as recommended by the city's fire-master, and asked for suggestions on protection from house-breaking. When the Council made none he wrote that the Board 'disclaim all responsibility for the safe custody of the collection of antiquities, which is entrusted to the exclusive charge and custody of the Society' (March 1883). This extraordinary statement was countered by a long letter signed by the Marquess of Lothian as President of the Society, and by the two Secretaries, one the recently appointed J. R. Findlay, proprietor of the *Scotsman*. When on police advice a night-watchman was appointed, the Treasury refused to pay the Board for him. The Society agreed in a conciliatory gesture to contribute one-third of his wage for the first six months, but the responsibility was still not fixed. By then even wider issues had overtaken the matter.

The School of Art, it will be remembered, while administered by the Board, came under the Department of Science and Art of which the Museum in Chambers Street was part, and which was within the Home Office's remit. The Board's minutes show that in January 1882 a letter to the Treasury from the Secretary of State of the Home Office had strongly advocated the move of the School to the Industrial Museum,

'on the ground that the room in the Royal Institution now occupied by the Art School could be used for giving increased accommodation to the Museum of Antiquities'. A new factor appeared in the autumn. When in 1879 Laing had bequeathed to the Society twenty-six historical portraits it was in the hope that, along with its earlier miscellaneous acquisitions, they would become the start of a national portrait collection. Following this idea but not bringing in the Society, an anonymous donor offered to give £10,000 to help finance a Scottish National Portrait Gallery, if the Board would found it and the Government would match his gift. Both these matters must then have been discussed unofficially, along with the Board's probable attitudes, such as fear that its control over the School might be lessened. At any rate in June 1883 the Treasury officially proposed that the School of Art should be moved — but alternatively asked, 'if the Board oppose a move by the School, would the Museum of Antiquities not be transferred [the idea already floated in 1868 and 1873]; and if so room might be found in the Royal Institution for the Scottish Historical Portrait Gallery which there is now a prospect of founding'. In July the Board's Committee on the School of Art rejected any move by it, giving no very strong reasons, and the alternative was put to the Antiquaries.

They replied that because of the 'apparent difficulty of attaining any more suitable arrangement and *in view of the other interests involved*' (my italics), they 'may feel themselves compelled to acquiesce in the proposal'. All the conditions mentioned in the Treasury Minute of 1851 must however remain in force, including the mutual relations between them and the Board. Four or five times the space occupied in the Royal Institution was needed. By October plans from the Office of Works of what was proposed in the front block of new (west) wing of the Museum of Science and Art were found totally unsatisfactory. Situated on the second and upper floors, the exhibition space was to be 6665 square feet, rather over two and a half times that on The Mound, but three and a half was needed without provision for the future, and windows instead of roof-lights seriously reduced wall-space. The library and meeting-hall was to be 941 square feet, compared with 738, but, having windows and not much more than half the height, it would not accommodate the collection as it stood, in wall-shelves with a gallery. Access was poor, there was no workroom, no accessible storage, and so on. 'The proposal, to store the priceless National Collection of Antiquities in two small upper floors of a building in which these floors probably represent about one-fiftieth part, would be

in a national sense discreditable.' Though told that only minor changes would be possible, the Council ventured 'to suggest that if the whole west wing of the front block were separated from the other portions of the Industrial Museum building by solid party walls rising from the foundations through the roof, and provided with adequate entrances, it would not be difficult to make the internal arrangements such as would meet the requirements of the National Museum and of the Society'.

The Board then recommended to the Treasury 'favourable consideration of the Council's objections'; they also objected to having to pay for the removal of the Museum from their own funds; and they set up a Portrait Gallery Committee, including several Trustees who happened to be on the Antiquaries' Council, Fettes Douglas, Noël Paton and J. R. Findlay. The Treasury, having agreed to provide the matching £10,000, formally agreed to the scheme for founding the Portrait Gallery to be housed in the Royal Institution; and stated that it was not practical to consider removal costs until the Society had accepted the proposals without serious modification; if the Board persuaded them, there would be no difficulty over costs. In November, the Society strengthened its Council by adding Lord Rosebery to the vice-presidents Arthur Mitchell and the Earl of Stair, and by making R. W. Cochran-Patrick MP Secretary along with J. R. Findlay. The Board's representatives on the Council through all this were Noël Paton and Francis Abbott, Secretary of the Post Office in Scotland. The Queen's Remembrancer J. J. Reid was a councillor as an individual.

By February 1884 the Treasury admitted that the space offered the Museum was somewhat less than might naturally be desired. However, more would be unjust to the other Museum, and rejection of the offer would imperil the foundation of the new Gallery. The Council still objected, and protested at the failure of the Office of Works architect to appreciate information given him, and his partiality to the Museum of Industry. So the Board resolved that the Museum of Antiquities should be removed to the Industrial Museum, its representatives on the Council dissenting.

Three months elapsed before the Society finally declined to move. The day before its letter was sent, a conditional offer was made to the Board, passed on to the Treasury on 11th June:

The Gentleman who formerly made a gift to the Board of Manufactures to aid in the establishment of a National Portrait Gallery for Scotland, has now very generously proposed to give the sum of £20,000 for the purpose of building or

acquiring premises for the accommodation both of the National Portrait Gallery and the Museum of Antiquities.

The offer is made with the desire to provide a separate building for the Portrait Gallery, and also under the impression that his former gift has indirectly had the effect of prejudicing the Society of Antiquaries as the custodian of the Museum of Antiquities, and with the desire that they should be provided with better accommodation than they are to obtain in the new wing of the Industrial Museum, Edinburgh.

The Board recommended the offer 'because of the advantages to the School of Art as well as to the Museum'. A central site had unexpectedly come on the market for £7,500 and the Board were prepared to use £2,500 of the capital they had earmarked for the School of Art. The Treasury approved, and agreed to provide the necessary £5,000.

In December the Board sent the preliminary plans of the building to the Council, which noted that 'the eastern wall of the central block divides the two collections from basement to roof . . . The only thing in common . . . is the central entrance from Queen Street'. A committee under the President, with Findlay as Secretary, received the idea with much satisfaction and approved generally the plans and elevations, followed by the Council. Some practical suggestions were made, such as that the front and back galleries should have their floors at the same level and that they should be joined by wide archways instead of small doorways, and that as the Board were unfortunately unable to cover the full extent of the ground, temporarily closed archways at the end should allow expansion. These improvements were made, the eastern extension being built before the building was finished, so allowing for a Council room separate from the library cum meeting hall, for work-rooms in a mezzanine, and for strong rooms. The proposed coin room opening out of one of these never materialised; it was made the chief officer's room.

From 1885 the Board, instead of dealing directly with the Treasury, came under the new Scottish Office and Secretary for Scotland. Before long Lord Lothian, the Society's President, was holding that office, and Findlay as the Society's Secretary was writing to him officially about improving the finances of the Museum for the time it would enter its new premises. The value of the Museum and Library, he stated, could not be less than £200,000, yet 'it may be safely asserted that no other national Museum in this or any other country has ever been acquired on such easy terms by the nation; or has received such scant support from national funds'. For not only were the new building and its

contents a free gift to the country, but even the cost of providing for the Museum in the Royal Institution (£4,410) and salaries and other costs at £410 p.a. had been provided out of the Board's own Scottish funds — not out of Imperial Funds like those in London and Dublin. This was fully set out in an enclosed article from the *Scotsman* (12.3.87), which also dealt with the history of the National Gallery, treated only somewhat better. (The theme was repeated in the newspaper in April 1890 and February 1906.)

A salary of £400-£500 was asked for the Keeper (unpensioned), compared with the £300-£500 (pensioned) of the Keeper of Natural History in Chambers Street, and the £500 starting point of an Assistant Keeper in the two British Museums. For the Assistant Keeper £250 was suggested. An annual purchase grant of £500 was also requested, making a total budget of £1,700. Even with friends in office (and the Scottish Office confirmation was signed by R. W. Cochran-Patrick), approval in 1891 was only for £860, the Treasury adding £450 to the Board's enforced commitment. This allowed for just three attendants, with army pensions, for four rooms, so the Society had to pay for the man in the library, who also acted as clerk. The new Assistant Keeper, George F. Black, was to act as relief attendant and be paid £100; he had for some years been 'extra man' paid by the Society, and was appointed by the Board in 1891 on the Council's nomination, confirmed by the Secretary for Scotland in accordance with a new procedure. Anderson was to get £400. There was no purchase grant, but the possibility of special grants was confirmed.

Consultations with the city's chief constable resulted in the magistrates providing two policemen, one at a time, for night duty in the building, with a tell-tale clock for rounds. (Police watchmen, paid for by the Board, were not finally withdrawn till the Second World War.) The Council demurred at having stanchions on all the ground floor windows, preferring a telephone to the police and fire brigade. As the question of responsibility remained unsettled, the Society consulted their law agents about insuring the collections vested in the Board, and were advised it might be prudent to do so. They decided, however, to insure only the library, and curved and plate glass case tops; the Board repaid for these at last.

Suspension of work on the Museum's half of the building for some eighteen months, causing extra costs and difficulties with the contractors, and a question in Parliament, was mainly due to a dispute between the Board and the Treasury. When the sums gifted by the

anonymous donor (increased by £12,000 for the extensions at either end) were all exceeded by the rising costs, the Board were prepared to pay from their own funds for the finishing work on the Portrait Gallery, but not for the Museum's half. This they, and the Society, considered to be the Treasury's responsibility, as undertaken in 1851 though then forced on the Board to implement, and as implicit in the proposed move to Chambers Street. The Treasury in February 1888 accepted furniture and moveable fittings, but refused to meet painting, heating, lighting, fire appliances, hydraulic lift and motor. The Society prepared a memorandum of protest detailing the terms of the Conveyance and the Treasury Minutes, to brief T. R. Buchanan, MP for Edinburgh, and circulated it in July to all Scottish MPs.

The Board offered to advance £528 to allow some work on the two sides to be continued as one operation, but the Lord Advocate advised the Secretary for Scotland that they could not use their own funds for the Museum building even as a loan, as their powers were limited to the improvement of education in the fine arts. (This would have made all their expenditure on the Museum *ultra vires*, and three years later the Scottish Office pointed out that decorative and ornamental arts, and taste and design in manufactures, were also specified in their Act, so the Museum was covered.) When the Advocate's advice was fresh, however, the Secretary of the Board, accompanied by Cochran-Patrick, discussed the matter in July 1888 in London with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, without progress. Scottish pressure, and a £500 contribution by the Board 'towards removing misunderstanding', led the Treasury to compromise in March and insert in the Estimates £1,550 for structural fittings (£150 less than it had originally refused, and now not allowing for electric light or a lift, or apparently any lighting at all in the exhibition galleries); the Office of Works would get £1,700 for furniture with a further £1,500 in 1890-91. Removal costs of £700 were also allowed. The building, like those at The Mound, was to be owned and maintained by the Board, who dropped their attempt to have the maintenance of the interior of the Museum accepted by the Treasury. For a while they did pursue efforts to stop paying the £410 'contribution' to salaries and running costs of the Museum, even it was said to the length of threatening to close it.

The Treasury finance to restart work on the Museum came in time to allow a good face to be put on things by Lord Lothian when as Secretary for Scotland he took the chair and opened the Portrait Gallery on 15 July 1889. The Board's Chairman, Lord Justice-General

Inglis, paid tribute to Lord Buchan, his correspondence with Lord Hailes already in 1778, and to Carlyle and David Laing, and noted that the present Donor had not proposed that the Society should undertake the Portrait Gallery because it would require the influence and means of the Board, who possessed apartments most suitable for the purpose. Unfortunately they were occupied by the Museum; when a solution could not be found, the Donor had undertaken to house both. Owing to rising estimates this had now cost him £50,000, without any statues, which it was hoped others would give. (He later added another £10,000 'for decoration'.)

The Donor was then revealed as J. R. Findlay. He gave his own account of the foundation, and in conclusion referred to the fight against the proposal 'to shunt the Society and its collections to a pendicle of the Museum of Science and Art'; and he described the association of Museum and Portrait Gallery in one building as peculiarly felicitous, because the two collections would be mutually illustrative.

While the rearrangement of the collections was being planned for the new building, the Society, like several other bodies, benefited from a gift, soon increased to an endowment, by R. H. Gunning MD, in honour of the Queen's Jubilee in 1887. In this case it was specifically for travel, in order to study or research in other archaeological museums or collections. In the first year Anderson visited fourteen museums in Scotland and Black eighteen. Their report published in the *Proceedings* comprises catalogues of those collections, which for many are the best record of what was in them; the conclusion was that 'if all the collections of the local museums were brought together they would fail to produce the materials for a systematic archaeology of Scotland'. In 1889 Anderson broadened his background still further by going to Mainz, Paris and on to north Italy, and published summaries of what he saw in sixteen museums in Switzerland and twelve in Italy.

As a source of additions to the Museum, Treasure Trove and its practical problems were being considered. In a printed memorandum for the Council in May 1890, the Secretaries listed what had been received from the Exchequer since 1808, quoted in full previous circulars issued by the Remembrancer, and summarised the procedures in Ireland and Scandinavia. They discussed defects, difficulties and uncertainties that prevented the National Museum's benefiting fully from the law of Scotland. They pointed out that the intervention of the police and Fiscals associated the system with 'the popular odium

attached to the criminal department', as Anderson wrote in a companion article in the *Scotsman*. They proposed that the Museum should be given a regular grant, and authority to receive finds and administer payments, as the Royal Irish Academy did (and the British Museum subsequently), while the Crown's claim could still be enforced if finds were withheld or misappropriated. In practice a sort of compromise took place, the Museum being allowed to purchase most finds offered it. This was reinforced by an opinion of the Crown law-officers in 1907, that the Crown's right to all finds was not prejudiced by not being exercised, in particular by failure to claim what was of small value.

Before leaving The Mound, the Society issued in 1890 the final part of *Archaeologia Scotica* (V.3). There were only two papers, on the Duns of the Outer Hebrides and on King's College, Aberdeen, besides a donation list of 79 pages, filling the gap from 1830 to 1851, when lists began in the *Proceedings*.

The rooms in the Royal Institution were emptied from November 1890. The arrangement in the new building can be rather generally deduced from the information about location given in the catalogue compiled by Anderson and Black, published by the Society in 1892 — splendid value, nearly 400 pages and 650 woodcuts, 5,000 copies in paper covers at one shilling (cost price £216), boards and larger paper 500 at half-a-crown. The classification is very detailed for the prehistoric collections, and for comparable stone and bone artefacts from elsewhere, keeping together finds from important sites. Yet some of the headings (each with a two-letter prefix to the number) which applied to recent Scotland embraced a great variety of objects, such as MP 'Tools, Implements and Miscellaneous'. Most of the ethnographical and foreign collections, coins, medals, and unexhibited manuscripts got little or no mention. Things collected from countries other than Scotland were all exhibited in the large roof-lit room on the second floor, with a few exceptions — medals, seals and armour.

On the first floor, allotted to prehistoric times, no periods or ages were explicit, and everything was 'in the shop window'; there were no drawers or cupboards. Cases in the southern half of the gallery started with the contents of chambered tombs followed by bronze objects typologically arranged, bronze cauldrons with iron hoards, Celtic bells and crannog finds; classified flints were at either end and in the window recesses. In the other half there were similarly the various types of pottery and associated objects from graves, the great

collection of surface finds from the Culbin Sands at one end, with Early Celtic metalwork adjacent, and finds from domestic sites in the windows. At the other end were large cases of stone axes and more flints, but also prehistoric goldwork and post-Roman ornaments and through the archway foreign gold (all for easy removal each night), Viking grave-finds and early church croziers; in the rest of the extension were the excavated finds from brochs and caves, and stone urns.

The historical gallery was (and to a considerable extent has remained for ninety years) basically divided into domestic things in the southern part, and in the larger northern part a sequence of topics — sculptured stones and casts from early Christian to medieval West Highland, 150 items, within the box-like western end, below banners high on the walls; next to these the ecclesiastical collections, followed by accoutrements and weapons, many of them up on the walls, while in the window cases were charms, seals, watches etc. Coins and medals were set out immediately at the entrance of the gallery. The Roman finds from Scotland were at the far end of the north side, probably with the antlers and ox skulls above them. In the low room at the extreme east end were dug-out canoes, cup-and-ring boulders, The Maiden and other instruments of punishment, and more weapons.

The opening in Queen Street by the Marquess of Lothian took the form of a *Conversazione* on 14 August 1891, to which representatives of learned societies and public institutions in the city were invited. They met on the ground floor of the Portrait Gallery which, because not yet required for pictures for quite some years, was let to the Royal Scottish Geographical Society. Its lecture hall in the southern half was regularly used by the Antiquaries, who had arranged that the Royal Archaeological Institute of Great Britain should be holding its summer meeting there, and should join them for the opening. A further historical attraction that summer was an important Heraldic Exhibition mounted in the upper part of the Gallery.

The building, with its highly decorated Italianate Gothic exterior of red sandstone, to be completed with many statues, was so far the most discordant intrusion into the New Town of Edinburgh. The architect, Rowand Anderson, had worked in a variety of styles and was doubtless selected and influenced, as well as financed, by J. R. Findlay. Even more startling to Scottish taste, one would have thought, were the large parts of the interior where polished rich red brick walls combined curiously with the sculptured and ashlar architectural features. They dominated the entrance hall and main staircases for over fifty years,

and also the whole ground floor of the Museum, which there opened out of the Portrait Gallery. The connecting doorway had carved on it the Society's shield of Arms with its royal tressure (not coloured till almost ninety years later), and the name that was at last agreed, if only tacitly, National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland.

The ground floor exhibition hall is well designed for floor space (about 4,350 square feet), particularly lofty except at the extension, 20 feet to the ceiling, and lit by large pointed-arch windows so that space for attaching exhibits to the walls is reduced and mostly high up. Faced with this difference from the Institution's roof-lit rooms, Joseph Anderson was heard to say at the *Conversazione*, as related long afterwards by A. O. Curle, that 'the Gothic style of architecture is unsuited to a Museum'. When Rowand Anderson countered, 'But I have made it suited', the reply was, 'Well, you should at least have turned the windows upside down'. Unfortunately there are no photographs to show how the newly arranged halls actually looked. Up each main half, separated by wide arches, there were 12-foot long cases, some flat, some upright, at first varied by shorter cases at right angles to them. Neither these nor the smaller cases in the window-recesses yet held drawers or cupboards. The first floor is similar, with more but narrower windows, and only two feet lower, while the extension goes to the full height. The architect wanted the walls painted green, but the Council preferred red. The cases were longer, nearly 15 feet, set parallel to one another like platoons on parade, a column of ten on the north side and seven on the south; later, as downstairs too, additional long cases had to be inserted till they were only three feet apart. Some of the original shallow wall-cases set at the ends of the halls, with narrow desk-cases projecting from them, still survive *in situ*. Upstairs the high roof-lit 'comparative gallery' had a floor area of 2,000 square feet, and the adjacent library 1,500 surrounded by a cat-walk gallery. Attics were available for the boxed manuscripts. The 2,000 square feet cellar was probably just a dump, for there were no fitments for storage.

Emphasis on Research, 1891-1913

The new, much more spacious displays, and the conjunction of the Portrait Gallery, did not compensate for what had probably not been anticipated, the disadvantage of going 250 yards northwards from Princes Street. The new attendance figures, counted inevitably at the joint front door, were for the first fourteen months at less than half the

rate of the previous full year's 83,597. By next year at 23,500 they were less than a quarter of the average before exhibition conditions at the old Museum had become so bad. The figures for the rest of the decade were lower still, and by 1906 fell below 15,000. In contrast the old Statue Gallery still at The Mound, on its own, had 40,000 visitors in 1902. In 1908 entrance fees in Queen Street were abolished by special permission of the Treasury, 'owing to the out of the way position' of the Portrait Gallery building.

Situation alone could not cause the attendances to continue declining for so long, not could the stamp-album form of display, a general fashion for much longer. To provide as a matter of fairness the same amount of space in the building for each institution was to build-in a handicap to the Museum, and to underrate the differences in scope and potential between collecting the portraits of four or five centuries, and material illustrating a people's life over millennia, even neglecting those same centuries. As seen in 1911 by a Glasgow businessman writing in the *Glasgow Herald* (C. E. Whitelaw, 11 November) — an article on the arrangement of an ideal National Historical Museum based on his experience in organising the remarkable Palace of History at the Scottish Exhibition in Glasgow earlier that year — the Museum of National Antiquities in Edinburgh lacked certain essentials. For there

a magnificent collection of material is quite paralysed through being housed in an ill-adapted building, only allowing half the space necessary for the adequate display of the objects, and in the matter of funds having only a miserable pittance, quite inadequate to its needs, and a scandal to this country. It has however the best brains at its call.

The brains of the Society, with the two curatorial members of staff, were maintaining and applying the momentum of archaeological thought, increasing the size of the collections and their importance to specialists. They were also sharing the new knowledge with the 700 members and the wider public through the meetings, the *Proceedings*, Rhind lectures, newspaper reports and other publications. The interest generated continued to draw in accessions much more comprehensively relevant to the Museum's field than the research, so that exhibition inescapably became less satisfactory than ever, until radical change was possible.

It was a period when categories of antiquities were being investigated in detail and catalogued, with final or preliminary publications in the *Proceedings*, using, illuminating or adding to the Museum's collections. G. F. Black, the Assistant Keeper, wrote up Scottish

charms and amulets in 1893, and there were similarly extensive papers unconnected with the Museum, for example on the archery medals of St Andrews and Aberdeen, and on Scottish medieval tomb effigies. A calendar of the Scottish charters 'in the possession of the Society' was published in 1907.

Directly relevant to the Museum, though going far beyond it and forming one of the Society's major enterprises, was the corpus of the *Early Christian Monuments of Scotland* before the twelfth century, much more accurate and complete than Stuart's work of a previous generation. It was carried out by J. Romilly Allen CE with the co-operation of many members of the Society and others. The Council in 1890 awarded him the Gunning Fellowship for two years at £100, and later for five more, to finance his travel, photography (particularly in 1894), and innumerable drawings. The publication was based art-historically on Joseph Anderson's early Rhind lectures, and incorporated as its introduction Anderson's lectures of 1892. Allen was himself a Rhind lecturer, on Christian symbolism in 1885, and extended the original scope of the *corpus* by adding in his exhaustive study of the formal patterns and their distribution, as well as of the Pictish symbols. He wished to have casts of four of the finest Ross-shire stones made, but the Council did not see their way to this; the South Kensington Museum, however, did the one at Nigg. After publication in 1903 the total expenditure was reckoned at £2,240, of which only £730 was recouped from early sales (at four guineas, but two for Fellows and three for subscribers), and £780 from the Society's general fund. This indispensable work had the effect by its very thoroughness, as had Burns's *Coinage*, of inhibiting further constructive study of its subject for more than a generation.

Estimates for an illustrated catalogue of the Scottish coins in the Museum were obtained in 1895. The draft was prepared by A. B. Richardson, curator since 1888 and donor of a 1575 £20 piece of James VI. Few additions had been made since the Exchequer in 1882 had given generous selections from a remarkable series of hoards, found in the previous five years and studied by Burns and Sim — notably Alexander III to David II silver from Montrave, Robert III groats from Fortrose and gold of James III from New Cumnock; selections from two fourteenth-fifteenth-century hoards came in 1893. From 1897 to the publication of the catalogue in 1901 an active, but far from ideal, policy was pursued to make its range more complete in conformity with Burns's *Coinage*. At the same time as making purchases, authority

was obtained to dispose of 'duplicates and specimens unconnected with Scottish numismatics'. Duplicates from mints in Britain, and continental sterlings, were sold at Sotheby's in January 1899 ('the property of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland'), among them many of the coins selected in 1882 which one fears may have been die varieties, such as Burns had not always specified, though well aware of them. In August 1900 there were sold anonymously there the many hundreds of Greek and foreign coins and medals, including the Ruthven collection accepted in 1884 and also foreign coins from Scottish hoards, that were thus part of our currency if not our numismatics. Fortunately those from early archaeological contexts such as Viking bullion hoards were excluded. Burns's English selection from the Montrave hoard was kept intact. From the proceeds of the sales over 270 Scottish coins were bought from the Pollexfen collection in 1900 and inserted into the catalogue as an appendix. The handsomely bound volume cost 'within £300' for 250 copies, and was sold at 21s, at a loss even apart from the numerous complimentary copies.

A more economical scholarly Museum publication was printed in the *Proceedings* in 1899, a catalogue of the objects in the Egyptian collection by Margaret Murray, Lady Associate 1900-63.

After Black resigned in 1896 for better prospects in the United States, fortunately to continue working and writing on Scotland, F. R. Coles succeeded him temporarily, then after a year with a higher salary (£140), raised in 1905 to £200. He had been a corresponding member, publishing surveys of forts and stone circles in Galloway since 1890. Reports illustrated by his plans and sketches of stone circles in north-east and central Scotland, surveyed on the Gunning Fellowship (at a much lower rate than Romilly Allen's) were for eleven years a feature of the *Proceedings*, to which he also contributed notes on burial finds, until in 1912 he too left for financial reasons.

A wide range of archaeological investigations was always recorded in the volumes. Most important for the Museum was the systematic and sustained series of excavations financed through the Society that began in 1890. Credit for much of this was due to David Christison, Secretary with Robert Munro and like him a doctor of medicine; Joseph Anderson's part was chiefly editing the sometimes very stout volumes of *Proceedings* and writing the find-reports, which brought him to subjects new to him, Roman material and the entirely novel mesolithic from caves at Oban. For recording, a set of six-inch maps was issued to the Society by the Ordnance Survey, once there was house-room for it.

Christison started off with some unproductive examination of forts in Argyll (helped by a colleague whose excavation was illustrated by the first half-tone blocks in the *Proceedings* in 1891), within a series of field studies of forts in various areas which led up to his pioneer book on *Early Fortifications in Scotland* (1898, the Rhind lectures of 1894). Roman Archaeology then took over. The Glasgow Archaeological Society had begun in 1892 making a series of soundings in sites along the Antonine Wall (proposals for acquiring stretches of the Wall for preservation were put to the Antiquaries in 1894) and a leading Glasgow Fellow, James Macdonald, was making studies of the Roman roads in southern Scotland. In 1895 he as well as Christison, J. H. Cunningham (then the Antiquaries' Treasurer) and John Barbour in Dumfries undertook the supervision of a very successful excavation at Birrens, from where the Museum had long had altars and other finds. The suggestion came from the Dumfries and Galloway Antiquarian Society, and much of the work was done by Barbour. A clerk of works provided continuous on-site control.

Once fired, the Antiquaries carried on. Full use was made of the professional skills of architects, Barbour and Thomas Ross (joint author of 'MacGibbon and Ross'), of Cunningham who was a civil engineer, and later of the surveyor Mungo Buchanan. Professor F. J. Haverfield of Oxford was close adviser and financial helper. They chose next the even more heavily fortified Ardoch in Perthshire, where digging continued for twelve months with the same clerk of works, and Cunningham himself in charge. The traces of the timber buildings were discovered and planned. They then returned to Dumfriesshire to the forts at Birrenswark, where Barbour had under him Alexander Mackie who was in course of becoming the Antiquaries' permanent clerk of works, in the field for most of the year; he and a friend had been discovered excavating in their spare time the iron age fort at Abernethy in Perthshire, with its elaborately timber-laced rampart. There followed Lyne, Camelon, and the fortress at Inchtuthil (where a native palisade-trench was identified for the first time), then on the Wall, Castlecary, and Rough Castle in 1902-03. For most of these Christison was the named author of the promptly published reports. That of Inchtuthil was by John Abercromby (incorporating one by Ross). He had substantially assisted the financing there and at Castlecary; a subscription list was opened for Rough Castle. Guidance came from the work of German archaeologists on their *Limes*, and a wide range of foreign archaeological literature was being bought and exchanged for the library.

Meantime T. H. Bryce, professor of anatomy in Glasgow, was being assisted from what was left of the Rhind excavation fund, with new capital from Carfrae and Primrose bequests, to investigate chambered tombs in Arran and Bute. Not only were his finds valuable for the Museum, but he published a notable study, later often forgotten, of the context of Scottish neolithic pottery, showing its resemblances to the pottery of the Scandinavian megalithic tombs, and its closer affinities to that of western France and Spain (1902).

He may have been influenced by Abercromby, who in a paper in 1902 to the British Association and more fully in the *Proceedings* in 1904, made a preliminary survey of British beakers — 20% of them, including some Scottish, in the British Museum, 19% in the National Museum from Scotland alone. This developed into his classic *Bronze Age Pottery of Great Britain and Ireland* (1912) which also dealt with the associated objects and the European background. Stuart Piggott has described it as a new approach to archaeological evidence, essentially that still in use, and has commented that the view taken from Scotland in those days was more international than that from southern England, with Arthur Evans as an exception there.

Christison returned to his study of forts in Argyll, and in 1902 Abercromby offered up to £200 a year for excavations on 'British' sites. So Bryce continued on chambered cairns, and Abercromby himself, now joint Secretary, explored and recorded in detail hut-circles with 'earth-houses' (of the Iron Age) in Aberdeenshire. Christison went to Mid-Argyll with Alexander Mackie in 1904, and investigated four forts. The main one was Dunadd, a stronghold of the early Scots, where they recovered for the Museum objects of many kinds from that little-known period. At the excavation committee for the next year Abercromby was planning to excavate the comparable site at Dundurn in Perthshire, and Christison was apparently omitted, but divergencies soon widened. Abercromby in March wrote resigning from the Council and discontinuing his financial support, because of the Society's system of excavation. The Council accepted his decision non-committally with much regret. At the next election Christison resigned his Secretaryship after seventeen years; archaeologically he had failed disastrously at Dunadd, where he had not obtained any information on the nature of the occupation of the different parts of the site, by not having recorded the relationship of the finds with each other and with the recognisable walls, not to speak of the less tangible evidence of perished structures. Abercromby did not stop publishing in the *Proceedings*, and returned

as President in 1913. It appears, however, that his bequest to the University of Edinburgh, formulated in 1916, to found the chair of Archaeology that carries his name, was a result of the quarrel. Robert Munro, who had long wished that there should be regular university instruction in archaeology, founded the Munro Lectureship in Anthropology and Prehistoric Archaeology in Edinburgh in 1910.

Just before Abercromby withdrew his support from the Society's excavations, work at Newstead under James Curle began early in 1905, for which a public appeal for funds was then made from time to time, raising ultimately £1,850. Curle was a lawyer in Melrose nearby, who had excavated two brochs in Selkirkshire in 1891 and as a result had started to study Samian pottery. His campaigns at Newstead, continuous through the year, lasted into 1910, with Thomas Ross surveying and Mackie as clerk of works. Of them Ian Richmond forty years later wrote that 'Dr Curle's excavations, which were far in advance of contemporary practice, disentangled a detailed plan of much of the fort and its surroundings', but that the stratigraphy of the five phases that he had distinguished was much looser than could be determined by modern methods; in addition they had 'produced a collection of relics so notable that they have never ceased to excite wonder'. After an interim series of Rhind lectures in 1908, Curle's published report, *A Roman Frontier Post and its People* (1911), was no less admirable, except for some omissions presumably due to its extreme promptness. A close study of the parallel evidence on the Continent with the help of foreign scholars (five of whom were made Honorary Fellows), and the good fortune of pit-deposits separated by a period of abandonment, made the work a lasting contribution to the chronology of Roman military equipment and pottery. Finely produced by James Maclehose, this monograph cost the Society £500 in addition to copies gifted by it or bought for later sale, and £300 contributed to the actual excavations from the funds. In the same year the first edition of George Macdonald's *The Roman Wall in Scotland* was published by the Oxford University Press.

Besides genuine relics from excavations, the Museum received and kept for permanent reference some others quite different. Excavations near Dumbarton at a small hill-fort and two crannog-like structures in the Clyde, undertaken locally between 1896 and 1901, gave rise to great controversy in newspapers and periodicals on account of the many unheard of things found, decorated geometrically and with faces, slate spearheads, shale figurines, miniature cup-and-ring stones.

Andrew Lang led the defenders and Robert Munro wrote *Archaeology and False Antiquities* (1905) because the conflicting opinions caused 'the very existence of such a thing as scientific archaeology to be doubted'. The best account is in French (de Pradenne 1932). A discussion in the Society in 1900 was, quite exceptionally, published. In it Joseph Anderson said, 'I prefer to suspend my judgment—merely placing the suspected objects (as they place themselves) in the list of things that must wait for further evidence, because they contradict present experience'. In the spirit of simply allowing everyone to see and judge things for themselves that was characteristic of the Museum, the 'Clyde forgeries', and some genuine objects found with them, were exhibited uncatalogued but without warning of suspicion, until withdrawn to store in 1939. On the same principle, possibly, various bronze axes acquired in the 1880s which should have roused suspicions, were bought and catalogued without comment. On the other hand a massive carving of a Roman cavalryman, found at Camelon in circumstances that seemed to show it was of some age, and published in 1902 after being claimed as 'treasure trove', was relegated to the cellar unnumbered. Another puzzle, a set of bagpipes dated MCCCCIX, published in 1880 and bequeathed to the Museum in 1911, was often doubted before satisfactory proof of falsity was published in 1974.

Turning now away from research, we can see that while relations with the Board and the Treasury lost most of their tensions once the Museum was rehoused, further important principles were not settled without difficulty. The provision from 1895 of an annual purchase grant, that might accumulate in the Society's hands, 'for ordinary small articles of interest', was an advance, though at £200 it was considerably less than the £500 asked for, and promised only for five years at a time. It also had to meet the cost of treasure trove rewards, previously paid from the Exchequer's own vote. The condition that the Remembrancer should sit on the Council, provided he was or became a Fellow, like the Board's two representatives, strengthened the long-standing co-operation.

The very large and unique medieval Glenlyon brooch was auctioned in London in May 1897. A painful argument on the morning of the sale between Robert Carfrae, elderly chairman of the Antiquaries' purchase committee and C. H. Read, who had succeeded Franks as Keeper at the British Museum, resulted in the two Museums making final bids against one another, and the loss of the brooch to Scotland at £220. The British Museum was at that time in dispute over the extraordinary

gold hoard recently found at Broighter in Ireland, and bought privately by the Trustees. Under pressure from Irish MPs, and simultaneously the Scottish Office, A. J. Balfour as First Lord of the Treasury set up a strong Parliamentary committee to enquire into the case of the 'Celtic ornaments found in Ireland', and to consider and suggest regulations for avoiding undue competition between museums supported out of public funds in Scotland and Ireland on the one hand, and the British Museum on the other, 'for the acquisition of objects of antiquarian or historic interest, and for ensuring that . . . the museum situated in the country [peculiarly] interested should be afforded . . . [priority]'. They were also to consider whether legal obstacles to the British Museum's parting with objects once acquired should be relaxed. The evidence and recommendations were printed in full with, in appendices, the Society's internal report of 1890 on the operation of the law of Treasure Trove (House of Commons 1899, 179). A code of conduct on competition was suggested, which for Scotland has been followed ever since, but relaxation of the British Museum's restrictions, even as between the national museums, was only tentatively supported by a majority. The Crown had to sue the British Museum's Trustees in 1903 for illegal possession of treasure trove, to return it to Ireland; but this remedy was not possible for the brooch. Read was evidently unrepentant over either case, for he resigned from the Society in 1904 after unsuccessfully laying claim to the bronze age armlet found at Melfort in Argyll, Crown property in Scotland, on the grounds that it had been bought by his predecessor. The British Museum Trustees on the other hand had quickly presented in compensation excellent facsimiles not only of the Glenlyon brooch but also of the Lochbuie brooch, the larger brother of the Brooch of Lorne.

The Treasury went back on the spirit if not the letter of its earlier statements on special grants in 1904, when the medieval harps on loan were withdrawn for auction. The £1,000 requested was provided only by advancing four years' ordinary grant. So the 'Queen Mary' harp at £892 10s absorbed four and a half years' money despite further argument centred on the library and periodicals. The Lamont harp was bought by W. Moir Bryce, and in time bequeathed to the national collection. Before the grant commenced again, two eighth-century silver brooches, long known, were offered for sale, to be bought for £250 by a loan on most generous terms from C. E. Whitelaw. The only income for purchases then was from the two paying days each week (soon afterwards abolished), which came under £20 a year as it was

divided between the Museum and the Portrait Gallery.

Since Black had reported in the *Proceedings* in 1893 on the Scottish antiquities in the museums in London and in the Royal Scottish Museum, the latter had acquired the Noël Paton collection. Following a request from the Director in 1906 for the Egyptian and Assyrian objects to be placed on loan in Chambers Street, there were discussions in which the Society tried to have the respective spheres of the two museums more clearly defined. Schemes for purchase or exchange, particularly concerning the Scottish items in the Noël Paton collection estimated as worth £1,000, were put forward unsuccessfully, but Dr Dobbie left open the possibility of purchasing the Egyptian collection. A. O. Curle as Secretary replied for the Society, regretting that the Royal Scottish would not effect an exchange, but hoping that the bringing in touch with each other of the two Institutions might tend to their mutual advantage.

The Board of Manufactures was replaced in 1906 by a new and much smaller Board of Trustees for the National Galleries of Scotland, with no further responsibility for the art schools. This followed a long enquiry by a committee appointed in 1902 by the Secretary for Scotland, Lord Balfour of Burleigh (Cmd 1812-3, 1903). Much ancient history had been reviewed, often rather one-sidedly, with the usual confusion — the Museum (without the National) being described throughout as belonging to the Society, and even the staff similarly. Three recommendations were made regarding the Museum: that the Society should nominate one member to the new Board (it was however constituted without nominated members), that the purchase grant should be made permanent, and that an additional £200 should be paid to the staff. The two changes were accepted by the Treasury promptly, the Keeper's salary being raised to £500 p.a., the same as the new whole-time post of Director of the National Gallery, but without pension. The Assistant Keeper and to a small amount the attendants were given rises, but the Society was still left for several years to pay the fourth attendant, in the library, who also acted as clerk. (The Society paid too for recataloguing, but binding could be paid from the purchase grant.) The relationship between the Museum and the new Board was exactly the same as before, except that the buildings were transferred to the Office of Works. To it a request for electric instead of gas lighting in the Society's meeting room was soon sent. Efforts to have a lift installed were unsuccessful.

The retirement of Joseph Anderson was put off as long as possible,

because his post was not pensionable. A deputation discussed the matter with the Secretary for Scotland, but a Treasury letter in autumn 1912 explained that even if it had been prepared to make a change at the time the Board was reconstituted in 1906, Anderson had then already been five years over the maximum retiring age for a civil servant; however a gratuity would be granted if he now left. The size of this when paid (£412 5s 3d), as well as discussion whether the post would in future be pensionable, may explain why pressure from the Scottish Office was necessary before he gave four weeks' notice that he would retire at the end of March 1913. He was aged 81, but in addition to making him an Honorary Fellow and collecting £600 for him from co-workers and friends, the Society retained his services as editor at £50 p.a. until he died in September 1916. Besides his LL.D. from Edinburgh (1882), he was an honorary member of the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries in Copenhagen, of the Society of Antiquaries of Stockholm, and of the Royal Irish Academy, also Professor of Antiquities of the Royal Scottish Academy.

Meantime the vacancy for Assistant Keeper had been filled, after fourteen months, in summer 1912 by the appointment of A. J. H. Edwards, who had been five years a technician (preparer) in the natural history department of the Royal Scottish Museum. The salary was £150-£200, to start with unpensioned.

Modernisation and contraction, 1913-45

Most of the protagonists for the next thirty years were now on the stage. Sir Herbert Maxwell was in the last of his thirteen years as President, during which, it is stated in the *Proceedings*, the 'National Museum of Scotland' would have been in a much worse position than it was, but for his efforts to obtain fairer treatment from the Government. Under him the principal Secretaries were A. O. Curle, BA WS, brother of James Curle and since 1908 Secretary and archaeologist of the new Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland, and Robert Scott-Moncrieff WS. The Curators were James Curle and J. Graham Callander, shortly to be archaeologist to the Commission, with George Macdonald as curator of coins since 1903. Their offices were not only indications of their interest in the Museum; like the Secretaryship they did not rotate at regular intervals and so could be held for even thirty years. James Richardson, who in 1914 became first Inspector of Ancient Monuments for Scotland (then a part-time post), had recently joined the Society, and Angus Graham,

later Secretary of the Society (1938-66), was about to do so.

A committee of Council, including Macdonald and Callander, quickly recommended that A. O. Curle should become Director of the Museum, after the Council had decided that the post should be pensionable with a more adequate salary, and still combined with the assistant secretaryship in view of the Society's responsibilities. The appointment was made in May 1913 by the Secretary for Scotland in terms of the National Galleries of Scotland Act 1906, and the Treasury agreed that it should be pensionable (on issue of a Civil Service Commission certificate) and regarded as whole-time notwithstanding the commitment to the Society; the salary was however to remain at £500 as 'ample for the post'.

It was the need to conserve James Curle's Roman finds of leather, wood and metal, particularly iron, and his instigation, that led to Edwards's selection because of his museum experience and knowledge of chemistry. So the Gunning Fellowship was used to send him in the middle of 1913 to Berlin to learn archaeological conservation under Professor Rathgen and Dr Regling, after which some elementary equipment was obtained through the Office of Works. Soon a preparer too was employed temporarily, and Edwards was 'established'. This was a pioneer development in British museums.

The congestion, to which new cases for Newstead had added, gave urgency to a scheme for fire-proofing under new wooden flooring. It may be assumed that A. O. Curle was particularly active in the committee appointed in December 1912 to consider the temporary removal of the collections and cases into the Portrait Gallery's premises, and subsequent changes — the extensive provision of drawers in the window bays was proposed, lighting for the cellar, and long loans such as of models of Edinburgh buildings to the city's museum; a stock-taking desired by the Committee of Public Accounts was envisaged for when the Museum would be closed to the public. Though provided for in the Board's Estimates for 1913-14, the closure and move (in five weeks, leaving the top floor meantime) did not take place till spring 1914, perhaps to allow the new Director to investigate the state of the Museum and its deficiencies and uncatalogued categories, on which he reported. The cellar in particular needed to be fitted up as proper store-rooms; Edwards long afterwards recalled finding a table there, collapsed under a great weight of things.

In lesser details of administration as well as in personnel a more modern Museum was taking shape. As the Board had at last secured

permission to pay for the library attendant, the Council decided to use the savings to employ a clerk for the Society. So the Minutes from July 13 were typewritten, from October by Miss E. M. Dennison who did not retire till 1944. She also typed the Director's correspondence and did other work for the Museum, at the Society's expense, as was the telephone then installed. A system of catalogue-index cards was begun. Some money was saved by making the Assistant Secretary's honorarium only £10. A proposal made in 1912 after a meeting with the secretary of the Edinburgh School Board, that short descriptive accounts of different sections of the Museum might be printed for school visits, does not seem to have been followed up. Nor was the opening on Sunday afternoons as proposed by the new Director, even though opposition to it within the Society was unsuccessful on a vote. One change made was that the Council, rather than the Secretaries, made the report on the year to the Society. This included a summary of accessions to the Museum and other matters relating to it, such as had come to replace in the *Proceedings* the Council's formal report to the Board; attendance figures were dropped from 1907. The format and binding of the *Proceedings* were improved in 1915, but the arrangement of the contents was not altered, with the full donations lists set out monthly until consolidated in 1939, when modifications were begun for more economical and handier volumes.

More important, in May 1914 the Society recommenced its own excavations. In connection with his work for the Royal Commission, and with a contribution from the Society, A. O. Curle had excavated at the vitrified fort of Mote of Mark in Kirkcudbrightshire in 1913, obtaining for the Museum a remarkable collection of moulds for dark age ornaments. Though it was also hoped to explore the fort at Mumrills on the Antonine Wall, a campaign was begun under Curle, with support from Abercromby, within the recently recognised ramparts on Traprain Law near Haddington. The complexity of the structural remains found, and even more the quantity and variety of relics both native and Roman, opened a new dimension in the archaeology of Scottish native sites. The proprietor, the Rt. Hon. A. J. Balfour, promised all the finds to the Museum. Work had to be suspended after a second season in 1915, but particularly well illustrated reports were promptly published in the *Proceedings*. Another landmark, in the volume for 1918, was the first listing of Roman coins found in Scotland, by Macdonald, who also kept up his series of accounts of coin hoards from other periods.

With the major changes started, and the Museum already closed, the onset of war prolonged and intensified the beginning of modernisation. Edwards and some of the attendants left at once for the Forces. Curle remained to place valuable exhibits in the cellar, and later to dismantle the library (and replace it in 1917) and the comparative gallery, as under-floor fire-proofing continued; unwanted pottery from Newstead was, according to oral tradition, mixed in with the concrete. Re-flooring was delayed and ultimately took place in 1919, using soft instead of hard wood-blocks, for economy. For several years to the end of 1919 the empty galleries were used by the Timber Supply Department of the Board of Trade. The Society's meetings until December 1918 were held in the Royal Society's rooms, which by coincidence had been transferred to 24 George Street. The Museum's purchase grant ceased for the duration, but savings allowed purchases for the library to continue to within a few months of its recommencement in 1919; the few purchases of objects had included a gold lunula and torc once in Adam Sim's collection, at a Red Cross sale.

In 1916 A. O. Curle was appointed Director of the Royal Scottish Museum in the Scottish Education Department. Because the Museums were closed he continued to be responsible for Queen Street, and to work part-time there. His successor, on the same terms (which now included editing the *Proceedings*), was Graham Callander, aged 46. He was proposed by the Council in March 1919 but not appointed till September, after they and the Board had considered an application from Donald A. Mackenzie, brother of the Secretary of the Commission. Callander had left the Commission for war-work but had continued to be Secretary of the Society, in succession to A. O. Curle, and to contribute papers on prehistoric material in each volume of the *Proceedings*. Edwards returned in 1919 and succeeded in getting a salary rise, of £50. The new post of preparer was filled by William Darroch, for some years on a temporary basis. A camera was soon provided for him, and a lantern and screen (on hire) for the Society's evening meetings. Curle joined Macdonald and his brother as a Curator, and remained the Society's representative on the Ancient Monuments Board.

In May 1919 the Duke of Atholl, as chairman of the Committee planning the Scottish National War Memorial in Edinburgh Castle, wrote about the Scottish Historical Museum that was part of the scheme. He proposed that the Society should approve the transfer of the collection in their charge to suitable buildings to be provided for it

in the Castle. The Council declined to recommend this to the Board, while agreeing that more accommodation would permit the existing collection to be properly displayed and allow for future expansion. There were obviously many difficulties but the only ones minuted were the disadvantage of moving the library to the Castle and the need to hold the meetings elsewhere (the Castle being still garrisoned). The Memorial committee founded instead the Scottish United Services Museum which, transferred to the Government in 1948, has needed all the accommodation yet available in the Castle.

The excavations at Traprain Law were begun again in 1919, and continued seasonally until 1923. At the very beginning they uncovered the largest quantity and variety of cut-up pieces of late Roman silver plate known from a single hoard. Probably because all the finds were promised to the Museum, the Crown made no claim of treasure trove. A Treasury grant of £1,000 paid for annealing and cleaning by Brook and Son, jewellers in Edinburgh, who were allowed to make replicas, on which royalties were paid to the Society. Publication of A. O. Curle's fine monograph, *The Treasure of Traprain* (MacLehose and Jackson, Glasgow 1922, 3 guineas), was arranged by the Society. Two hundred copies for presentation to libraries and institutions around the world were bought at the members' subscription rate (2 guineas) by John Bruce, who had financed the 'Clyde forgeries' excavations, and who was a generous supporter of the Society's excavations and purchases for the Museum. A general appeal in 1921 for the Traprain excavations raised nearly £400. In addition £100 grants over several years were given by the Carnegie Trust. The excavations ceased when instead a rescue excavation similarly financed was begun at the Roman fort of Mumrills, which lasted four and a half years; meantime a series of non-Roman occupation sites and cairns was examined in Galloway, Lewis and Caithness by the Assistant Keeper on the Gunning Fellowship. Archaeology had not yet formulated the questions which excavations at large hill-forts such as Traprain should try to answer, and the publication in the *Proceedings* in annual reports was probably not seen as unsatisfactory, however short on conclusions. Indeed as it set out the finds, covering five centuries at least, in broadly stratified 'levels', it was a considerable advance, and accessioned in the Museum the material was readily accessible for further study.

Because the Museum remained closed, a temporary exhibition of the Treasure in Chambers Street lasted over two years. Co-operation began while Curle was still Honorary Director in 1919, when a considerable

bequest of almost entirely English china and silver from James Cowan-Smith was accepted after agreement to lend what was not Scottish to the Royal Scottish Museum. The idea of relieving pressure by lending Egyptian and other foreign material was considered, but as neither side yet favoured large-scale transfer, little but 134 Greek pots and figures and Roman lamps was placed on long loan in 1921, followed by seven hundred or so ethnographical specimens in 1924. A collection of military uniforms was lent to the United Services Museum in 1930, a few years after being accepted.

Various outstanding accessions came to the Museum before it was reopened. The great Pictish monument from Hilton in Ross-shire was given by Macleod of Cadboll after remonstrations against its initial acceptance by the British Museum; the Thomas Coats of Ferguslie collection of Scottish coins, the type-collection of Burns's *Coinage*, was gifted by the Coats family on condition that it remained in the Museum in all time coming as a separate entity accessible to students. Gifts to the prehistoric archive were on a lesser scale, among them a rare middle bronze age hoard from Glentrool in Galloway, Erskine Beveridge's iron age finds from North Uist, and Lady John Scott's varied collection from Berwickshire.

Despite a request in 1920 for the purchase grant to be raised to £600 it remained at £200, except for an increase of £20 from 1936 to cover freight, travelling etc, until stopped again in 1940. (The Board averted a threatened stop in 1932.) Out of this came purchases for the library, now important because of the many periodicals received in exchange for the *Proceedings*, particularly from abroad; it was stated in 1920 to contain 15,042 volumes and 1,004 pamphlets. Binding ceased to come out of the grant; after the Society had contributed to arrears in 1929, this was undertaken by the Stationery Office as for other government libraries.

Good use was being made of the grant for buying museum objects. The fantastic pre-Roman Torrs chamfrain (really a pony-hat it seems), long at Abbotsford, was bought at auction in 1921 for £305, the medieval Guthrie bell-shrine privately for £250, and the gold signet of Joan Beaufort, James I's queen, for £100. Through treasure trove came twelfth-century ornamental spoons and gold fillets from Iona, and late medieval coins from Perth, but the opportunity of more than a partial selection of coin varieties was not taken. When the Mary Queen of Scots jewels and fan from Penicuik were sold in 1923, the Council lacking funds left it to Dr Walter Seton, and Sir Bruce Seton, one of the

Fellows, to raise subscriptions from the King and Queen and many others, helped by a guarantee from the Marquess of Bute much larger than the auction price of £420. A policy of trying to purchase old finds, such as the Culbin armlet, or secure them on loan if not as gifts, was being actively supported by James S. Richardson. He began shortly afterwards in 1925 his forty-five years of constant association with the Museum, first as a Curator (on A. O. Curle's moving to Librarian) and then as a Trustee; the recorded flow of small gifts from him of 'bygones' and good craftsmanship was but one aspect of his encouragement of the more varied as well as the aesthetic sides of the collections, beyond the prehistoric accumulation to which he also regularly contributed gleanings. For a while in the 1920s the Council welcomed donations of eighteenth and nineteenth-century domestic silver, 'poorly represented in this Museum', before a restrictive policy change concentrated on spoons.

The Museum was reopened in January 1923, by the Chairman of the Board deputising for the Earl of Balfour, indisposed. In July it was visited, along with other parts of the Galleries, by the King and Queen. One main change was that the Roman collection, with the new treasure in a specially secure metal case, had been moved upstairs to the north-west end of the first floor. On both floors large numbers of glass-topped drawers set under cases in the window-bays had, along with cupboards in the basement, allowed a great thinning of what was on open display. To continue this process, the gradual replacement of the floor cases by ones with storage underneath was to be a major programme over the years. The comparative gallery, closed until 1927, was the first completed, by 1938. The chance that part of the basement became the workshop of one of the Office of Works carpenters gave the Museum an advantage in calling on his services for fitments inside the cases.

By the early 1930s the thousands of exhibits were rearranged, as well as maintained, largely by Edwards, who had visited museums in six countries abroad. Mounted on unbleached linen, with labels and individual numbers (in place of large adhesive figures) in Darroch's clear, if necessarily minute, script, they gave the whole Museum a clean and cared-for look, despite the density of display and the long cases no more than three feet apart. A much larger proportion of the collections was intentionally kept visible than was already fashionable. Particularly in the prehistoric gallery, this was partly due to the concept of keeping the range of archaeological evidence for anyone to study un-

hindered; but equally, since the National Museum drew discoveries from the many diverse parts of the country, it was thought right that the visitors from each part should always be able to see typical things from their own area. The need in this for a geographical location index of the first floor was voluntarily supplied from the mid-1930s by one of the attendants, W. J. Ross, and widely appreciated. The exemplary maintenance of the polished floors and case-glass was part of the attendants' routine.

Much of Callander's time was spent in writing for the *Proceedings* and editing it, with an editorial committee consisting of Macdonald, A. O. Curle and W. K. Dickson of the Advocates', later National, Library. Among the papers he contributed in the 1920s were several of the main descriptive discussions of categories of Scottish material, much of it in the Museum, which as Graham has noted were a feature of the *Proceedings* at this time — those on the Museum's first collection of mesolithic flints, on neolithic pottery, bronze age hoards, and medieval brooches; perhaps rightly the fewness of comparisons outside Scotland has been criticised as a turning away from the days of Munro and Abercromby, but introversion was not really characteristic of the period when J. H. Crow demonstrated a connection between gold lunulae and jet necklaces, and James Curle inventoried Roman stray finds. It was not of course only Scottish prehistory that was placed more fully in an international context by V. Gordon Childe, appointed in 1927 first Abercromby professor in Edinburgh. At the beginning he was not wholly welcomed, but elected to the Society's Council in 1930 and a Foreign Secretary from 1932, he was increasingly involved with the Museum's affairs, as well as using the collections and library for research and teaching.

Behind the scenes there were serious tensions. In 1925 Callander submitted a memorandum on the salaries and status of the staff, claiming that the Museum had been downgraded in 1921 and that it should be regarded as equivalent to a department in the Royal Scottish Museum (of which there were three). At the same time Edwards requested that it should be made clear that he was the second officer, and so equivalent to the Keeper in the National Galleries (the curator of the Portrait Gallery). Comparabilities are vexed matters even when there are standardised grades and pay, which did not then exist for the government museums service, but pay-scales do reflect, and condition, attitudes affecting the whole institution. A considerable harmonisation of scales in the London institutions took place in 1913, and in 1919 the Royal

Scottish caught up to the extent that its Keepers and Assistant Keepers stopped where their London equivalents began. Under the National Galleries' Board in Edinburgh the picture and museum sides had in 1920 been equivalent to one another in pay, but in 1921 the Director of the Galleries had risen to £800-£900, well above the Keepers in the Royal Scottish, while the National Museum's Director had been put by the Treasury at £600, just above the latter's minimum, instead of at their maximum £700 as agreed by the Board and Council; the Galleries' second post received an Assistant Keeper's salary but the Museum's at £250-£350 went no higher than an Assistant (Asst. Keeper II), against the wishes of the Council. There was 'considerable discussion' in 1925 in the Council, but a committee under George Macdonald, in consultation with the Board's Chairman after the National Galleries' Whitley Council had taken the matter up, declined to press it. When after further correspondence, including a representation from the Association of Professional Civil Servants, the Board in 1929 agreed to ask the Treasury to bring salaries into line with those in the Royal Scottish Museum, the Council 'disassociated themselves from the independent action of the officers of the Museum', and the Scottish Office supported the Treasury's refusal. Whatever the Council's reasons, and influence with the Scottish Office, the existence of the distinguished Curators may have seemed to the Treasury to reduce the responsibilities of the staff, and to make the Museum less than fully public.

Following the appointment in 1927 of a Royal Commission to enquire into and report on the National Museums and Galleries in London and Edinburgh, the constitutional peculiarity of the Society's role was certainly so handled and placed on record, that the seventy years' intermittent but persistent efforts to secure for the Museum and its staff financial treatment comparable to that of other national museums were set back for another twenty-five years. Among the eleven commissioners the only domiciled Scot was Sir George Macdonald, now in his seventh year as Secretary of the Scottish Education Department. He was at that period the most usual chairman of the Society's Council, but was absent when an invitation to give evidence to the new Commission was considered together with a draft submission. Both representatives of the Board were present, one its chairman, Sir John Findlay, son of J. R., on the Council since 1907. 'After considerable discussion certain emendations were decided on', and the text left to the Secretaries and the chairman James Curle to complete. The long memorandum as printed by the Commission is almost

all factual, setting out the Museum's history, constitution, relation with other institutions, staffing, congested lay-out, facilities, benefit from excavations etc. It specifies as anomalies in the constitution that the attendants were under the management of the Board, and that the Board were represented on the Council but not the Council on the Board. Then, after noting that in 1851 there was no Secretary for Scotland and the Board had then a much more considerable variety of public duties, it asserts:

Except for the fact that the Museum is installed in the same building as the National Portrait Gallery and that accounting may be simplified through the cleaning, and to some extent the appointment of attendants being under one body, there does not appear to be any strong reason why the entire charge of the Museum of Antiquities should not be entrusted to the Society of Antiquaries acting directly under the Secretary of State for Scotland . . . The time must come, and that at no distant date, when the Museum must be housed elsewhere in a larger building; in that event any reason which may exist for the retention of control by the Board of Trustees will disappear.

(It may be wrong to speculate whether two drafting hands can be identified according to whether the term Museum of Antiquities is used, as always by the Commission (occasionally adding Scottish) or National Museum of Antiquities (alternatively National Museum) as in most of the memoranda, and in the Commission's final index.)

When James Curle as curator gave evidence to the Commission in London in 1928, along with Findlay and Callander, he was first asked to sum up the advantages of control of the Museum by the Society of Antiquaries, which he reported had now over 1,000 members. Callander spoke only about cases and attendance figures. Much of the questioning was done by Macdonald, whose final question to the Chairman of the Board was, 'When the happy time comes when there will be provided another Museum for the Society of Antiquaries, do you think that the dual control should continue?' 'No, I do not think that the Board would have any particular interest in continuing that control. I think they recognise that in the Council of the Society of Antiquaries you have as good a body for the management of the Museum as you could have.' Earlier answers made it clear that those concerned misunderstood their history. They believed that the Queen Street building would naturally 'revert' to the Portrait Gallery, with perhaps £5,000 credited towards the new building as representing what J. R. Findlay had spent on adding the Museum to the building he had always intended for the Portrait Gallery. It was supposed that the other

claimant for space in the Royal Institution had been not the portraits but the Royal Scottish Academy (which did not move there till 1912), and the donor's long and very active concern for the Museum was apparently forgotten. Far from the opportunity being taken to press the Government to honour the responsibilities undertaken in 1851, even the possibility that the Society might provide a fresh printed catalogue 'without expense to the Treasury', and its payments for typewriting the Museum's correspondence and registers, were accepted as natural. Nor did any of the very experienced Commissioners question whether Parliament would readily hand over what was legally an integral part of the National Galleries, to a Council which was almost entirely self-perpetuating.

In their Final Report (1929 Cmd 3401) they said:

The time is not far distant when the Museum of Antiquities will require a separate building if it is to play the part it ought to play as an educational institution, specially designed to stimulate Scottish archaeological studies and the teaching of history . . . If a separate site and building could be provided for the Museum of Antiquities a solution of the problems indicated above affecting the National Gallery, the National Portrait Gallery and the Museum itself, would have been found . . . To bring the plan to immediate fruition may not seem easy in present financial circumstances, but its speedy realisation would be assured if the tradition of private munificence so conspicuous in the history of the English and Scottish Institutions is maintained.

When that happened the control of the Museum should be placed 'formally and absolutely under the Society of Antiquaries'.

In addition to recounting measures already begun to help congestion, they took up a point made by A. O. Curle, when as Director of the Royal Scottish Museum he noted textiles and furniture as areas of overlap between the two Museums, and expressed his personal view that furniture should be concentrated in Chambers Street; the Commission advised that the council should be careful

not to aggravate the congestion by purchasing or accepting objects which are suitable for exhibition in an Art Museum, even though, if more space were available they might rightly be regarded as falling within the scope of the Museum of Antiquities. Any danger of their being lost to the nation could be got over by finding them temporary lodgement in the Royal Scottish Museum.

A Standing Commission was appointed in 1931 to advise on the development of the National Institutions and related questions, and to stimulate and direct the generosity of benefactors. It included several of the original members, with Macdonald, now retired, chosen by the Scottish Institutions. In their first Report in 1933, still in the shadow of

the world financial crisis, they wrote that while the Royal Commission had been impressed with the need for a Gallery of Modern Art in Edinburgh, and still more by the difficulties hampering the Galleries and Museum, other solutions than the provision of a new building for the Museum of Antiquities had since been proposed, and the first step must be to reach a clear decision on what was ultimately desirable; the Galleries' interests were once more tangling the Museum's case. In their second Report in 1938 they briefly reiterated that undoubtedly the need for a new building for the existing Museum of Antiquities was very great, while the absence of a Gallery of Modern Art was a serious deficiency: 'both projects may naturally be expected to appeal more particularly to Scottish benefactors'. However, following a recent extension of the Royal Scottish Museum, they also recommended a lecture hall there, with no question of waiting for benefactors for it, any more than in the past.

A necessary preliminary to a new building was to consider where it should be. In December 1930 the Council wrote to the Office of Works and to the Lord Provost's committee on town planning, suggesting that a site at or near Brown Square (alongside the Royal Scottish Museum) might be suitable.

Throughout the 1930s a series of transfers on 'permanent loan' was organised in order to reduce congestion in the Museum, and make the staff's task more realistic. From 1934 to 1937 there were lent 'by the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland' to the National Library the Haxton collection of 124 bibles, a few other books, notably the first folio Shakespeare, and nearly 350 manuscript items, one of them the Drummond of Hawthornden volumes; and to HM General Register House nearly 750 charters and documents. (Quite a number of parchments and other manuscripts were kept on view, and cleaned by the Stationery Office.) Following 550 English trade tokens in 1929, almost 1,000 items of the Egyptian collection and 280 South American and Mexican went similarly to the Royal Scottish Museum in 1939. This freed the comparative gallery for other use, once the remaining ethnology and the Danish, Swiss and most other non-Scottish archaeological exhibits had been stored away. It was easy to reach, along with the library, by the lift at last installed in 1930, with a new door into the Portrait Gallery.

Within its own specific field, the Museum continued to grow. Two collections which notably strengthened representation of the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, promised as bequests, came first on loan

— the Clanranald family and Jacobite relics, with the 'Red' and 'Black' manuscript books (1931), were never to be removed on loan; and a large part of C. E. Whitelaw's Scottish weapons, accessories etc (1929) with a similar condition, another part going to Glasgow. All 1,925 Roman coins found at Falkirk, and claimed as treasure trove, were kept. When the Monymusk Reliquary, a Celtic house-shaped shrine of about AD 700, which probably once held relics of St Columba carried at Bannockburn, was auctioned in 1933, the National Art-Collections Fund bought it for £2,500 after the Society itself had raised £1,222. Three exhibits from the Empire Exhibition in Glasgow in 1938 were also bought for in all £1,200, and presented by the Fund — a two-handed West Highland sword, and medieval and Renaissance carved oak panels respectively from Montrose and Killochan in Ayrshire; some members of the Council considered that the panels should rather go to the Royal Scottish Museum, but gaining the support of Sir John Stirling-Maxwell, J. S. Richardson successfully opposed this. In 1939, however, it was decided to make no offer for Renaissance panels from Dundee carved with biblical scenes. Next month the Scottish Secretary of the National Art-Collections Fund, Edward Meldrum, undeterred by a *non possumus* from Edinburgh, secured for £440 an enamelled armorial pendant of Mary Queen of Scots, by persuading the Duke of Hamilton to add in what he bid to get it for Holyroodhouse, and later getting more than half the remainder from the Museum.

In an important break with precedent, fine prehistoric, Pictish and later metalwork and stone and bone carvings were lent to an exhibition in 1939, that of Scottish Art at the Royal Academy in London.

Excavations were the main source of archaeological accessions. The Society, while continuing to make contributions out of comparatively small bequest funds, soon left the initiative to others. There was, however, first an attempt to recover more information about Dunadd under J. H. Craw, who after retiring from farming became one of the Secretaries in 1929. He found that Christison's 'turning over' had been too thorough, and moved to the broch at Aikerness in Orkney, acquired for the Society by a Canadian benefactor, T. B. Macaulay. The Office of Works took over the site before Craw died in 1933, and continued the excavation, under Richardson's general supervision as Inspector.

The Ancient Monuments branch of the Office of Works was becoming a major factor in Scottish excavations. Previously archaeological relics had been to some extent collected during the tidying up of

monuments in guardianship, but this material was rarely published or made accessible. Exceptionally the finds from a drain at Crossraguel abbey were published by Macdonald in 1920 because of the remarkable coins, and reached the Museum in 1939 as part of a tentative start by a disposal committee, while finds from Urquhart castle, though never published except for two brooches, were deposited on loan in 1924 by the Seafield Trustees. After protests from Orkney at the way Skara Brae was being treated just as an architectural problem, Childe was asked to observe the digging, rather than excavate, but he published reports in the *Proceedings*, followed by a book in 1931, and many finds were placed in the Museum on loan. (Childe was still uncertain that they really belonged to the Stone Age rather than to extremely retarded aborigines. Callander's paper on why they must be immediately pre-broch in date is an instructive example of a well-argued case flawed by using unreliable associations, and underestimating ancient people.) A. O. Curle, invited in 1931 to uncover the buildings at Jarlshof in Shetland, where he discovered two thousand years of settlements and the first Viking houses known in Britain, was able to take full charge and publish interim reports, as he had done for Traprain, and his finds were stored in the Museum. Excavators of lesser standing, chosen in the belief that 'what is known as archaeological excavation may be supervised by any interested antiquary', were generally more restricted; Macdonald in a presidential address to the Society in 1935 protested at 'official secrecy'. Inadequate organisation and manpower, compounded by the outbreak of the Second War, frustrated the plan to publish monographs, pending which the finds and information remained inaccessible. Metal objects, however, came to the Museum to be treated, and with other selected finds were in some cases given to it by the landowners.

Several unofficial series of excavations were in progress. Childe investigated a variety of sites as part of his university teaching programme, with donation of the finds to the Museum and prompt publication in the *Proceedings*. (Papers by his students began to appear there, notably one on bronze age beakers in 1934. More importantly his *Prehistory of Scotland* (1935) reshaped its subject in the light of all the work since Anderson at home and abroad.) The Glasgow Archaeological Society was investigating Roman sites in the West, placing its finds in the Hunterian Museum. Walter G. Grant, distiller and landowner in Orkney, uncovered a complex broch-site and various neolithic chambered tombs in the Island of Rousay, which Callander wrote

up for the *Proceedings* after co-operating in the supervision. Grant invited Childe in 1938 to take over his excavation at Rinyo which had turned out to be another Skara Brae and provided new evidence for an early date, still accepted with 'extreme reserve'. Grant gave the relics from his sites to the National Museum, generally fairly promptly. So did the landowners of sites which Lindsay Scott, a civil servant in London, excavated in Skye and North Uist and published in the *Proceedings*, principally chambered cairns.

Instead of a fairly simple world of antiquarian bodies having little to do with each other, even when local ones had personal links to the Council, the Society and Museum now had to respond to the growth of a network of organisations. Edwards and Robert Kerr, who was a keeper in the Royal Scottish Museum, after he became curator of coins in 1933, began to attend the Museums Association conferences as delegates of the Society; Edwards as well as Childe represented it at the international Conference of Prehistoric and Protohistoric Sciences in Oslo in 1936. There was also representation on the Conference of Archaeological Societies, organised by the Society of Antiquaries of London. In 1938 the Society joined the new Scottish Federation of Museums and Art Galleries, devoted to changing the depressing state of affairs reported by the Royal Burghs in their evidence to the Royal Commission in 1927, and only confirmed by Callander and Edwards when they toured the Scottish local museums in 1932.

In this situation, small improvements in the staff's salaries served to emphasise the anomalies of their position within the national museums, not evident to the outside world. When the Board's initiative got for Edwards in 1931 the same scale as that of the Galleries' second post, the Treasury gave Callander a maximum £700, which Royal Scottish Museum Assistant Keepers had had since 1921. The Council were split on whether to accept. Childe and W. Douglas Simpson supported Callander's memorandum of protest, but Macdonald argued strongly in favour, mentioning that the Council had been satisfied with the figure in 1921, when the Treasury had refused it. While accepting his advice, the Council doubled the Director's honorarium as Assistant Secretary, to £120. Later general increases did not alter relativities. Recognition came to Callander in other ways, by his LLD from Aberdeen in 1932 and by his appointment as member of the Royal Commission on Ancient Monuments in 1938.

Callander died suddenly in March 1938, seven months before retirement. The Council recommended Edwards's promotion; as his health

was not good, they agreed Childe should edit the *Proceedings*. They then crushed the idea of a small increase in the Director's salary (standing at 20% lower than that of the Galleries' Director, which at its top was £1,058, like those of Keepers at the Royal Scottish, and Deputy Keepers at the British Museum). However, they asked that the prospective assistant should be a graduate and styled Keeper, apparently to ensure for him the full salary scale of an Assistant Keeper II elsewhere, on the upper part of which Edwards had been, like the Keeper in the Galleries. All this was agreed to by the Board and the Treasury. After advertisement and interviews conducted by the Civil Service Commission, the Secretary of State appointed, in preference to Rainbird Clarke among others, an Edinburgh graduate R. B. K. Stevenson, aged 25 with a London diploma in prehistoric archaeology and a year's varied experience of excavation. He took post in December. The Museum also got a typist of its own that year.

On the approach of war the basement was reinforced, and shortly before the Museum was closed, on 1st September 1939, the transfer of exhibits to comparative safety there was begun. The display cases, some filled with boxes from store, and sculptured stones protected by sandbags, had to stay in the galleries, which for that reason were never successfully requisitioned for war-time offices. Edwards and Darroch continued to work on the collections and the trickle of accessions; later on substantial additions came through Kerr to the communion token collection. Stevenson, transferred early in 1940 into the Department of Health for Scotland, gained experience of administration for two years before being called up into the army. After the first winter the Society's meetings were resumed, in the afternoon. The library remained open.

Sir George Macdonald died in 1940 after nearly seven years as President of the Society. His successor on the Standing Commission, Lord Normand the Lord Justice-General, joined the Society and became very concerned with the future of the Museum. By the summer of 1943 post-war planning of all kinds could be taken seriously. After consulting with him then, Richardson, Edwards, and other members of Council replied to a questionnaire from the advisory committee on Edinburgh's city development. As possible localities for the new museum building, they named the vicinity of Holyrood (favoured by Richardson) and of Bristo (Brown Square as previously suggested), also Bruntisfield House. Soon afterwards information was sought from the secretary of the University Court about its extension scheme which might affect Bristo. To a question about a site for a folk-museum, the

Tower of Liberton was mentioned by way of an example; this was a subject which the Council had decided was premature in 1931, when raised after the Commission had supported the idea of one for England. In another area of planning, there was the new Council for British Archaeology; Lindsay Scott was asked to represent the Society, which through Childe took the lead early in 1944 in starting the regional group for Scotland.

In the difficult period that followed Edwards's death in July 1944, Macdonald's successor as President of the Society was widely influential, being Sir John Stirling-Maxwell KT, among other things Chairman of the Ancient Monuments Board and a Trustee of the Galleries. Richardson, as a Curator, briefly stood in until Childe could be appointed by the Secretary of State as Honorary Director, which he accepted for one session, with the status of a temporary civil servant from 1 September. The Council then had before it three proposals: that they should nominate A. D. Lacaille of the Wellcome Medical Museum, a Glaswegian and contributor to the *Proceedings*, or V. E. Nash-Williams of the National Museum of Wales, or recommend the promotion of the Keeper, despite his short experience of museum work and if he could be released soon from the army in Italy. The Board, while preferring public advertisement, decided not to support any permanent appointment for the present. Discussion continued, involving the Secretary of State, Tom Johnston, and his successor Arthur Woodburn, with Childe stressing his time-limit in order to secure the return of the Keeper, which the Scottish Office was working on, or failing that the appointment of Nash-Williams. In the event Childe continued (with limited responsibility) past the end of 1945, and during the last months Ian Finlay of the Royal Scottish Museum was lent half-time.

Meanwhile the ground floor of the Museum was reopened on 21 March 1945 by Lord Normand, whose address, printed in the *Proceedings*, ended with the hope that many Scotsmen would come to appreciate the great value of the National Collection, and resolve that it be displayed in a more suitable and commodious building. Childe and Richardson, with Darroch the Technical Assistant, had set out an exhibition, 'From the Stone Age to the '45', to tell the story of the development of culture in Scotland and commemorate the Jacobite bicentenary. The Annual Report described how 'cases were set back to back so as to allow space for viewing the contents; the choicest sculptured stones were made visible for the first time by consigning the remainder to the stairs or cellars; . . . and The Maiden was set up on a

scaffold where it could be seen'. The exhibits, few but typical, included some lent, or specially acquired to be attractive, such as the suit of an eighteenth-century Earl of Rothes. They were accompanied by large distribution maps, photographs, plans and explanatory labels, supplemented by a six-page guide sold for threepence. When the war in Europe ended, the finest pieces were put back on show, and in the autumn the first floor was reinstated, with the help of a trainee Technical Assistant J. A. Brown (whose fine drawings soon began to appear in the *Proceedings*). In the first seven months the exhibition had 32,000 visitors, with the Portrait Gallery still closed but Sunday afternoon opening at last introduced.

Preparing for a new deal, 1946-54

The senior post was finally filled from October 1946 by Robert Stevenson promoted to Keeper (in-charge), thus returning to Anderson's title as appropriate to a one-department institution, and more in line with the salary which was still that of an Assistant Keeper I. He had been released in January, and was *de facto* in charge next month. As the Council had decided in May 1945 to fill separately their vacant post of Assistant Secretary (and Editor) — later choosing H. M. Paton, due to retire from the Register House — they had ended the eighty-year-old partial subservience to the Society, which must long have prejudiced the Treasury, and the inferiority at the council-table which Edwards had also much disliked. After a year as Librarian, the Keeper was made a member of the Council *ex officio* by a change in the Society's laws in 1947.

It was agreed that the collections from recent centuries ought to be more systematically looked after and developed, and that a historian rather than another prehistorian should be found, perhaps from among the many ex-servicemen graduating in 1947. Civil service procedures were slow, so Stuart Maxwell, the Edinburgh graduate selected as a regular Assistant Keeper (II), did not start work till October of that year. The following month the Keeper as a civil servant opened direct contact with the Scottish Home Department (such as became normal later), on account of a Treasury review of salaries in museums which had resulted in his falling below the level of an Assistant Keeper I.

The correct channel for such matters was through the Galleries' Board, but it was not flowing smoothly. Following a reconstitution in 1947, when Sir John Stirling-Maxwell had stood down, neither of the

representatives appointed by the Board of the Council was there legally, not being a Fellow although several other Trustees were. (The King's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer had for the same reason dropped out in 1941.) Further, a paper circulated to the new members of the Board had embodied the bad history recorded in the Royal Commission's report in 1929, to the effect that they had no real concern with the Museum and its contents, apart from staff and salaries — which were not helped by the anomaly that the Director of the Galleries had naturally always attended their meetings but never the Director of the Museum. The Antiquaries with their President, the Earl of Haddington (1945-50), hoped that adjustments could be made. The Board came to the conclusion that the constitution was no longer workable, but meantime Alexander Maitland joined the Society and, with Lady Watson, attended Council meetings. After considering the Keeper's salary, the Board in 1948 recommended that it should be at the rate of a Keeper in the Royal Scottish Museum; they also agreed that there should be a second Assistant Keeper and a second permanent post of Technical Assistant after Darroch retired, as well as a librarian for three years to reclassify and catalogue the library; and appointments were made to the latter two posts.

The Third Report of the Standing Commission on Museums and Galleries, published next year, discussed the Gallery of Modern Art proposals more fully than the accommodation 'essential' for the Museum, on which the Society was noted as consulting the Planning Authority. It expressed the view however, that the extent of the site required was bound up with the possibility of a Scottish Folk Museum, for which the Society was also looking for a site ('a matter of urgency', as material was disappearing fast). It agreed with the Galleries' Trustees that the problems should be reviewed as a whole. In June 1949 a sub-committee of the Commission visited Edinburgh for this purpose, and the Chairman Lord Harlech discussed their findings with the Prime Minister C. R. Attlee and later with the Secretary of State Hector McNeil: these included emphasis on 'the need for the Museum to have a building to itself' and a recommendation that without waiting for this it 'should be given definite status as a National Institution with a Board of Trustees appointed *ad hoc* on which the Society of Antiquaries should be strongly represented' (Fourth Report, 1954).

This cutting of the Gordian Knot might have been welcomed by the Council if it had been discussed with them before being proposed, and if it had not come when the Treasury had shown that it considered the

Museum to be less than a Department in the Royal Scottish Museum: in September 1949 it turned down the Board's recommendation on the Keeper's salary (which had been supported by the Commission), in favour of grading as an Assistant Keeper I with £100 allowance (the same as departmental deputies in the Victoria and Albert Museum). Moreover the new Secretary of State Arthur Woodburn, in informing Lord Haddington in November of the Commission's proposals, put forward for discussion two further courses which might be interim or permanent — to transfer the responsibilities of the Galleries' Trustees to the Secretary of State while leaving management with the Society, or to transfer the responsibilities and also have the Museum administered along with the Royal Scottish Museum, leaving the Society to act in an advisory capacity. The Council much preferred management by a Board of Trustees to being taken over by a Government department, and suggested to the Galleries' Board that the appointment of a Trustee able to advise them on the Museum would be sufficient. Refusal by the Board to discuss these matters with the Council reinforced the fear that any major change geared to the then extremely unpropitious circumstances would harm rather than help the Museum's future. (Other straws in the wind were that the Board had declined to support a request for increased purchase grant for which Colonel Gomme-Duncan MP had got an encouraging reply from the Secretary of State, and that the Commission seemed to favour a Research Assistant instead of the proposed second Assistant Keeper.)

In September 1950 the Secretary of State dropped the departmental alternatives, and in accepting the Commission's recommendations for a new Board he asked what further points the Society wished him to consider. To obtain support for the Council's view of the Museum's underestimated worth and potentiality, the reply requested that a committee should be set up to enquire into the scope and status of the Museum, for example a representative of the Civil Service with a member of the Standing Commission and an archaeological specialist, possibly Dr Kendrick, Director of the British Museum. As a result the Philip Committee was appointed in April 1951 (p. 207).

While these fundamental administrative matters were being debated, no less attention was being paid to the collections. The broad aim was to make the future Museum more educationally useful by having good representative collections of all periods to move into the new building when it came. This embraced both helping to make the material itself and the results of archaeological research more widely known, and

fostering the study of the ordinary (as well as the exceptional) things of modern historical times in what might be called an archaeological way. A basic task was to build up into significant series the accumulated curate's eggs of whatever had been made or used in Scotland — within practical limitations, such as avoiding the specialities of other institutions and (for the time being) the products of industrial technology.

The most urgent task was to make the best of what the Commission's Third Report called 'the present cramped quarters, where the Museum's primary purpose of preservation and research is well nigh irreconcilable with its secondary object of popular education'. The oppressive red brick walls of the ground floor were painted cream in 1948, and the display there was completely rearranged, with bays formed by placing cases back to back to enclose and separate Highland weapons, cannon and relics of Stuart, Jacobite and Hanoverian causes, from the ecclesiastical and the burghal exhibits. There were also some changes in lay-out and density in the prehistoric gallery upstairs. Next year brighter fluorescent tubes replaced the gallery lights. *A Short Guide to Scottish Antiquities* was published, a succinct cultural history covering most kinds of things shown rather than a case to case guide (first edition 1949, 33 pp. text, 6 pp. ill., price 1s). Because there was a little more room to move about and see in, the Museum could be used by the city's new Schools' Museum Officer, T. A. Davis; children taught by him in the galleries (later on, if not then, with stack-away chairs), or less often by their own teachers, numbered over 5,000 in the year from November 1950. On the top floor one-third of the former comparative gallery was kept for temporary exhibitions, the rest being closed off for storing the exhibits thinned out from downstairs. This was not sufficient or suitable for the growing costume collection, which could only be shown a very little at a time, and the reference collection of weapons augmented in 1948 by some 150 items from the Colville collection, on indefinite loan from the Scottish United Services Museum (still the only major transfer of any kind *into* the National Museum).

To make way for these the library stacks in the attic rooms had to be reduced. As the 1,500 books and pamphlets selected for removal had come by presentation or exchange, the Council considered that the spirit of the original donation required them to be transferred to Government-owned and independent institutions alike free of charge except for transport costs. Any residue might be sold to buy books (in the event £77 worth). Of the 940 items so transferred in 1949, nearly

400 went to the Scottish universities. As many went to the National Library, 48 of them pre-1600, making over 500 for it with the 1934 loan then given outright — the manuscripts continuing on loan. (A further disposal, mainly of duplicates and offprints, was not effected until 1955.) Then under a Disposal of Surplus Material Order (1951) the non-European comparative collection was reduced to about 500 items by giving to the Royal Scottish Museum some 2,000, plus the more valuable 1,300 lent before the war, as well as 160 Greek and Roman objects, three-quarters of them previously on loan. After advice from the British Museum 700 foreign classical antiquities were auctioned in London (1954, £460). Nearly 700 flint implements were given to the British Museum (Natural History). Finally 90 skeletal items from Scotland, mostly crania, were in 1954 placed on loan in Edinburgh University's Anatomy Museum.

Small temporary exhibitions began in December 1948 with archaeological air-photographs from Kodak by J. K. S. St Joseph, followed by Scottish and comparative foreign objects in the Museum — ancient and modern, air-photographs of castles and religious houses, ladies' dresses, and in 1951 costume accessories followed by spinning and weaving. This last was devised by a post-graduate archaeology student, Audrey Henshall, and resulted in a full catalogue in the *Proceedings* of most of the Museum's pre-1700 fabrics. The first idea for an exhibition of some of the finest objects in the collections as part of the Festival of Britain (1951) was to have it at The Mound, away from the Museum's inevitable clutter, and, though this was not possible, Glasgow Art Gallery and Museum mounted it strikingly and colourfully in the vast central hall at Kelvingrove. Many of the 191 exhibits were shown properly for the first time (*Scotland's Ancient Treasures*, 32 pp., 8 pls. two in colour). A few 'treasures', notably the Hunterston Brooch, had instead to be submerged in the official 'Living Traditions' exhibition in Edinburgh. Another successful co-operative enterprise, with and in the Portrait Gallery in 1952 during the sixth Edinburgh Festival and supported by the Arts Council, was a largely loan exhibition, 'Eighteenth Century Costume', arranged and catalogued by the Assistant Keepers of each side.

Short outward loans to exhibitions became not infrequent. They comprised some clocks and watches to Kelvingrove in 1949, four pieces of the Traprain Treasure to Colchester in 1950, local objects to historical exhibitions in 1951 (Musselburgh, Galashiels and Dumfries), the recently found Anglo-Saxon hoard from Iona to the Hunterian

Museum in Glasgow (1952), and the main archaeological finds from Lewis shown for a few days in Stornoway in 1953.

The Museum's curatorial staff tried to visit and keep in touch with museums all over Scotland, and to visit museums abroad, aided by the Gunning Fellowship. The Society too, over a few years, showed the flag by holding a joint meeting with local societies, beginning with Glasgow and Perth. The Regional Group, to which by 1949 eighteen societies and six museums belonged, stimulated joint enterprises; the Assistant Keeper for several years helped to organise its excursion, while the Keeper contributed a bibliography to its annual report, and a Scottish book-list for teachers for the parent Council of British Archaeology, and also spoke at the Group's first Summer School in 1952 devoted to the Problem of the Picts. Lecturing to societies far outside the Museum was an increasing commitment.

The improved display, publicity through exhibitions and acquisitions, and wider involvements coincided indeed with a general increase in public interest in archaeology and the arts. The attendance figures for the building, which had averaged 46,000 for much of the 1930s, rose in the early 1950s to over 70,000 and jumped to over 100,000 in 1953.

Along with those activities went the development of the collections. The number of donors soon returned to the annual fifty or so, as before the war. Encouragement of post-medieval donations, to which fewer than half had been contributing, led to considerable increases in donors, at first to eighty or so from 1950. Much of the early increase was for the costume collection. Two exceptional gifts in 1952 were the c. ninth-century carved wooden box found long before in Orkney, from A. Henderson Bishop who gave most of his collection to the Hunterian Museum, and Colonel le Rossignol's bequest of Stuart jewellery. Excavated collections received included pre-war finds, already published (Midhowe Broch, Orkney) or just then reported on in the *Proceedings* (neolithic North Uist and Bothwell Castle medieval pottery). After Childe moved to London in 1946, Stuart Piggott, his successor as professor and soon in the Society, began a series of research excavations in southern Scotland mainly on neolithic and early bronze age sites; the most remarkable was that at Cairnpapple in West Lothian. Mrs Piggott did the same for the Iron Age, particularly in Roxburghshire, of which the Royal Commission were preparing an Inventory to a new higher standard. C. S. T. Calder's discovery and almost single-handed investigation of a late neolithic

culture in Shetland started at Stanydale in 1949. The Society contributed to the work at these and other sites from which the finds are preserved in the Museum. Several of the directors took part in a joint Scottish universities scheme for giving students some experience of excavation, which developed into more formal training on Roman sites under Miss A. S. Robertson of the Hunterian Museum — the Scottish Field School in Archaeology, instituted in 1947; the Society's representative on its committee was the Keeper of the National Museum. The Ministry of Works excavations at Jarlshof were completed under J. R. C. Hamilton, but the Society was unable to share in the publication, discussed in 1953. Shortage of finance had recently threatened the *Proceedings* themselves, until the Society's subscription rate was doubled after more than a century, to two guineas in 1952.

High quality, or scarce and collectable, things from recent centuries had most often to be bought. The purchase grant was restored at last from 1947-48 but, though double the old amount, could not at £440 go far to buy books for the library and treasures for the nation, even when price rises had not begun to accelerate sharply. (The library needed to be kept abreast of developments in European archaeology and in the study and context of the modern collections.) So the council decided to supplement the Government grant with a Special Purchase Fund to be launched at a suitable opportunity. This came with the purchase in 1948 of Charles I's coronation ampulla of gold, withdrawn from auction on the Society's offer of £1,000. For this, after £200 from the National Art-Collections Fund, the Council used up the money, by then £900, long earmarked for updating the 1892 printed catalogue — no longer a practicable or desirable proposition, nor replaceable by subject catalogues while the staff was so small. The public appeal brought a contribution from the Queen consort, £1,000 from the Pilgrim Trust, and over £1,000 more from other well-wishers. The Fund next year bought 135 historical and nineteenth-century prize medals for £780 from the R. W. Cochran-Patrick collection, including a gold medal of James VI on his marriage (£440), but failed over Charles II's coronation gold medal of 1650. Ordinary purchases of other medals, and of coins and tokens, were regularly being made; there were also losses through theft in 1948-9, due to inadequate supervision of an apparently trustworthy visitor, most of which were recovered. All the upwards of 300 Anglo-Saxon coins from Iona were acquired through Treasure Trove. The clothing and other finds from a bog-burial at Gunnister in Shetland also came from the Crown. Out-

standing targes, basket-hilted swords and accessories, in all twenty-five items, from the Milne-Davidson sale were acquired in 1952 for £880, from R. I. Cochrane's bequest to the Society's Fund and from the National Art-Collections Fund. The Galloway Mazer (1569) — a most important purchase for itself, for its effect on the responsibility for buying Scottish domestic silver (as the Royal Scottish Museum had declined to bid for it because of other priorities), and because of the £7,500 additional Government grant toward the final price of £11,500 — was unsuccessfully bid for in March 1954; but was later secured on the recommendation of the Export of Works of Art Committee, and with £1,000 or over from each of the Pilgrim Trust and the two other generous Funds.

When in 1948 the Council learned that Miss I. F. Grant wished to give up her Highland Folk Museum at Kingussie, they began negotiations with her, hoping to form a Trust with various public bodies to re-establish it on a more suitable site. This proved unacceptable to her, as did a proposal for cataloguing her collection, financed by the Pilgrim Trust through the Society. Miss Grant was, however, the Rhind lecturer for 1950, speaking on 'Periods of Highland Civilisation'.

The Secretary of State's departmental committee (p. 202), consisting of Sheriff J. R. Philip, Sir Thomas D. Kendrick, Director of the British Museum, and P. J. Rose, a former Assistant Under-Secretary for Scotland, were appointed 'To enquire into the scope and functions of the National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland and its relations with other institutions and to make recommendations for its administration in the light of the conclusions reached on these matters'. After considering evidence received from twenty-eight organisations and individuals, they met in the Museum on 18-22 September 1951 to hear oral evidence, and visited museums in Edinburgh, having seen national museums in London and Wales. The evidence was not published, but in 28 pages the Report covered in some detail the Museum's history, existing situation, future government and development, its relations with other museums, services required by various categories of user, and staffing and designation (Cmd 8604 1952). The chief recommendations were that the Museum, with any projected (but physically separate) Folk Museum, should come under a new Board of twenty-one members (without local authority *ex officio* representatives but otherwise on lines suggested by the Society following the 1925 precedent of the National Library); and that a central site should be obtained at the earliest opportunity for the new Museum building, which the Secretary

of State had accepted as a Government responsibility in principle shortly before he appointed them (House of Commons, 9 March 1951). However, as this new building 'would probably not be available for use in less than twenty years', additional accommodation with a larger staff should be provided in the interim; and during this the Museum should undertake the preservation of material suitable for a folk-museum, though to a much more limited degree than was later accepted by the Trustees' policy of a comprehensive balance of all periods. In the discussion on the designation National Museum of Antiquities, 'which has the advantage of covering both archaeology and prehistory on the one hand, and also history on the other', their impression that the 'exhibits are mainly archaeological and prehistoric' was even then a misleading description of the iceberg, if one went by bulk and interest to the public rather than mere numbers of small items. For the name and other matters the Committee reasonably recommended no change.

The Philip Committee's recommendations were accepted by the Government, and a Bill to effect the constitutional change was published in November 1953. The more favourable climate which the Committee stimulated can be traced in other ways. Though the third curatorial post was graded only at Research Assistant (II) level — filled in February 1952 by Miss A. S. Henshall to specialise in the prehistoric collection (and act as librarian) — the Keeper's post was from April 1953 at last graded as equivalent to those in the Royal Scottish Museum with a scale rising to £1,435, and the skills in conservation, illustration and so on of J. A. Brown in charge of the laboratory, with two assistants, were recognised by regrading to Research Assistant I like his opposite numbers; Stuart Maxwell had been given normal promotion from Assistant Keeper II to I in 1951. The purchase grant, which shared with other museums a 25% increase in 1953, was to be trebled for the new Board, to £1,500. Of greatest practical importance were premises at 18 Shandwick Place, the westward prolongation of Princes Street, made available in the autumn of 1953, into which the laboratory and much of the growing stored collections were moved, and where there was a hall and other space to be adapted for public display.

The Scottish Home Department had also, with the help of Sheriff Philip, searched on its own for a site for the new building in the area recommended and had identified as very suitable, and perhaps the only one likely to be available without planning complications, Brown Square at the south-west corner of Chambers Street, which as we have seen the Society had tried to earmark with the local authority in 1930

and again later. Confirmation or otherwise of these interim and permanent sites was referred to the new Board, the latter specifically by the Secretary of State's initial letter to the Chairman.

The National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland Act 1954 transferred to its new Board the powers and duties relating to the Museum previously vested in the Board of Trustees of the National Galleries and in the Society of Antiquaries. It thus relieved the Society of the charge and management but did not alter its other relations with the Museum, such as the mutual arrangements represented by the library and the housing of the Society, undertaken by the Treasury in return for the gift of collections. The Trustees who were to assume responsibility on 1 April 1954 were appointed in several ways: by the Secretary of State, the Chairman Lord Normand and eleven others intended to represent a wide range of public interests — two of them, as laid down in the Act, to represent archaeological interests, respectively in the West of Scotland (R. C. Reid) and the Scottish Regional Group of the Council for British Archaeology (R. L. Hunter); by the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, its President *ex officio* (Sir William Calder) and four others (J. S. Richardson, I. A. Richmond, Miss A. S. Robertson, W. Douglas Simpson); and one each by the Senatus of the four universities (R. G. Cant, J. D. Mackie, R. D. Lockhart, and K. H. Jackson), and *ex officio* the Professor of Archaeology in Edinburgh University (S. Piggott).

Epilogue, 1954-80

The subsequent twenty-six years of the double-century have been as eventful as any of the earlier stages of the Museum's history, and they have been chronicled in the published annual reports of the Trustees to the Secretary of State for Scotland, laid before Parliament. Both the achievements and the failures require a more dispassionate review than is yet possible from within the Society, far less the Museum. The exhibited collections are confined to the same space as was criticised in 1911, although what is not visible has since then grown many times in real amount and in educational, not to speak of commercial, value. Staff numbers have grown to several times those of 1954, but are still considerably short of those employed in other museums with comparable tasks.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

These notes summarise the sources used for both parts of the chapters on the origins and development of the Museum, detailed references for which will be available in a marked copy in the library of the Museum and Society.

Manuscript materials include the Society's minute books, complete from 1780, with printed circulars, miscellaneous correspondence, etc., all in the library of the Museum and Society. In the Scottish Record Office, some of the records of the Board of Manufactures have been consulted, and some minutes of the Board of Trustees of the National Galleries of Scotland. Not much in the Museum's files antedates 1938, with the exception of accession registers and the 'coin cabinet fund' ledger. Dr S. A. Shapin's unpublished thesis (University of Pennsylvania 1971), 'The Royal Society of Edinburgh to 1820: a study of the social context of Hanoverian science', and Dr Marinell Ash's draft of her chapter in this volume, have been stimulating, as well as pointers to information.

Published sources that deal retrospectively with the Society and Museum comprise the two parts of W. Smellie, *Account of the Institution and Progress of the Society of the Antiquaries of Scotland* (Edinburgh 1782, 1784), and the later accounts in *Archaeologia Scotica* iii (3: 1784-1830) (1831), with lists of members, donations, communications, and (pp. xxiv-xxviii) Skene's address of 1826, incorporated in the 'Account' by S. Hibbert and D. Laing, 1831; and *Arch. Scot.* v (1: 1831-60 and earlier) (1890), with biographical notices (1874) appended to Laing's 'Anniversary Address' of 1861, supplemented by lists of members and communications in iv (3) (1857) and of donations 1830-51 in v (3) (1890); in the *Proceedings* (from i (1) in 1852, publication dates sometimes irregular), occasional anniversary and other addresses delivered by Wilson in 1851, Murray 1822, Cosmo Innes 1857, Neaves 1859, Simpson 1861, Laing 1868, various speakers 1874, Mitchell 1901 (on work of the Society since 1851), Guthrie 1913, Macdonald 1936, Normand 1945; also in *Proceedings*, annual and special reports to members and to the Board, notably in 1881 (coin cabinet affair and interpretation of the conveyance), 1892 (re-opening), 1899 (Glenlyon brooch affair), purchase grants, excavations, obituaries, and papers, e.g. those on the early history of the Society (Boog Watson, xlv 1911), on the Minor Society (Macdonald, liii 1919), on publications (Graham, cii 1969-70, cvii 1974-5), and on Joseph Anderson (Graham, cvii 1975-6).

Catalogues of the Museum: general, published principally in 1849, 1863, 1876 and 1892; of coins, Scottish (1901), Anglo-Saxon, with a history of the collection (1966). *Short Guides*, 1926 (revised 1935); 1949, revisions to 1962. On the Clyde Forgeries, see A. Vayson de Pradenne, *Les fraudes en archéologie préhistorique* (Paris 1932). Mons Meg, 1828-9, D. Caldwell, ed., *Scottish Weapons and Fortifications* (Edinburgh 1981).

The Departmental Committee's Report on the National Museum of Antiquities (Cmd 8604, 1952) published the 1851 Conveyance, which was also printed, along with the Treasury Minutes of 1851 and 1858 concerning the Museum, in the Society's memorandum for MPs in 1888 (on finishing the building). Parliamentary Commission on Science and Art (Ireland) 1869, xxiv (Evidence in Edinburgh). The evidence and report of the Departmental Enquiry on the Board of Manufactures are Cmd 1812-13, 1903; Royal Commission on National Museums and Galleries, evidence and reports in a series of parts (Cmd 3192, 1928, Cmd 3401, 1929, etc.); Standing Commission on Museums and Galleries, reports published 1933, 1938, 1948, 1954.

Treasure Trove, see preface to 1863 *Catalogue*; printed memorandum by Society's Council, 1890 (listing accessions 1808-82), published in House of Commons Report 179 (1899) (see p. 170 above); A. H. Rhind in his *British Archaeology, its Progress and Demands* (Edinburgh 1859).

Biographies, additional to the *Dictionary of National Biography*: R. Kerr, *Memoirs of William Smellie* (2 vols., Edinburgh 1811); John Stuart, *Memoir of Alexander Henry Rhind* (Edinburgh 1864); M. C. Hibbert Ware, *Life and Correspondence of S. H. Ware* (Manchester 1882); for A. Seton, see D. Selling, *K. Vitterhets Akad. Hist. o. Ant. Handlingar* lix.3 (Stockholm 1945).

Published histories of other institutions: J. Evans, *A History of the Society of Antiquaries* (Oxford 1956). Royal Society of Edinburgh: foundation, see S. A. Shapin, *Brit. Jnl. Hist. Science* vii (1974), 1-41; history to 1862, Introduction to *General Index of Transactions* (Edinburgh 1890). British Museum and British Antiquities: A. H. Rhind, *British Archaeology* (1859) (see above); A. W. Franks, *Proc. Soc. Ant. Lond.* iii (1856); Select Committee on the British Museum, Report and Evidence, 1860, xvi. National Gallery of Scotland: Colin Thompson, *Pictures for Scotland* (Edinburgh 1972). Royal Scottish Museum: D. A. Allan, *The Royal Scottish Museum* (Edinburgh 1954). Royal Scottish Academy: Esmé Gordon, *The Royal Scottish Academy 1826-1976* (Edinburgh 1976), with details of Royal Institution building. Portrait Gallery: J. M. Gray, *The Scottish National Portrait Gallery, The Building and its Contents* (Edinburgh 1891). Also S. Piggott and M. Robertson, *Three Centuries of Scottish Archaeology* (Edinburgh University Library exhibition 1977); David Murray, *Museums, their History and their Use* (3 vols., Glasgow 1904); G. E. Daniel, *A Hundred Years of Archaeology* (London 1950); O. Klindt-Jensen, *A History of Scandinavian Archaeology* (London 1975).