

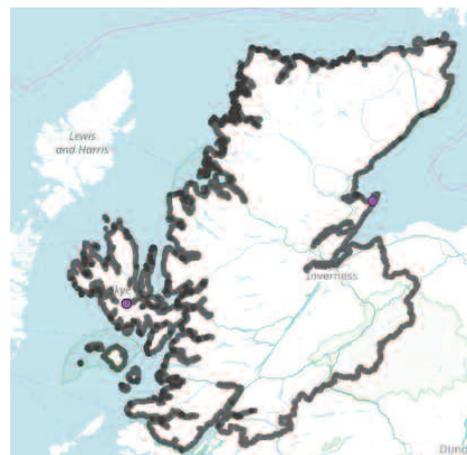
# Ring Money and Arabic Coins

**Period:** Viking (c. 800AD – c. 1000 AD)

**Material:** silver

**Complete item**

The pewter armrings are copies of silver artefacts from Viking Age Scotland. All the ring money found in Scotland to date has been plain, but there are a few examples elsewhere that have stamped decoration. Ring money allowed people to carry their wealth close to



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them. It could be displayed as jewellery or kept hidden under clothing. A hoard of four complete armrings together with some coins from the Frankish and Anglo-Saxon empire (dated to around 1000 AD) was found in the wall at Tarbat church, Portmahomack.

Ring money was made by beating a silver ingot into shape, steadily elongating it until it reached the correct length. The ends have been flattened to make them more comfortable for the wearer. The decoration has then been 'punched' into the sides by placing a 'die' with the design against the silver and striking it with a hammer, to impress the design into the silver. The final stage was to hammer the silver into the curved shape so that it could be worn around the wrist.

The box also contains replicas of Arabic coins. During the Viking period vast quantities of these were traded up the Baltic via Russia to Scandinavia, and then dispersed where Vikings travelled. There are even Viking hoards from the Highlands which contain them. The Arabic empire in Afganistan had rich resources of silver, and the Arabic coinage was noted for its purity and good weight.

**What items could be used as currency today?**



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*Viking ring-money with Frankish coins from Tarbat, now in the NMS, Edinburgh*

**See also:**

When? Early Historic

When? Viking

CT Silver Currency Production

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