

SWORD, SHIELD UMBO, ETC.

from Ormside Churchyard.



ART. XXXVI.—*Various finds in Ormside Churchyard.* By
THE PRESIDENT.

Communicated at Langholm, July 12th, 1898.

THE church of Ormeshead, near Appleby, in Westmorland, or Ormside, as it is now called,* stands upon a considerable eminence, partly artificial and partly natural, which may once have been an Anglo-Saxon or Danish burh. From time to time this churchyard or its vicinity has yielded up some curious finds of various sorts. Thus the county histories record that :—

In the year 1689, behind the church in the river Eden, on the south side next the hall, were found several vessels of brass, some of which seemed to have been gilt. The river exposed them by washing away the soil. They seemed not to be ancient. Upon one of them were the letters F.D., supposed to stand for the name of Frances Dudley, widow of John Dudley aforesaid, and daughter of Sir Christopher Pickering. They were buried probably during the civil wars, in the reign of King Charles the First.†

No authority is given for this statement, which is repeated by various writers, but the following paper has been sent to me by the rector, the Rev. J. Brunskill: it purports to be a copy of all the references to the parish of Ormeshead in the Hill MS. Collections, in the possession of the Rev. Canon Machell.‡

Note to Lady Pembroke's Will by the Rev. James Raine, Principal of Neville Hall, Newcastle.§

* Hodgson, in his *History of Westmorland*, p. 151, says—"Ormshead is vulgarly called Ormside." No doubt Ormshead or Ormeshead is the older form, and there was a family of the name of De Ormesheveds.

† Nicolson and Burn, *History of Westmorland and Cumberland*, Vol. I. p. 517.

‡ For the Hill MSS. see these *Transactions*, Vol. IX, pp. 14—28. See p. 24.

§ The Rev. James Raine printed Lady Pembroke's Will in the "*Archæologia Eliana*," 2nd series, Vol. I, pp. 1—22, but no such note occurs there.

Found

Found Sunday, 2nd of November, 1689, behind Ormside Church, in ye river Eden, on ye side next ye Church.

- (a) Thurribulum or censer. This censer has three holes at the sides evidently to put y^e cords through. It was 3 inches high, in diameter alone 5. It was of brass, gilded.
- (b) An ewer of brass, 7 inches high, 3 inches wide at y^e mouth, 13 in circumference at y^e widest part.
- (c) A brazen mortar.
- (d) A pewter basin, 3 inches deep, 8 inches diameter.
- (e) A pewter flower pot, 6 inches high. Circumference at belly 10 inches.
- (f) A cullender of pewter.

A case of brazen weights and two brazen candlesticks of different sizes.

Two pewter candlesticks, a less and a greater.

Two pewter flaggons, a less and a greater; several plates of pewter and a small lead* for boiling meat: wh: weighed 2 stone 10 pounds, on the great flagon handle F.D., *i.e.* Frances Dudley.

We have no further information as to the circumstances of this find, which is of a miscellaneous nature; including both ecclesiastical and domestic utensils. Frances Dudley was a natural daughter of Sir Christopher Pickering, who gave her the manor of Ormeshead. She married, firstly, John Dudley of Dufton, and secondly, Cyprian Hilton. Sir Christopher died 1620, and Cyprian Hilton in 1652.† It is quite probable, then, if F.D. really means Frances Dudley, that the hoard was buried during the civil wars. It may possibly have been hidden in 1651 in fear of stragglers from the army of Charles II. which then passed through this neighbourhood.

Early in this century, at a date and under circumstances now unknown, a cup, cup cover, basin or bowl formed of two thin plates of metal, one silver, the other copper, both gilded, were found in the churchyard of Ormeshead. It is now in the York Museum, presented by "Mr. John Bland of Ormeside Lodge, 1823." The catalogue speaks

* *Lead*, a vat or kitchen copper.

† See Inscriptions on brass plates in the Hilton Aisle in Ormeshead Church.

of

of it as "one of the finest specimens of Anglo-Saxon workmanship." This noble relic is dealt with by Mr. W. G. Collingwood in a paper which follows this.

In this present year—1898—another interesting find has been made in Ormeshead churchyard. On Saturday, February 5th, the sexton, in digging a grave, found some iron articles which were at first called "armour." The following account is by the rector, the Rev. J. Brunskill :

Ormshead Rectory, Appleby, Feb. 11, 1898. Dear Mr. Chancellor,—I am much obliged by your kind offers anent our find of armour. What we recovered was just at the foot of a grave which was open, and, after the funeral, getting down upon the coffin, I saw enough to conclude that we would make a special opening at the undisturbed portion between the graves. I took out a piece of iron about a foot long which may have been a rim, but left what may be the skull and a large thigh bone fast at the corner, across which the sword was said to have been. After my many instructions and orders to my old gravedigger, I was much disappointed that he had broken the sword. I had often tried to interest him about our precious cup, now at York, and (perhaps) he lately saved a rude "priest's pillow." The cap, however used, is only four inches in diameter, and a portion of the rim, or flange, still remains. It is heavy—14 ounces. The sword is fine metal, and may have been double-edged; is three feet long, and weighs more than two pounds. The guards are small, straight, and the handle too narrow for a strong hand. I enclose a rude 'rubbing' of the sword, but at my first opportunity you shall see these articles, and any other we may succeed in finding."

The articles found are four in number, (1) the sword, which is broken in two. (2) The umbo of a shield, called by Mr. Brunskill the cap. (3) A piece of iron about a foot long. (4) A small knife. They have been submitted to the Society of Antiquaries of London, and pronounced to be Danish.* A detailed account follows, which can be compared with the illustration given with this paper.

The total length of the *sword* is 3 feet over all. The blade is straight, two-edged, and 2 feet 7 inches in length from the quillon. It is

* See *Proc. S.A.* 2nd series, Vol. XVII, p. 194.

broken

broken into two pieces by a fracture, which makes two rough right angles in crossing the blade, and is distant from the quillon on one side of the blade $15\frac{3}{8}$ inches, and on the other $16\frac{1}{4}$ inches. The blade is broadest at the quillon, viz., $2\frac{1}{8}$ inches; it gradually decreases upwards, and at 3 inches from the point is $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in breadth. The quillon is 4 inches in length, slightly convex on the two sides, and on the surface next to the grip, but straight on the side next to the blade. It projects at right angles to the blade on either side about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch. The pommel is a small straight bar, $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches in length, and a square of $\frac{1}{4}$ inch in section. The sword is exactly similar to one engraved on O. Rygh's *Norske Oldsager* and assigned to "Le Second Age du Fer."

The *umbo* is very plain and simple; its diameter at its base is $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches, with a flange, part of which remains, $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches in breadth; two of the nails by which it was fastened to the wooden shield are still in the flange. The height of the *umbo* is $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches; it has no knob at the top, and is perfectly plain.

The third article found is a piece of iron about a foot in length, and semicircular or nearly so in section, with a diameter of $\frac{5}{8}$ inch; four nails in it at intervals of $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches show that it has been nailed upon some object. It has been conjectured that this is the brace or handle by which the shield was held, but the intervals between the nails, of $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches, are too small to admit of the insertion of a hand. It may have been the rim of a wooden shield.

The last article is a small knife, which measures, tang and blade together, $4\frac{3}{8}$ inches, of which the blade accounts for $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches.

By the kindness of Mr. Brunskill, these interesting objects are now in the Museum in Tullie House, Carlisle.