


An Account of some Antiquities found at Norby Estate, in Norway, in a Letter from Mr. PETERSON to the Rev. JOHN HODGSON, Sec.

IN the county of Laurvig, in Norway, there is an estate called Norby, the property of Gulbrand Rosenberg, on which is a burial ground, which belongs to a very remote period. It consists of numerous barrows, or conical heaps of earth, and forms a parallelogram of about 400 feet long and 150 feet broad.

Several of these barrows have been opened. Some of them for the purpose of removing their materials for making roads, and others with the hope of finding jewels in them, or ornaments formed of the precious metals. In my visit to Norby in the spring of this year, Gulbrand Rosenberg presented me with the articles hereafter enumerated, on condition that I would present them to the Antiquarian Society of Newcastle.

1. The fragments of an earthen jar, which were found in the barrow that was first opened. The clay of which it is made is of a very coarse kind, resembling the fire clay used about Newcastle: it is also very slightly burnt, being of a black colour. The inner surface of these fragments is covered with a sooty substance, and the outside of its neck



has been stamped all over with a figure of the quarry or diamond form, thus. It was placed near the centre of the barrow, and had a stone, like a hand millstone, put upon it as a cover. The hole of the millstone was stopped with No.

2. A sling stone, which is in the form of an egg, but flattened on one side. It is 4 inches long, $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter in its thickest part,

and $2\frac{1}{4}$ in the thickest part of the flatted side. It weighs one pound eleven ounces and a half avoirdupoise, and consists of iron-stone. It is grooved with four lines, dividing it equally into four parts, in a longitudinal direction, and meeting at each end of it. These grooves would seem to have been for the purpose of fastening it to a cord; and I suppose that it has been thrown from the hand and regained by one end of the cord being kept secure, in the same manner as the Morgan Rattler was used in the late Irish rebellion.

After finding the above noticed articles, the barrow was dug through to the level of the adjoining ground; where, from the blackness of the earth, pieces of charcoal, burnt bones, and melted pieces of metal, it was conjectured that the bodies of the person or persons interred in it had been burnt.

I conversed with the person who was present when the urn, No. 1, was found. He is a joiner, of the name of Lind, and lives in the neighbourhood of Norby. He told me that the millstone was thrown aside, and the urn broken by the men who found it, for they tossed it away, disappointed that it contained no treasures.

The same person was also present at the opening of another of these barrows, in which a human skeleton was found. The body did not appear to have been laid in a horizontal, but in a sloping position in the ground, the feet being a little inclined; but this position might probably have been occasioned by some partial sinking of the ground. The whole skeleton was perfectly entire, but fell to pieces as soon as touched. It was only of the ordinary stature of man, and no metals or other antiquities were found with it.

There have also been found in these barrows, at different periods, the following articles:—

3. An axe of steel, seven inches long between its mouth and the back of its helve-hole. Its mouth is four inches broad, and the helve-hole wider next the back than the mouth.

4. A steel spear, fourteen inches long, much blistered and rendered brittle with rust.

5. A very powerful bridle bit of iron, with an iron ring, three inches and a half in diameter, and other appendages of iron attached to each side of it. Also fragments of two other iron rings, having the resemblance of swivels, and some other articles, which may have belonged to the reins of a bridle; but which are much blistered with rust.

6. A bason, seven inches in diameter, and two inches and three-quarters deep, formed out of a sort of stone, which in Norway is still made into vessels, which are used for boiling in, as pipkins are in England. It has had an iron handle fastened upon it, the rivets of which still remain in its sides; and it has also been broken, and re-united with wires and small iron cramps. The stone of which it is made is of a grey colour, shining, and micaceous, and so soft as to be readily turned upon a lathe. In modern books of mineralogy it is called *Lapis ollaris*; in Norway, *Kittlestien*, *Grodstien*, and *Fitstien*; and in England, *Potstone*: and it is probably of the same sort as that which Pliny says was formerly got in Sifano, and which was hollowed out, and turned into vessels used for cooking victuals in, and for culinary purposes; and concerning which there are some curious notices in De Laet on Gems, collected from Gesner, Agricola, Scaliger, and others.

ERIC PETERSON.

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