



ARCHÆOLOGIA ÆLIANA.

THE CHURCH AT GUYZANCE.

THE following notes, chiefly from local information, especially the extract given from the Survey of the Percy estates in 1567 by Thomas Clarkson, may be found useful as an appendage to the account of Guyzance, and its lords, the Tysons and the Hiltons, printed in the *Archæologia Æliana*, vol. iii., p. 129.

Clarkson's descriptions of the church and its possessions is both graphic and minute; and it is to be remarked that in his account, written only thirty years after the suppression of the monastery at Alnwick, and consequent secularisation of its estates, it is expressly stated that the chapel of Brainshaugh was the parish church of of Guyzance.

By permission of His Grace the Duke of Northumberland, the following extract from this valuable survey is given:—

— *Brainshawghe cum suis pertinenciis.*

To the westard of the town of Guysnes is scituate one chapell with certaine other good buyldyngs unto the said chapell appertaining called Braynshawgh which chapell was foundit by — then lord of Shilbottell Guisans and other townes which afterwarde was the inheritance of the Baron Hilton by marriage of the dowghter and soylle heire of the for-said — lord then of Shilbottell and other the premisses. It was first a nonrye¹ and after chanones at the last browght to the master and his felowe who then was accomptant to the monasterye of Alnewyke of all the yssues and profits which yerely did encrease above the fyndyng of the sayd master and felowe and their famylle. — then lord of Aclyng-ton did graunt that parcell of grounde wherein the scite of the sayd chapell and other buyldyng standith to the abbott and convent of the said lait dissolved monasterye of Alnewyk for the same was parcell of Aclyng-ton in the old ynglish tonge called Brainshawghe: all the other land

¹ "Priorissa de Gyesnes habet 3l. 14s. 4d."—*Pope Nicholas's Taxation, 1292.*

meadowes and pastures therunto adjoyning was gevyn by the said — lord of Shilbotle to the mayntenance of the said religious persones in puram elemosinam as by the register book of the same at length is declared with all other parcellis of lande apperteyning to the said howse of Brainshawghe lyin without this bounder folowyng and in other places as heirafter shal be described.

Begynning at the water of Coquet at the southeast corner of the dicke of Midlewood one the north syde of Acklington Parke at the head of the Marche hagge which ys a parcell of grounde laityly pertaining to the town of Acton and gevyn by the lord of Acton to the howse of Brainshawghe in maner and form aforesaid from thence a dicke called Brainshawghe dicke invyroneth all the ground as well arable pasture as meadow therunto adjoining and belonging saving such certayne parcell of grounde as heirafter shal be mentioned unto the water of Coquet.

It is scituate upon the water Coquet nigh Aclington parke with two gardyns besyd the churchyard: the kirk is leadit: ther is two closes adjoyning unto the said gardyns called the Lee Closes conteyning — acres of grounde over and besyd thre certayne parcell of arable ground containing — acres which are all ditched with one quickwood dicke with another parcell of pasture grounde joyning upon Gusnes loyning called Morelee which containeth — acres wherein standith a — mylne in good reparations called Brainshawghe milne.

Ther is a close which is parcell of Haisand and adjoyning to the said ground called the Chathenlee Closse and also it pertaineth to Brainshawghe it conteynith — acres and ther is also within the bounder of Brainshawghe and parcel of the same contening — acres called Shell Close it is a pasture ground well dicked with a quickwood hedge and ther is one cottaige lyinge in Whittell which is rented at vi^s. viij^d. p. annum and one cottaige in Haisand p. annum iiij^s. a nother cottaige in Bredderwyk p. annum viij^s. all which are also parcell of Brainshawghe over and besyds one close in Haysand field called the Nunne Close p. annum ij^s. as also the tenement and toft with ther appurtenance in Guysance p. annum — as heirafter in the title of the towne of Guysance more at large it doith appeare.²

The inhabitants of the towne of Guysnes and Barnhill do pay all their teithes to Brayneshawghe the teithe corne of Guysans onely excepted which is of the yerely value of —: they ought to go to no other church then to the chapell of Brainshawghe for it is the parice church in the which owght to be devyn service of God mynistered thre days in the weeke: they owght onely to crystine and baptisme the children at Shilbotle only and now the said inhabitants have no service at the said chapell of Brayneshawghe but at Easter onely so that in lait dayes as well as in the ancient tyme ther was the master and his felowe with others that used to do solemne service as is before recited nowe is ther

² Accordingly, under the head of "Guysnes.—John Foster, knight, free-tenant," we find that Henry Heron in right of the Queen, holds free, as parcel of the land of Brainshawghe, by rents payable to the Lord, 1. Nine acres of arable land, one rood of meadow and one acre of pasture; 2. A cottage there with three acres of arable land, one rood of meadow and — acres of pasture; 3. Another cottage with two selions of land now in the tenure of Gilderd Wilson.

not one preast either to singe or saye any thing which wold be by my Lord's helpe be amendit.

Sir John Foster haith the said chapell of Brayneshawghe with all the spiritualities thereunto belonging as also the temporalities of the Queene's Majesty by lease.

From this and collateral evidence it appears that Sir John Forster, the celebrated Warden of the Marches, had become possessed, by grant from the Crown, of Alnwick Abbey and its dependencies, including the chapel of Brainshaugh. He lived at Alnwick Abbey while holding the office of Lord Warden, and, from the above, was in possession of the church lands at Guyzance about 1567. His heirs sold the whole to Sir Francis Brandling, Knight, whose son, Mr. Robert Brandling,³ is by Mayson stated to be proprietor about 1618.⁴

Alnwick Abbey and the surrounding lands were sold by Robert Brandling and Ralph Brandling, grandsons of the above, to Mr. John Doubleday, but the Guyzance chapel lands cannot be clearly traced. In 1661 the heirs of Sir Francis Brandling, Knt., were fined for not appearing at the Court Baron of Alnwick, to do suit and service for lands at Guyzance. In 1699, the property is mentioned as in the hands of the Widdringtons of Hauxley, who sold the Guyzance estate to the ancestor of Mr. Tate of Bankhouse, but the gardens, &c., around the chapel seem to have lapsed to the adjoining estate.

The chapel ruins, from the best information now to be obtained, have lain in the present delapidated state, without material change, for the last sixty years. Previous to that period, from the division of the tithes among several lay impropiators, the ownership of the graveyard and site of the ruin were undefined, and consequently the materials lay at the mercy of those around; great quantities of stone were then taken away for buildings at Brainshaugh, &c. It is said, I know not whether correctly or no, that the terrace in front of the hall was flagged with gravestones therefrom.

Henry Trobe, aged seventy-six, who was born at Guyzance Mill, which his father tenanted before him, never saw or heard of any change in the ruin, save as to the outer fence; this was a broken-down wall,

³ Robert Brandling of White House, in the parish of Alnwick, buried March 10th, 1664-5, was son of Sir Francis Brandling, Knight, of Alnwick Abbey, 1623-25, who died in 1641.—*Surtees' Durham*, vol. ii. p. 90.

⁴ In this Survey the following properties are described as belonging to "Mr. Robert Branlyne—sometime Sir John Forster's freehold":—1. A cottage and crofts in the occupation of Robert Gibson, 2a. 3r. 6½p.; 2. A messuage house, garth, and crofts, in the occupation of Robert Gibson, 1a. 1r. 30½p.; 3. A cottage and a garth in the occupation of John Horsley, 32½p.

perhaps as old as the church, so delapidated that the cattle from the surrounding pasture could graze over the grave-yard. The present enclosure wall was built by the late John Tate, Esq., of Bankhouse, after he had acquired the sole property in the area.

At the Tithe Commutation in 1837, the district was treated as the "Extra-parochial chapelry of Brainshaugh," having been so considered, as shewn by county records, more than two hundred years. Thomas Tate, Esq., is now sole tithe-owner, and proprietor of the freehold of the ruin and grave-yard, his late father having gradually bought up the divided shares from Mr. Bacon of Hazon, and others.

The late Mr. Tate remembered service being performed frequently under the shade of a large thorn tree outside of the ruin. When the old hall at Gloster Hill was burnt down, on Sunday morning, 7th January, 1759; his parents were at the service, and had to be sent for on account of the fire. I cannot learn from whence came the officiating minister, or how he was recompenced for his toil. Mr. Trobe on one occasion, about fifty years ago, attended within the ruin 'a preaching' by the Rev. Mr. Beverstock, who had married the widow of Cook of Brainshaugh; but this was probably nothing more than the casual volunteer of a clergyman resident in the neighbourhood.

The burial ground is open for any inhabitant of Brainshaugh or Guyzance. A register of burials was commenced by the late Mr. Tate; but it is said interments have been variously registered at Edlingham, Shilbottle, Felton, and Warkworth, as suited the convenience of the clergyman. Mr. Tate's family burial place is within the chancel, and I am told that in excavating the grave of the late Mr. John Tate, at a depth of about eight feet, some fragments of stained glass, and a small implement like a pair of scissors or snuffers, were thrown out. Unfortunately these were appropriated by a neighbouring farmer, and lost sight of; so that it cannot be ascertained whether the relics were of any value, historical or intrinsic. The Vicar of Shilbottle has generally been called on to read the burial service, but most likely from no better reason, than his being the nearest resident clergyman, and willing to oblige the friends.

The popular tradition, so frequently appertaining to the like ruins, exists in the neighbourhood, that the Priory of Brainshaugh was an appendage to Brinkburn, and that a subterranean passage existed between the two places. All this is of course mere fable, the chapel undoubtedly belonging to Alnwick, but it is curious as shewing that these grandsire tales, however confused, had their origin in actual circumstances, to note that Brinkburn had possessions in Guyzance and at

Barnhill.⁵ May not the subterranean passage have been originally a secret footpath through the dense wood which on one occasion *nearly* preserved Brinkburn from a Border foray, and in early times filled the Vale of the Coquet?

The existing walls of the ruin are faced with dressed stones, 'blocked in course,' but very irregular; the core of the walls being filled with round stones from the river, &c., and coarse lime; they are about thirty inches thick. In the nave, about half height, there are holes as if at one time there had been beams let in to carry the floor of an upper chamber. The piscina, which is of two basins, has the arch of its recess formed of one large stone, quite out of proportion to the 'blockers' of varied size and thickness around.

The church of Guysance, as a member of Alnwick Abbey, had right of pasture in Edlingham moor. We find that John the son of John the son of Waldeve of Edlingham, granted to the Abbot and Convent of St. Mary's, at Alnwick, free and sufficient common in his whole moor and pasture of Edlingham for all their horses tame and wild, and for all their cattle as well of their house of Alnwick as of the house of Gysnes. This John was living in 1241, which gives an approximate date to the grant. It was confirmed by Edward I. in 1307, as appears in Tanner's *Notitia Monastica*, quoted by both Hutchinson and Mackenzie in their county histories.

In all probability, Shilbottle, Hazon, and Guyzance being from the earliest records connected as one fee under the barony of Alnwick, the latter vill had been originally part of the parish of Shilbottle, separated therefrom, in the lapse of time, by the distance of the parish church and the convenience of Brainshaugh chapel, both of which pertained to the Abbey of Alnwick. When the sustentation of the 'master of Brainshaugh and his felowe' was withdrawn, the district would be left nominally as the parish of Brainshaugh, but practically as extra-parochial.

But whence came the minister who held service 'pretty regular' under the thorn tree a hundred years ago? If I am correctly informed that the early modern interments were registered at Edlingham, is there not some room for surmise whether any 'pastoral' connection in lieu of the right of pasturage arose between the two places, and whether the duties having been performed by the clergyman from Edlingham, he entered the services done in his own parish register?

C. S. B.

⁵ Clarkson's Survey of 1567 states that George Carre, son of William Carre of Whitton, holds freely at Guyzance two messuages and 20 acres of arable land, 2 acres of meadow, and 6 acres of pasture, late pertaining to the monastery of Brenkebourne, by suit of court and a free rent to the lord: also that the heirs of Edward Bednell hold there freely a tenement called Barnhill, and certain lands adjoining formerly the possessions of the same monastery, by fealty, suit, and rent.