

del., Robt. Pollard sculpt. — Chancel of St. Andrew's Church, Newcastle, 1840, Mark Hall Gibson. — Buck's View of Tinemouth, 1728. — South-east view of the Church of St. Dunstan in the East, Jos. Skelton sculp. 1817.

RUNIC INSCRIPTION ON BARONSPIKE.

BY EDWARD CHARLTON, M.D.

IN the month of March, 1864, a shepherd was watching some ewes on Baronspike, a high range of crags, or rather of huge stones, lying about two miles to the north-east of Bewcastle Church. He suddenly observed some faint traces of letters on a large square stone, facing to the north-west, and which was then illuminated by the slanting rays of the setting sun. On examining the letters he found them of a form totally unknown to him. The inscription consisted of three lines and a quarter, in letters about $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches long. No information of this discovery reached us at Newcastle, but about two months ago our attention was called to it by a letter from a learned antiquary in Copenhagen, who stated that it was noticed in *The Builder*, for October 8th, 1864. On referring to this number of that journal, I found the following paragraph:—

“Last winter a shepherd discovered an old inscription on one of the large rocks at Barnspike, a long range of crags cresting the hills about three miles to the east of Bewcastle Church. The inscription is Scandinavian or old Norse, and may perhaps be read thus—

BARNR HRAITA AT GILLESBUETH
IAS UAS DAUTHE I TRICU ROB
TE VAULKS AT FADRLAN NU LLANEGSEL

Barnr cut this in memory of Gillesbueth, who was slain in a truce by Robt. de Vaulx, for his patrimony again coveted.”

“The inscription is on the north-west side of a large crag, and well protected from the weather, but is almost illegible,” &c., &c.

On Friday, November 10th of this year, we rode over to the spot, and a herd-boy, from the High Grains, soon pointed out to us the inscription. Our astonishment was great, for instead of illegible or almost illegible characters, we found the surface of the stone covered with three bands of black paint, while each letter had been worked out with a sharp tool so that it looked like a thing of yesterday. On close examination,

while copying the inscription, we found two or three strokes indicating letters which had been missed by the modern Vandals in their operations, and in these, to our great satisfaction, we observed that the hoary lichen which closely covered the rest of the stone was quite perfect. On our return to the High Grains house we closely cross-examined two of the men there as to the original condition of the stone, and they both assured us that when first discovered the letters were, as stated in *The Builder*, nearly illegible, and that they were covered with lichen, or, as they expressed, "with the fog," like the rest of the stone. We learned from them that this injury was inflicted by the photographer and his companion, no doubt with the object of obtaining a good negative of the inscription. As it stands at present, it requires a keen eye to be certain that it is not a modern forgery, were it not for the certain testimony of the honest farmer and his shepherd at the High Grains. We read the inscription as follows:—

BARANR : HRAITA AT GILLHES : BUETH

IAS : UAS : TAEUTHR : I : TRIGU : ROEB

TE : UAULKX : AT : FETRELANA : NU :

LLANERCOSTA.

BARANR : HRAITA AT GILLHES:BUETH
IAS : UAS : TAEUTHR : I : TRIGU : ROEB
TE : UAULKX : AT : FETRELANA : NU :
LLANERCOSTA.

Baranr writes (these) to Gillesbueth
who was slain in truce (by) Rob
de Vaulx at Fetrelana now
Lanercosta.

Had we not ourselves inspected this stone, and heard from credible

witnesses of its original condition, we should have hesitated about receiving it as genuine. There has always been a tradition in the country that Robert de Vaulx, who founded Lanercost Abbey in 1169, slew Gille or Gilbert, son of Beuth, Lord of Bewcastle, at a meeting for agreement appointed between them under trust and assurance of safety. "Which shameful action made the said Robert leave arms and betake himself to the study of the law, in which he made such proficiency, that he became a judge. But this murder still stuck upon his mind, until he made satisfaction to Holy Church by building the Abbey of Lanercost, and endowing it with that very patrimony which had occasioned the murder."—Nicolson and Burn's Cumberland, p. 475.

The Editor of the Pipe Rolls of Cumberland and Westmoreland, published by this Society in 1847, thinks that there is no foundation for this story, as Gilles Bueth was dead before any of the Vaulx family had any connection with Gilsland. It is quite true that the De Vaulxs only obtained the Barony of Gilsland after the death of Gilles Bueth, but the murder of this chieftain by Robert de Vaulx may have taken place, as tradition tells us, several years before. We know that Gilles Bueth resisted the grant of Gilsland to William de Meschines by force of arms, so that the said William could not take possession thereof (temp. Henry I).

Henry the Second, very early in his reign, recovered possession of the Northern Counties from the Scotch, and he then gave to Hubert de Vaulx, the father of Robert de Vaulx, "all that land which Gilbert, the son of Beot, had on the day of his death, of whomsoever he held it." It is plain from this that Gilbert de Bueth held Gilsland by force of arms against the legal owner, and it was not unlikely that the De Vaulxes should be rewarded with his lands, when one of that family took means to rid the King of England of his troublesome enemy. From the inscription before us it seems that the deed was accomplished on the very spot where Lanercost now stands, but which in olden times was called Fetrelana. It was a likely spot for a truce meeting, that level ground near the river's bank on the confines of the Bewcastle district.

The inscription is in old Norse, and the Runes are purely Scandinavian or Norse. We observe the use of the word *HRAITA*, *writes*, instead of *rista* or *ristr*, and the same is to be found in the Carlisle Runic inscription of nearly the same date. Some of the Runes are reversed, and some too are compound, or more than one letter is expressed on the same stem. It is singular that the crag should have the name of Baronspike, that being the name too of the writer of the inscription. With regard to the word *TRICU*, it occurs also upon a cross in the Isle of Man, *IR OSKETIL SULTIT TRICU*, whom *Osketil* killed in a truce.

The character employed, as well as the language, are both nearly contemporaneous with the period when the events recorded took place. We may assume that some follower of Gillesbueh recorded on this wild crag the murder of his master. Few in those days would remember the Danish Runes, and fewer still would seek for a memorial of the deed in this desolate spot.

That so fine and remarkable an inscription should have been so recklessly injured must be deeply regretted by all archæologists.

DEEDS FROM THE REV. JAMES EVERETT.

A BUNDLE of documents not of the highest interest. Among them is Lord Eldon's autograph as chancellor. One or two notes are given below.

YORK CITY. MAYOR'S SEAL AND POWERS.—16 Jul. 21 Eliz. 1589. Noveritis nos Johannes Dobson de Novo Castro super Tinam mr. mariner et Margareta uxor ejus relaxasse et quietum clamasse Nicholao Dicconson, de civitate Ebor., roper, in sua plena et pacifica possessione et seisina die confeccionis presentium existen., totum jus in uno mesuagio extra Walmegaite Barre in parochia Sancti Laurentii extra Walmegaite Barre in suburbiis civitatis Ebor. "Quia sigilla nostra pluribus sunt incognita, sigillum officii maioratus civitatis Ebor. huic dictæ cartæ nostræ apponi procuravimus. Et ego Robertus Criplinge Maior civitatis Ebor. ad instantiam et specialem requisicionem dictorum Johannis Dobson et Margarete uxoris ejus, et precipue pro eo quod prefata Margareta per me examinata confessa fuit coram me prefato maiore dictam cartam esse factam suam propriam libere et spontanie, et absque aliqua compuncione sive cohercione dicti Johannis Dobson viri sui: ideo in verum testimonium premissorum sigillum mei officii maioris civitatis predictæ presentibus apposui."—Two small effaced seals.—*Sigillum. secretum. officii. maioratus. civitat. Eboraci.* The city arms, between two ostrich feathers, engraved in Boyne's Yorkshire Tokens.

STERNE.—Arms sealed by *Elizabeth Sterne of York, widow*, on a bond of 17 Mar. 1769 to Stephen Croft of York, Esq., securing £200 to her daughter Lidia Sterne of York, spinster. Quarterly. 1 and 4, At the base are waves, from which rises a tower at the sinister. There is a chief charged with a crescent between two mullets, and below this at the dexter side a sun from which proceed beams in the direction of the tower. 2 and 3, A bend charged with three owls? Witnessed by "A. Ricard, A. Ricard Jun."

BYRON.—Seal of arms used by parties to a deed concerning property in the Market Street Lane, Manchester, 26. Dec. 1720, witnessed by