

V.—ON THE MONASTERY AND CHURCH OF ST. PETER,
MONKWEARMOUTH.

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[Read on the 29th October, 1884.]

THE foundation of the monastery of Wearmouth antedates that of Jarrow by seven years. Benedict Biscop on arriving in England from his third journey to Rome, repaired to the court of Egfrid, then King of Northumbria. He displayed the relics and literary treasures which he had acquired at Rome and Vienna, "and," says Bede, "found such favour in the eyes of the King, that he forthwith gave him seventy hides of land out of his own estates, and ordered a monastery to be built thereon for the first pastor of his church. This was done," adds Bede, "at the mouth of the river Were, on the left bank (ad ostium fluminis Wiri ad laevam), in the 674th year from the incarnation of the Lord, in the second indiction, and in the fourth year of the reign of King Egfrid" (*Vita Beatorum Abbatum Wiremuthensium et Girvensium*, Giles's *Bede*, IV., p. 364).

After a year had elapsed, Benedict went to France and engaged masons, whom he brought back with him, that they might "build him a church of stone in the style of the Romans, which he had always loved." Within a year the structure was roofed, and mass celebrated therein. When the work was well nigh complete, Benedict sent messengers to France to bring thence "makers or artificers of glass," who at that time were unknown in Britain, that they might glaze the windows of his church, cloisters, and dining-rooms. Benedict next laid down rules for the government of his monastery, and departed on his fourth journey to Rome. On his return, amongst other treasures, "he brought with him pictures of sacred images, to adorn the church of the blessed Apostle Peter, which he had built; namely, a picture of the blessed Mother of God and perpetual Virgin Mary, and also of the

twelve Apostles, with which he intended to cover the middle vault, on boarding placed from wall to wall; also pictures from the gospel history with which to decorate the south wall of the church, and pictures of the visions of the Apocalypse of the blessed John, with which to adorn equally the north wall; in order that all persons entering the church, though unable to read, wherever they looked, might either contemplate the amiable aspect of Christ and his saints, though but in a picture, or with watchful mind remember the blessing of our Lord's incarnation, or having before their eyes, as it were, the separation of the last judgment, might be the more mindful carefully to examine themselves" (Bede, *Vita Abbatum Wiremuth. et Girvens*). Benedict also brought with him one John, archchanter of the Church of St. Peter at Rome, and abbot of the monastery of St. Martin, to teach the English the Roman method of chanting, singing, and ministering in the church. He, on arriving in England, not only communicated instruction *viva voce*, but also left not a few writings behind him, which, in Bede's day, were still preserved in the library of the monastery of Monkwearmouth. Agatho was then Pope, and he, at the earnest solicitation of Egfrid, gave to Biscop a letter of privilege by which his monastery was for ever made safe and secure from all manner of foreign invasion.

The foundation and endowment of the church and monastery of Jarrow soon followed. The twin monasteries, at least during their early history, were but one institution, of which Biscop was the head. When, however, the second branch of his establishment was planted at Jarrow, he appointed Ceolfrid abbot there under himself, and at the same time made Easterwine abbot at Wearmouth.

The story of Ceolfrid's life I have told in my paper on Jarrow,* and that of Easterwine must now be related.

He was of noble birth. Although Biscop was his cousin, he neither expected nor received any distinction in the regimen and routine of the monastic life. He underwent with pleasure the usual course of monastic discipline. He went from the court of the King, at the age of twenty-four, to the solitude of a recluse's cell. He was an inmate of Biscop's house almost, if not quite, from its foundation. His humility of character was apparent in the willingness, nay, the pleasure, with

* *Arch. Æl.*, Vol. X., pp. 195-216.

which he took part in threshing and winnowing, in milking the ewes and cows, and in the labours of the bakehouse, the garden, and the kitchen. When, after spending eight years in the monastery, during seven of which he was in priest's orders, he was raised to the dignity of abbot, the same spirit distinguished him. Frequently, when he went forth on the business of the monastery, and found the brethren working, he joined them in their labour, guiding the shaft of the plough, wielding the smith's hammer, or shaking the winnowing fan. He was a young man of great strength, pleasant voice, handsome appearance, and kind and generous disposition. He ate the same kind of food as the rest of the brethren, and in the same apartment. After he became abbot he slept in the same common dormitory as before. When he had held this office only four years a pestilence visited the district, and from its ravages the seclusion of the monastic walls afforded no security. Many of the brethren died, and Easterwine amongst the number. The last five days of his life he spent in a private apartment, from which he came out one day, and sat in the open air. He sent for all the brethren, and took tender leave of them, giving to each weeping monk the kiss of peace.*

Meantime, Benedict had departed, soon after the appointment of Ceolfrid and Easterwine, on his fifth and last journey to Rome. During his absence the church of Jarrow was completed and dedicated. This event took place on the 23rd of April, 685. Not quite seven weeks before (7th March) Easterwine had died, and four weeks later (20th May) Biscop's friend and patron, Ecgfrid, was slain in battle. After Easterwine's death, the brethren of Wearmouth consulted with Ceolfrid as to the election of an abbot, and their choice fell upon the deacon Sigfrid, a man skilled in theology, of courteous manners, and admirable temperance, whose disposition was chastened and sweetened by physical infirmity—an incurable disease of the lungs.

When Biscop returned, Sigfrid had been duly installed. As before, he brought treasures and relics in abundance. There were pictures for the decoration of the church at Jarrow, and others, representing scenes

* At Jarrow the pestilence seems to have been even more fatal than at Wearmouth. "In the monastery, over which Ceolfrid presided, all who could read, or preach, or say the antiphones and responses, were carried off, except the abbot himself and one little boy (puerulus), who was brought up and educated by that abbot, and now holds the office of presbyter in the same monastery" (*Hist. Abbatum Girvensium, Auct. Anon.* Giles's *Bede*, VI., p. 421).

in the Saviour's life, "with which he surrounded the whole church of the blessed Mother of God, which he had erected in the greater monastery [of Wearmouth] (*Divinae historiae picturas, quibus totam beatae Dei Genetricis, quam in monasterio majore fecerat, ecclesiam in gyro coronaret*)" (Bede, *Vita Abbatum Wiremuth. et Girvens.*) Biscop also brought "two palls, entirely of silk, of incomparable work (*pallia duo holoserica incomparandi operis*), with which he afterwards purchased from King Alfrid and his counsellors three hides of land on the south bank of the river Wear, near its mouth."

Shortly after his return home Biscop was seized by paralysis, which, during three years of suffering, increased upon him. When visited by the brethren he exhorted them to obey the monastic rule which he had given them, and which, he alleged, he had formed from the practices of seventeen monasteries visited by him during his travels. He requested earnestly that the large and noble library, which he had brought from Rome, should be preserved in its entirety, and neither be injured by neglect nor dispersed. But the one thing about which he was most anxious was the election of his successor. "And truly," said he, "I say to you, in comparison of the two evils, it would be more bearable to me, if God so determined, that all this place, in which I have raised a monastery, should be reduced to perpetual desolation than that my brother according to the flesh, who, as you know, walks not in the way of truth, should succeed me as abbot in the government of this monastery." On this speech, reported by Bede, Mr. Surtees remarks that Biscop's apprehensions "evidently pointed to a practice, not totally infrequent, of converting the headship of religious houses into a successive and almost lay inheritance" (*Hist. Durham*, II., 4).*

Taking counsel with Sigfrid, the advances of whose malady gave evident proof of the nearness of his dissolution, Benedict sent for Ceolfrið, and, with the approval of all the brethren of Wearmouth and Jarrow, made him abbot of both monasteries. Sigfrid died in the autumn of 686. Benedict only survived him four months. He died on the 12th of January, 687, and was buried in the church of St. Peter, Monkwearmouth.

* But see Surtees's *Hist. Durham*, I., p. vii; Whitaker's *Hist. Whalley*, 1st Ed., p. 41, 3rd Ed., p. 55, 4th Ed., I., p. 75; Raine's *Priory of Hexham*, I., Pref. p. 1; and Mr. Longstaffe's paper on "The Hereditary Sacerdotage of Hexham," in *Arch. Æl.*, N.S., Vol. IV.

The chief circumstances in Ceolfrid's life I have related in my previous paper. During his government, one Witmer gave, as a perpetual possession to the monastery of Wearmouth, ten hides of land in the vill called Daldun, which he had received from King Alfrid. Daldun may safely be identified with Dalton.* When South (or Bishop's) Wearmouth was given by King Athelstan to St. Cuthbert, Dalton was included as one of its appurtenances.† There is evidence that not long after the establishment of St. Cuthbert's at Durham, Dalton was one of its possessions,‡ and to this day the gift of Witmer forms part of the endowment of the cathedral of Durham.

Ceolfrid had ruled seven years at Jarrow before the jurisdiction of the two houses was conferred upon him. In this latter position he remained twenty-eight years. His monastic life at Jarrow and Wearmouth must have covered a period of over forty years. Finding age and infirmity creeping upon him, he determined to resign his charge, and repair to Rome, intending there to end his days. The brethren begged him, on bended knees, to forego his purpose. The third day after he had revealed his intention he set out. The account of his departure, as given by Bede, deserves a place here.

Early on the morning of Thursday, the 4th of June [715], mass was sung in the church of the blessed Mother of God and perpetual Virgin Mary, and in the church of the Apostle Peter, and after those who were present had received the holy communion, he immediately prepared for his journey. All assemble in the church of the blessed Peter; he kindles the incense, offers a prayer before the altar, pronounces a blessing upon all, standing on the steps, and holding the censer in his hand. They go thence, the cries of all mingling with the responses of the litany. They enter the oratory of the blessed martyr Lawrence, which was opposite the dormitory of the brethren (quod in

* See *Feodarium Prioratus Dunelmensis*, p. 121.

† Leland's *Collectanea*, I., p. 374; *Hist. Dunelm. Scriptores Tres*, pp. cccxxix-xxx, cccxxiii; Surtees's *Durham*, I., p. 224; Dugdale's *Monasticon Anglicanum*, Ed. 1817, I., p. 234; Raine's *Saint Cuthbert*, pp. 50-51; *Symeon of Durham* (Surtees Society's Ed.), p. 149.

‡ *Feodarium Prioratus Dunelmensis*, pp. xli, xlvi, lv, and especially lxxxiii. That these three charters of Bishop William de Karileph are palpably forgeries does not invalidate them as evidence that the convent of Durham actually possessed the estates they pretend to grant. They were, in fact, forged to afford a title to lands and churches already in possession.

dormitorio fratrum erat obvium).^{*} When uttering the last farewell he admonishes them to preserve goodwill amongst themselves, and to correct transgressors according to the rule of the gospel. To all, no matter how grievously they may have transgressed, he offers the grace of his forgiveness and reconciliation. He entreats them all to pray for him, and to become reconciled to him, if there were amongst them any whom he had reprovèd too harshly. They go down to the shore. Again he gives to all the kiss of peace, and they, weeping, fall upon their knees. Then he offers a prayer, and with his companions ascends into the ship. The deacons of the church, carrying burning tapers and a golden cross, enter the vessel with him. He passes over the stream, adores the cross, mounts his horse, and departs, leaving in his monasteries brethren to the number of nearly six hundred.†

This passage is valuable, since it gives us authentic information as to the extent of the establishment at Monkwearmouth at the time of Ceolfrid's departure. It mentions the churches of St. Mary and St. Peter, as well as the oratory of St. Lawrence. Until a comparatively recent period both churches existed. The account roll of the master of the cell of Wearmouth for the year 1360 mentions *the old church* as the receptacle of one stack of barley, being the tithes of the vills of Wearmouth and Fulwell.‡ Less than a century later the Proctor of Durham complains to William Hilton, son and heir of the Baron of Hilton, that "on Scottyman" named "John Pottes, in diuerse tymes has opynd and brokyn upp y^e dorese of y^e said Celle of Monkweremouth and takyn oute his corn and his hay afre his awn will and somtym sett his horse in a place callid y^e ald Kirke to y^e hay mowe deflyng y^e sam place and destroying hay," etc.§ The church designated "old" in these extracts was not necessarily a more ancient building than the other church, then as now, still used for its original purpose. A dismantled structure is always, in common phrase, styled "old."

^{*} "Quod est in dormitorio fratrum" (*Hist. Abbatum Girvensium, Auct. Anon. Giles's Bede, VI., p. 425*).

† *Vita Beatorum Abbatum Wiremuthensium et Girvensium. Giles's Bede, IV., p. 390.* See also a somewhat longer account of the same event in the anonymous *Historia Abbatum Girvensium* (*Giles's Bede, VI., pp. 423-425*).

‡ "In veteri ecclesia est j. tassa ordei decimalis villarum de Weremuth et Fulwell estimata ad" (*Inventories and Account Rolls of Jarrow and Monkwearmouth, p. 159*).

§ *Inventories and Account Rolls of Jarrow and Monkwearmouth, p. 241.* The document quoted in the text is dateless, but ante 1447.

After Ceolfrid's departure his brethren returned to the church, and with weeping and prayer commended themselves to God. After the psalmody of the third hour was sung, they deliberated as to what should be done. A new abbot must be elected. Three days later, on Whitsunday, a council was held, attended by all the brethren of St. Peters' and the elder brethren of St. Pauls'. The utmost harmony prevailed, and Huetbert was chosen. He immediately, accompanied by some of the brethren, went to Ceolfrid, who was waiting for a ship in which to cross the ocean.* He confirmed their choice, gave them his blessing, and received from his successor a letter of commendation, addressed to Pope Gregory II. On Huetbert's return, Acca, then bishop of Hexham, and Wilfrid's successor there, was summoned to Wearmouth to confirm the election of the new abbot.

One circumstance in Huetbert's life, which, says Bede, "was gratifying and delightful to all," must be here related.

"He took up the bones of Abbot Easterwine, which had been deposited in the entrance porch of the church of the blessed Apostle Peter, and also the bones of his former master, the Abbot Sigfrid, which had been buried outside the Sacarium on the south, and placing both in one receptacle, but divided in the middle by a partition, he laid them within the same church, by the side of the body of the blessed father Benedict. This he did on Sigfrid's birthday, that is, the 22nd day of August; on which day also the wonderful providence of God so ordered that Witmer, the venerable servant of Christ, whom

* The anonymous *History of the Abbots of Jarrow* declares that Huetbert and his companions found Ceolfrid "in the monastery of Albert, which is situate in a place called Cornu Vallis (in monasterio Alberti, quod est situm in loco qui Cornu Vallis appellatur)." Dr. Haigh imagined that the site of this monastery "was probably at Hornsea [in Holderness], on the coast of the East Riding of Yorkshire." Towards this supposition the only evidence is the syllable *horn*, which would be equally pertinent for Hornby, in the North Riding. At neither place, however, have we record or trace of any monastic establishment. The same anonymous history tells us that Ceolfrid sailed from the Humber; and a passage in Bede's *Lives* implies that Huetbert overtook Ceolfrid whilst "awaiting the arrival of a ship in which to cross the ocean." The monastery of Cornu Vallis must therefore be located at or near some port on the Humber. The Praetorium of Antonine's first Iter, identifiable with a submerged port near the later Ravensers, within the river-bay formed by Spurn Point, was certainly in Cornu, and even in Cornu Vallis, if we remember the bold headlands of Holderness on the east, and the southern wolds of Yorkshire on the west, and understand by *vallis* the whole district drained by the river Hull.

we have mentioned above, should depart, and he, who was their follower, was buried in the place where the aforesaid abbots were first interred.”*

To identify the “entrance porch”—the *porticus ingressus*—in which the remains of Easterwine had been interred, with the lower and earlier portion of the present tower is not difficult, as we shall hereafter have evidence. But the location of the Sacrarium is by no means so easy a task. The word itself has varied meanings. It sometimes means the whole church; in other cases “the most sacred part of the church,—the place of the altar and ‘confessio’” is meant, answering to τὸ ἅγιον and τὸ ἱερατικόν of the Greek church; and elsewhere the sacristy or vestry simply is intended. The first and most extended meaning is not admissible in the present instance. Perhaps English usage will incline us to accept the last definition as the most probable, though herein we shall differ from Dr. Haigh, who assumes that the chancel or choir is meant.† Here, perhaps, I ought to quote a singular and perplexing passage from the anonymous *History of the Abbots of Jarrow*, wherein we are told that “Benedict was interred in the porch of the blessed Peter, on the east of the altar, whither also, afterwards, the bones of the most reverend abbots Easterwine and Sigfrid were translated.”‡ Plainly, the porticus in which Easterwine was first interred, and that in which Benedict was buried, and to which the remains of Easterwine were removed, could not be the same. If we assume the existence of two porches, this does not remove the whole

* This passage is so important that I adjoin the original Latin. “Sustulit ossa Easterwini abbatis, quae in porticu ingressus ecclesiae beati Apostoli Petri erant posita; necnon et ossa Sigfridi abbatis ac magistri quondam sui, quae foris Sacrarium ad meridiem fuerant condita, et utraque in una theca, sed medio pariete divisa, recludens, intus in eadem ecclesia juxta corpus beati patris Benedicti composuit. Fecit autem haec die natalis Sigfridi, id est, undecimo Kalendarum Septembrium, quo etiam die mira Dei providentia contigit, ut venerandus Christi famulus Witmer, cujus supra meminimus, excederet, et in loco ubi praedicti abbates prius sepulti fuerant, ipse, qui eorum imitator fuerat, conderetur” (*Vita Abbatum Wiremuth. et Girvens. Giles’s Bede, IV., p. 396*).

† See his paper on the monasteries of Wearmouth and Jarrow in the Winchester volume of the Archæological Association, pp. 432 and 434. On the word *Sacrarium* see the glossaries of Du Cange and Spelman, and Smith and Cheetham’s *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*. Stephenson supports the view to which I incline, rendering, in the passage in question, *sacrarium* by “sacristy” (*Church Historians of England, Vol. I., Part II., p. 618*).

‡ “Sepultus autem est Benedictus in porticu beati Petri, ad orientem altaris, ubi postmodum etiam reverentissimorum abbatum Easterwini et Sigfridi sunt ossa translata” (*Historia Abbatum Girvensium, Auctore Anonymo. Giles’s Bede, VI., p. 422*).

difficulty. The emphatic way in which Bede speaks of the later resting place of Easterwine and Sigfrid's bones as being *within* the church, can leave no doubt that the *porticus ingressus* was *without*. So there were at least two porches, and the porticus *within* may have been a corridor between the churches of St. Mary and St. Peter.

Ceolfrid left Wearmouth on the 4th of June, and on the fourth of the following month he sailed out of the Humber. On the 12th of August he landed on the shore of France, and on the 25th of September died at Langres, at the age of seventy-four years.

Huetbert is the last of the abbots of Wearmouth of whom Bede's *Lives* gives us any account. He was probably abbot at the time of Bede's death. Dr. Haigh speaks of that Cuthbert, pupil of Bede, whose letter to some Cuthwin, fellow-pupil, is our record of their master's last days and death, as Huetbert's successor in the abbacy (*Winchester vol. Arch. Ass.*, p. 434). But in this he was led astray by Dr. Giles, whose statements on this point (*Bede's Works*, I., p. lxxvi., lxxviii.) are entirely erroneous.

From the time of Huetbert we have no record of the church and monastery of Monkwearmouth, till the period of the Danish invasion under Hinguar and Hubba. The noblest of the monasteries along the northern coast, says Roger of Wendover, were destroyed by these pirates; and he especially mentions Lindisfarne, Tynemouth, Jarrow, Wearmouth, and Whitby (Bohn's Ed., I., p. 192).*

After this comes another gap of two centuries in our history of the monastery of Monkwearmouth. At some period during this interval the church had probably been restored. By whom, or to what extent this was done, we shall never know. According, however, to the continuator of Symeon's *Historia Regum*, King Malcolm, in an extensive and barbarous raid upon the north of England, in the year 1070, "destroyed by fire, himself looking on, the church of St. Peter, the prince of the Apostles, at Wearmouth" (*Symeonis Dunelm. Opera et Coll.*, Surtees Society's Ed., I., p. 87). This statement is repeated in almost identical words by Roger de Hoveden (Rolls Series, Ed. I., p. 121). The *Liber Ruber Dunelmensis* says that "Malcolm, King of Scotland, consumed Wearmouth by fire" (*Hist. Dunelm. Scriptores*

* See also *Matthew of Westminster* (Bohn's Ed.), I., p. 411; and *Matthaei Parisiensis, Chronica Majora* (Rolls Series), I., p. 393.

Tres, p. ccccxxiv). The *Liber incerti auctoris de Episcopis Lindisfarnensibus*, as quoted by Leland (*Coll.*, I., p. 381), repeats the assertion in almost the words of the authority first quoted. This may be also said of a quotation in Leland (*Coll.*, II., p. 229) from some prologue of Alured's of Beverley.

Notwithstanding all this testimony, which, after all, does not amount, at most, to more than two independent authorities, Mr. Surtees, and, at a later date, Mr. John Hodgson Hinde, felt themselves entitled to call the statement into question. Mr. Surtees rests his scepticism on two grounds. First, that the event "is related with such discrepancy, both of date and place;" and second, that Symeon's "silence as to the almost contemporary destruction by Malcolm is strong negative evidence," especially as he (Symeon) says, "that from the era of the Danish conquest to the revival of the monastery by Aldwin, the site of the convent of Wearmouth lay waste and desolate two hundred and eight years" (*Hist. Durham*, II., p. 5). To this it is necessary to say in reply that the "discrepancy both of date and place," of which Mr. Surtees speaks, does not exist. The chroniclers who refer to the event are so unanimous, nay, almost verbally identical, that thereby the weight of their testimony is weakened. Symeon's silence, in his *Historia Ecclesiae Dunelmensis*, proves nothing, since therein Malcolm is scarcely mentioned, and his ravages in Northumbria did not come within the historian's plan. On the other hand, Symeon is rendered with extraordinary freedom when made to say that at Aldwin's incoming the site of the monastery of Wearmouth had lain waste two hundred and eight years. His words are these: "Clearly, from the time in which the churches in the province of the Northumbrians were plundered by the pagans, and the monasteries were destroyed and burnt, until the third year of the jurisdiction of Walcher, when, by Aldwin coming into that province, the monastic life therein began to revive, cccviii. years may be reckoned."*

Mr. Surtees, however, though he denies that the church of Monkwearmouth was burnt by Malcolm's followers, asserts "that Malcolm,

* "Plane a tempore quo a paganis ecclesiae in provincia Northanhymbrorum eversae, et monasteria sunt destructa atque incensa, usque tertium annum praesulatus Walcheri, quando per Aldwinum in ipsam provinciam venientem monachorum in illa coepit habitatio reviviscere, cccviii. computantur anni" (*Symeonis Hist. Dunelm. Eccles.*, Ed. Mag. Rot., p. 113).

in the same expedition in which he bore off Edgar Atheling and his sisters from the harbour of the Wear, did destroy a church or monastery on one bank of the same river," and that this "seems indisputably established by the testimony of concurring historians." These "concurring historians," however, with one exception (*Liber Ruber Dunelmensis*) agree in declaring that the place burnt by Malcolm was "the church of St. Peter, at Wearmouth."

Mr. Hinde's criticisms are both more careful and more weighty. He proves clearly enough that the whole account of the invasion by Malcolm, when the church of Monkwearmouth is said to have been burnt, contains so many assertions which are palpably untrue, as fairly to throw doubt upon the rest. One passage must be quoted here. "The church of St. Peter at Wearmouth is represented [in the narrative of Symeon's continuator] as having been burnt down on this occasion, whereas we learn from Symeon that it had been for ages in ruins, its walls only standing, and the site, both within and without, overgrown by timber and by brushwood, which were cut down with much labour a few years later, when the edifice was at last put into a state of repair" (Pref. to Surtees Society's Ed. of *Symeon*, p. 29). Desirous as I am to give these words their full weight, I will quote what Mr. Hinde says elsewhere. "Neither is there the slightest reason to suppose that the church of St. Peter at Wearmouth had ever been restored since the destruction of the monastery by the Danes in the ninth century. At all events the accounts given of it in the *History of the Church of Durham*, III., 22, A.D. 1075, when the site was overgrown not only with brambles and thorns, but with forest trees,* is altogether inconsistent with the assumption that it was in a state of repair only five years previous" (Note in Surtees Society's Ed. of *Symeon*, p. 86). The only explanation of the difficulty I can offer is that Symeon's reference to trees, brambles, and thorns is to be interpreted with some degree of latitude; and that, although no

* "According to the interpolator [of Symeon's *Historia Regum*], the church of Wearmouth was burned under Malcolm's own eyes in 1070. Could this description be given of the building about five years after? Certainly not, if we are to suppose with Mr. Hinde that the site was 'overgrown, not only with brambles and thorns, but also with forest trees.' But I do not see Mr. Hinde's forest trees in the 'arbores' of Symeon. Surely in the space of five years the site would be quite enough overrun with brambles, elder, and ivy to give the monks some trouble to clear it out" (Freeman's *History of the Norman Conquest of England*, V., p. 898).

restoration of the monastic buildings had taken place since the time of the Danish invasion, still some part of the church had been so far repaired as to serve the purposes of the neighbouring inhabitants.*

In my paper on Jarrow I have repeated from Symeon the story of the settlement, first at Monkchester, and afterwards at Jarrow, of Aldwin and his companions. After a time, Aldwin was desirous of reviving the decayed monastic institutions elsewhere. For this purpose, accompanied by one Turgot, he travelled northwards to Melrose. Reinfrid went to Whitby, and Elfwin remained at Jarrow. Turgot is said to have been at this time "a cleric as to his dress, but in heart and conduct a follower of the monastic life." The continuation of Symeon's *Historia Regum* gives a romantic account of his previous career, which is repeated by Roger de Hóveden. Melrose was then a ruin, but the pilgrims were charmed with the seclusion of the place, and at once commenced the observance of their monastic practices. Malcolm soon heard of their settlement in his dominions, and as they refused to swear fidelity to him, he adopted towards them a course of persecution.

"Meantime, the venerable Bishop Walcher, by frequent letters and injunctions, requested, admonished, and adjured them, and at last threatened, with the priesthood and all the people before the most holy body of St. Cuthbert, to excommunicate them unless they would return to him [in order] to remain under [the protection of] St. Cuthbert. Dreading, therefore, excommunication much more than the wrath of the king, who threatened them with death,—for they were then quite ready to die,—they left that place and returned to the bishop. He at once gave to them the monastery of the blessed Apostle Peter in Wearmouth, at one time exceedingly beautiful and renowned, as Bede, its inmate from infancy, describes; but then, what it anciently was could scarcely be seen, such was the ruin of the buildings. Here they made little dwellings of boughs, and strove to teach all whom they could to enter with them the strait and narrow way, which leads to life. Here Aldwin conferred upon Turgot the monastic habit, and as

* Corroborative of this view is a passage in the continuation of Symeon's *Historia Regum*, wherein we are told that at the time of Aldwin's arrival in the north, "but very few churches—and these formed of branches and thatch—and nowhere any monasteries, had been rebuilt during two hundred years" (*Symeonis Opera*, Surtees Soc. Ed., p. 94).

he loved him most dearly as a brother in Christ, he, by word and example, taught him to carry Christ's easy yoke. The bishop, loving them with familiar affection, often invited them to converse with him, and sometimes summoning them to his councils, deigned most cheerfully to obey their suggestions. But he gave to them the vill of Wearmouth itself, to which afterwards his successor, William, added an adjoining vill, namely Southwick, in order that he and the brethren who were with him, might, without great difficulty, persevere there in the service of Christ. For some came thither from the remote parts of England to live with them the monastic life, and they learned to serve Christ with one heart and one soul. Then they took pains to clear out the church of St. Peter, of which only the half-ruined walls were then standing; they felled the trees and uprooted the briars and thorns, which had filled the whole [site]; and when the roof was laid on, as at this day it is seen, they had done their best to restore [the place to fitness] for performing the offices of divine praise."*

Such is Symeon's narrative. The events it relates belong to the year 1075. The passage in which our historian computes the period between the desolation of the northern monasteries by the Danes, and the arrival of Aldwin in the north, at two hundred and eight years immediately follows. He then proceeds to relate that, under the

* Inter haec venerabilis episcopus Walcherus frequentibus eos litteris et mandatis rogavit, monuit, adjuravit, ad ultimum cum clero et omni populo coram sacratissimo sancti Cuthberti corpore sese illos excommunicaturum minatur, nisi ad se sub sancto Cuthberto mansuri reverterentur. Illi ergo excommunicationem magis quam iram regis, quae mortem eis minabatur, formidantes, nam mori tunc omnino statuerant, locum illum relinquunt, ad episcopum perveniunt. Quibus statim monasterium beati Petri Apostoli in Wiramuthe donavit, olim, sicut habitator ejus ab infantia Beda describit, egregium satis ac nobile; tunc autem, quid antiquitus fuerit, vix per ruinam aedificiorum videri poterat. Ubi de virgis facientes habitacula, quoscumque poterant arctam et angustam viam, quae ducit ad vitam, secum ingredi docere studebant. Ibi Aldwinus Turgoto monachicum habitum tradidit, et ut carissimum in Christo fratrem diligens, verbo et exemplo jugum Christi suave illum portare docuit. Quos episcopus familiari caritate amplectens, saepius ad colloquium suum evocavit; et interdum suis adhibens consiliis, libentissime illorum dictis dignatus est obedire. Donaverat autem illis ipsam villam Wiramutham, cui postea successor ejus Willelmus aliam proximam; videlicet Suthewic, adjecit, ut, cum his qui secum erant fratribus, sine magna difficultate ibidem in Christi famulatu possent perseverare. Nam etiam de remotis Anglorum partibus illuc aliqui advenientes, monachicam cum eis vitam agere, et uno corde ac una anima Christo didicerunt servire. Tunc ecclesiam Sancti Petri, cujus adhuc soli parietes semirutu steterant, succisis arboribus, radicatis vepribus et spinis, quae totam occupaverant, curarunt expurgare: et culmine imposito, quale hodie cernitur, ad agenda divinae laudis officia sateterant restaurare (*Symeonis Historia Ecc. Dunelm.*, Ed. Mag. Rot., p. 112-113).

bishop's fostering care, the monks led a quiet and peaceful life, and that he, like a most loving father, bestowed upon them the wealth of his affection, frequently visiting them, and at all times seeking most liberally to supply their needs. It was his intention, had he lived, to join their order, and to establish them in a permanent abode, near the body of St. Cuthbert. With this intention he laid the foundations of the monastic buildings at Durham. But death defeated his plans, and the completion of his project was left to his successor.

In the year 1083, on Friday, the 26th day of May, the festival of St. Augustine of Canterbury, the monks of Wearmouth and Jarrow, twenty-three in all, were brought into their new home at Durham by Bishop William de Karileph. We can picture the monks meeting early in the morning in the churches of their respective houses to say their last mass there, joy and sadness mingling strangely in their hearts the while. And then the little bands depart, often looking back with tearful eyes to the homes hallowed by the traditions of Benedict, Ceolfrid, Sigfrid, Easterwine, Huetbert, and Bede. As they go they carry their precious relics and treasures with them—the books brought from Rome, four hundred years before, by Biscop, and others written by the hand of Bede. Later in the day the fame of Durham rises before them, and hope and proud expectancy beat high within their breasts; and, ere the early summer's sun has set, their first evensong has risen to heaven from their new and splendid habitation.

From this time the monastery of Wearmouth became a cell under St. Cuthbert's. Its history to the dissolution I may make the subject of a future paper. At the latter period it was valued, according to Dugdale, at £25 8s. 4d., and according to Speed, at £26 9s. 9d.

It only remains for me to describe the existing portions of the ancient church. In Hutchinson's day "several remains of the monastic buildings," forming, with the church, "three sides of a square," still existed, but they have since then entirely disappeared. Of the old hall of Monkwearmouth, which perished by fire in 1790, some portions were believed to be remnants of the monastery, and other parts to have been constructed from its ruins. These are all gone, and so far as I know, no pencil has perpetuated their likeness. The only portions of the pre-Norman buildings at Monkwearmouth



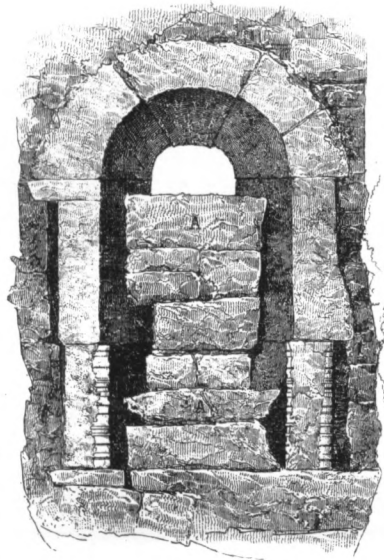
STEBLER, PHOTO.

INK-PHOTO, SPRAGUE & CO LONDON.

ST. PETER'S CHURCH, MONKWEARMOUTH,
BEFORE THE RESTORATION.

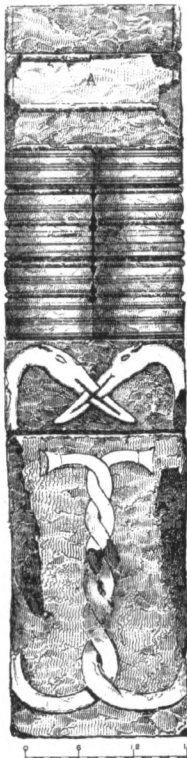




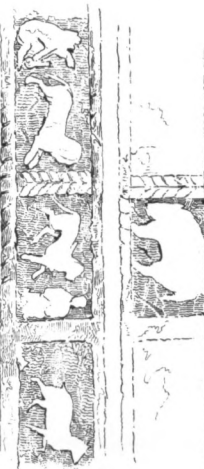


S PETERS, MONKWEARMOUTH

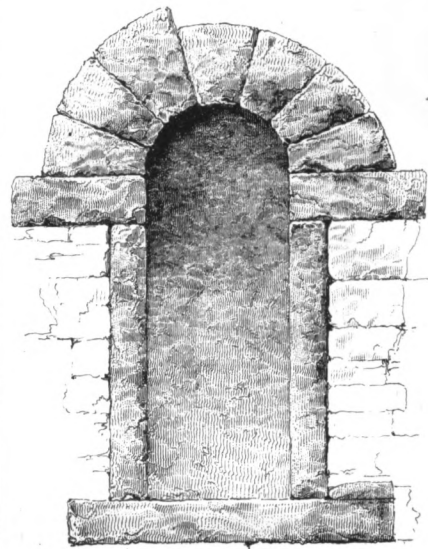
Internal Elevation of one of the Windows in Western wall of the Nave, now blocked up externally by the Tower Wall & filled with Masonry. A. Internally. (Note the Baluster Shafts chipped away to receive the Plaster)



S PETERS, MONKWEARMOUTH
 A Elevation of one Jamb of Western Arch of Tower
 B Portion of Carved String Course above Western Arch



B



S PETERS, MONKWEARMOUTH.

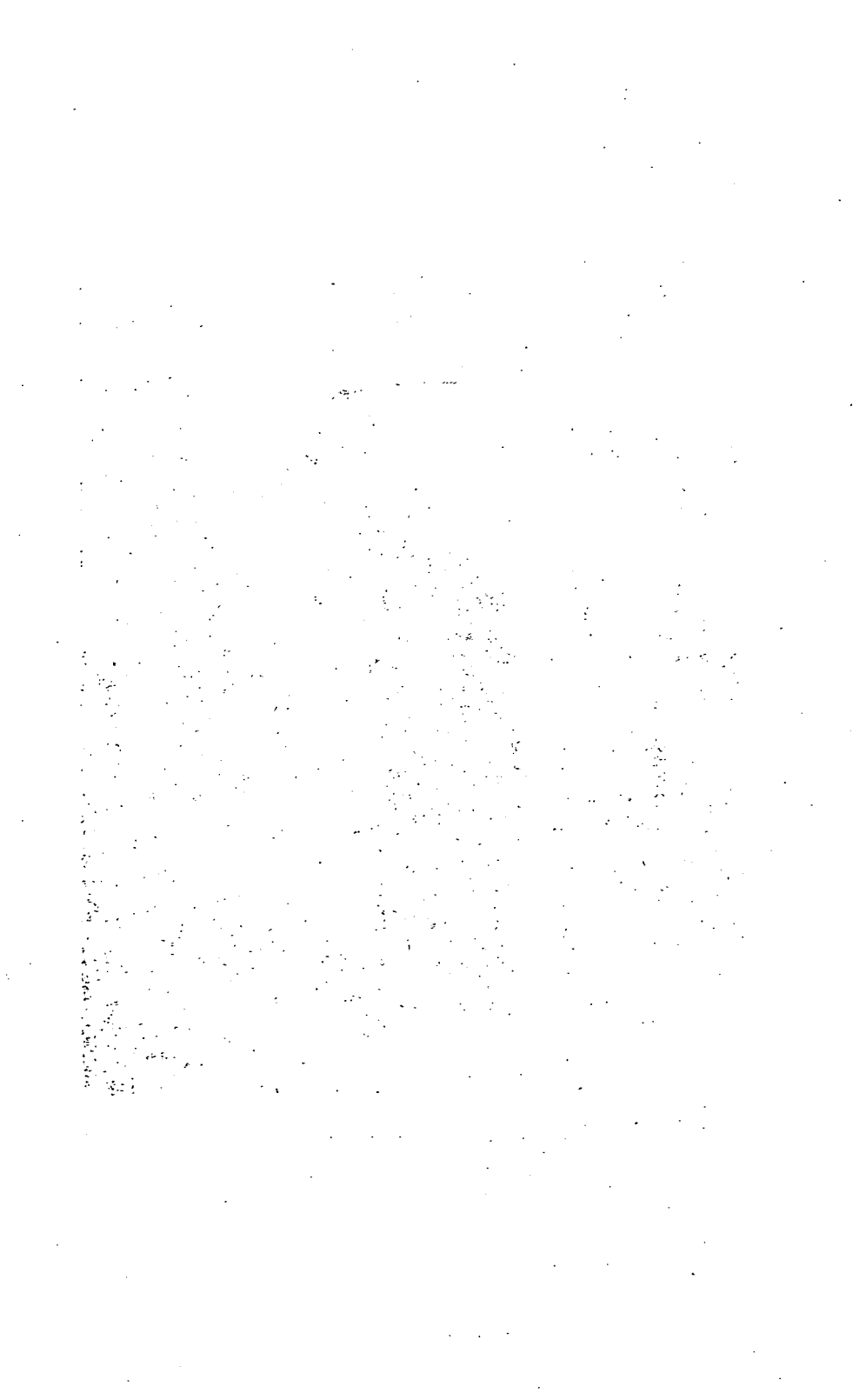
Elevation of the Archway on the South side of Lower Story of Tower



STABLER, PHOTO.

INK-PHOTO, SPRAGUE & CO LONDON.

DOORWAY OF THE "PORTICUS INGRESSUS,"
MONKWEARMOUTH CHURCH.



are the tower and west wall of the nave of St. Peter's church.* The lower portion of the tower is of different date from the upper part. Indeed its original height is clearly traceable, the angle of its western gable rising from the extremes of the second string-course, and terminating immediately below the third. This lower portion would thus form, originally, an "entrance porch," which antiquaries have been ready to identify with the "porticus ingressus," in which the bones of Easterwine first found a resting place. Over it was a chamber with a window on the west, and another on the east, looking into the nave. The lower portion of the tower is peculiar by reason of its three doorways, the fourth belonging not to the tower but to the west wall of the nave. This is an arrangement of which our only other northern example is the tower at Jarrow, and of which the only southern example that I remember is the early Saxon tower of All Saints, Brixworth.† The west wall of the nave is evidently of somewhat earlier date than even the lower part of the tower, which is simply built against it, and not bonded into it. The doorway, which is sometimes spoken of as the east doorway of the tower, is, therefore, really the west doorway of the nave, and was at first external. The two doorways north and south of the tower bear a remarkable resemblance to the walled-up doorway in the north wall of Jarrow chancel.‡ But

* For the drawings of details accompanying this paper I am indebted to T. W. U. Robinson, Esq., of Hardwick Hall. Some years ago Mr. Robinson caused a beautiful and valuable series of plates of details of the Saxon portions of Monkwearmouth Church to be engraved and printed for private circulation. From these plates, with Mr. Robinson's permission, I have selected and copied what I thought necessary.

† See a paper on this church, by the Rev. G. A. Poole, in the *Reports and Papers of the Associated Architectural Societies*, 1850, p. 122.

‡ Since my paper on the Church of Jarrow was printed, and, indeed, since the present paper was read, I have re-perused the fifth volume of Dr. Freeman's *History of the Norman Conquest of England*. A passage in his Appendix, which I had either previously overlooked or entirely forgotten, states his opinion of the Saxon remains at both Jarrow and Wearmouth. This opinion is identical with my own; but I shall be believed when I say this forgotten or unobserved paragraph of Freeman's had no influence in bringing me to the conclusions announced in this and my previous paper.

The passage to which I refer is the following :—

"I have no doubt whatever that large parts of the two churches now standing are the genuine work of Benedict Biscop. Each contains two distinct dates of Primitive Romanesque. At Wearmouth the upper part of the tower is not only Primitive, but clearly earlier than the restoration by Ealdwine. It connects itself, not with the Lincoln towers, but with the earlier type at Bywell and Ovingham. But it is raised on a porch, evidently older than itself, and showing signs of the very earliest date. Here we plainly have a piece of work of the seventh century. It follows that the church of Wearmouth was enlarged or repaired at some time

the western entrance of this tower, or rather porch,—for the original purpose of this portion should never be forgotten, despite later transformations,—is its great feature of interest. A century ago the upper portion of this entrance, though then built up, was visible.* When the engravings of Monkwearmouth church in Garbutt's *History of Sunderland* (1819), and in the second volume of Surtees's *History of Durham* (1820), were published, the tower had been covered with roughcast, and no trace of this archway could be externally seen. About twenty years ago it was opened out, and the accumulated mass of earth which surrounded the lower portion of the tower on three sides was removed. The distinctively fine character of this doorway can leave no doubt that at the time of its erection it was intended as the chief entrance to the church. On this account we may safely regard it as the "porticus ingressus" of Bede, rather than as that other porticus which was within the church. That, at a later period, some additional building was erected to the west of this porch, was clearly evident when the church was restored, for foundations of such a structure were then laid bare. In all probability these were the foundations of a similar building to that which still exists on the west side of the tower of St. Peter's, Barton-on-Humber.

The arch of this remarkably interesting doorway rests upon chamfered abaci, which, in their turn, are supported by baluster shafts. Each abacus rests upon two shafts placed against the thickness of the wall. These shafts are placed upon large stones bonding into the wall, and beneath these are similar stones placed vertically, and resting upon the foundations. A singular design is worked upon the face of each lower stone and continued upon the edge of the stone above it. The design itself, which, on each jamb of the doorway is the same, consists of two serpent-like forms with the tails of fish and the heads of swans. In the upper part of the sculpture the beaks meet and intersect in the

between 680 and 1075. At Jarrow the appearances are different. Here also there are two dates of work which we must call Primitive Romanesque; but while the earlier, as I see no reason to doubt, belongs to the age of Benedict, the later belongs to the age of Ealdwine. In the choir, with its windows so utterly unlike anything of William's age, I have no doubt that we see the building which Benedict raised, and in which Baeda worshipped. But in the manifestly inserted tower, and in the doorway forming part of the domestic buildings which stand close to the church, we see the Primitive style modified by the knowledge of Norman models, exactly as at Lincoln."

* See the engraving of "Monks Weremouth, Durham," in Grose's *Antiquities*.

middle of the stone. The neck extends to the edge, along which the body is carried down, as a sort of roll moulding, a distance of about three feet. Then the body turns inwards, and, meeting that of the other creature, they twine around each other like a cable moulding, ascending, meantime, the middle of the stone, and, a few inches below the top of the lower slab, they separate, turn again towards the edges, and terminate, as I have said, in fish-like tails. The whole height of the stones upon which the design is worked is 3 feet 8 inches. The baluster shafts are 1 foot 9 inches in height and 10 inches in diameter. The abacus is $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches in depth. The doorway is 8 feet 10 inches in height and 4 feet 9 inches in width. The arch itself is constructed of nine voussoirs. Along the edge of both abaci and voussoirs runs a delicate round moulding, which stands out from the face of the stone.

The side doors of the tower are perfectly plain, and remind us more of "long and short work" than almost any other feature we find at Monkwearmouth. They are 6 feet high, and 2 feet 2 inches wide.

Over the western doorway, and at the height of 12 feet 6 inches from the ground, we have the first string course, which exists only on the west side of the tower. It is 12 inches in depth, has a cable moulding along its upper and lower edge, and at intervals is divided into panels by double strips of somewhat narrower moulding of the same type. The panels have been filled with sculptured figures, chiefly of beasts; but these are now almost obliterated. A portion of this sculptured string course has at some period been removed, when the window above was carried down through it; but that window has now been restored approximately to its original proportions, and a new stone, with cable mouldings, has been inserted to fill up the gap in the ancient string course.

Above the window which I have just mentioned, and at the height of 20 feet 6 inches from the ground, we have the second string course, which runs round the three sides of the tower. North and south it marks the height of the original "porticus ingressus," and on the west the outline of the gable of that porch is distinctly visible. The space above the string course on the west in the ancient wall has been occupied originally by sculptured figures. Great stones in the wall itself, upon which the central figure was worked, still remain. Dr. Haigh conjectured that a rood had at one time adorned this space.

The western wall of the nave is, as I have said, of somewhat earlier date than the tower. The proof of this is, that the walls of the tower are not bonded into that of the nave, and that the tower has no eastern wall at all.

Along this west wall of the nave there runs, externally, a string course, at the height of 30 feet from the ground, and just above the peak of the original gable of the porch. This string is continued behind the present tower, and this fact proves that the higher part of the tower is of later date than the wall against which it is built. This fact is further and more positively proved by the existence, in the western wall of the nave, of two windows, which were blocked up when the higher part of the tower was built. These lights were opened out at the time of the last restoration, and portions of the tower were cut away for this purpose. Though resembling in general form the three lights in the south wall of Jarrow chancel, these Monkwearmouth windows have one especial and unique feature of interest. This is the employment of baluster shafts in their construction. Two of these shafts are employed in each window, and are so placed in the splay as to rest upon the lower edge of the sill, and to be, at their top, level with the bottom of the light. They are of precisely the same size as those in the western entrance, but are considerably smaller than those at Jarrow. In other respects they differ from the Jarrow specimens. The design is more delicate and refined, and indicates another genius, perhaps another nationality of artist.

These shafts, since they occur both in the windows of the nave and in the doorway of the porticus, enable us to determine that the erection of the latter followed very soon after that of the former.

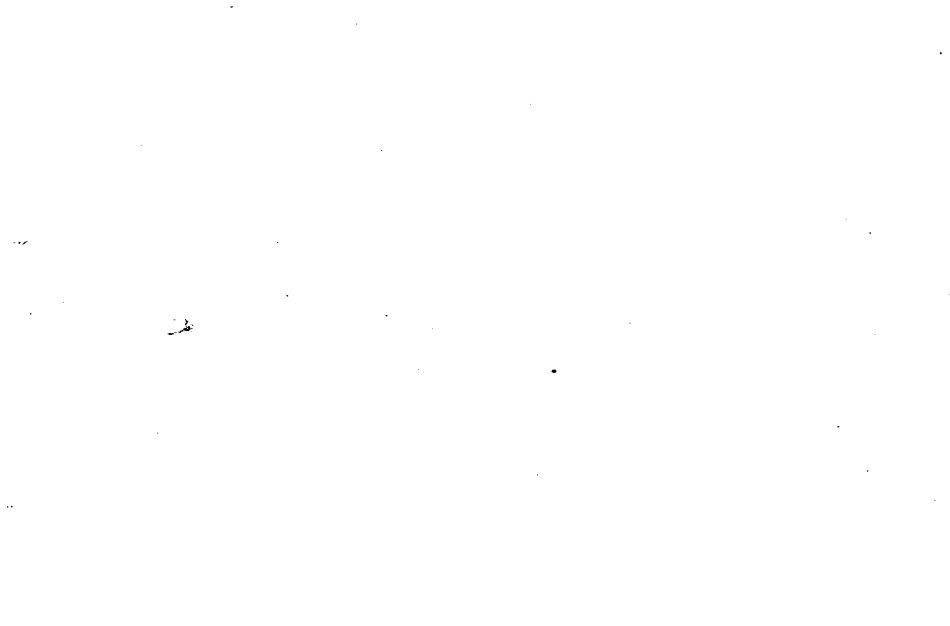
In the upper portion of the tower we have, on north, west, and south sides, double light windows, resembling in their distinguishing features similar windows in the towers of Billingham, Ovingham, and St. Andrews, Bywell.*

It may reasonably be asked if we can assign a date to these various portions of the ancient church of Monkwearmouth. I think that, approximately, at all events, we can do so. There is no need now to enter upon any argument in proof of the existence of Christian edifices in this country of pre-Norman date. The late John Henry Parker

* See Plate of Windows, *Arch. Æl.*, Vol. X., p. 218.

NOTICE.

Plate VI. not being ready will be sent out
with the *Proceedings* in a short time.



had the intention, had life been spared him, of announcing his acceptance of the views of Mr. Rickman. Careful evidence, so far as our present subject is concerned, is adduced in a *Report on the Church of Monkwearmouth*, signed by six members of the Architectural and Archæological Society of Durham and Northumberland, and published in the third part of that Society's transactions.

Here another line of evidence may be pursued. Bede's reference to the "porticus ingressus" as the place of Easterwine's first grave, is clear evidence of the existence of this portion, and consequently of the existing remnant of the ancient nave, in the days of Benedict. The later part of the tower, confessedly pre-Norman, has such points of identity of style with the towers of Ovingham, Bywell, and Billingham, that we cannot hesitate to assign a similar antiquity. The report which I have just mentioned inclines to ascribe all these structures to the latter part of the eighth or the first part of the ninth century.

NOTE.—My paper would scarcely approach completeness were I to take no notice of the fragments of the Saxon buildings which, at Wearmouth as well as at Jarrow, have been found from time to time. The largest number of these fragments is preserved in the vestry of Monkwearmouth Church, and of these I give my readers a photograph. Of baluster shafts, differing considerably in type from those in the porch at Jarrow, there are nineteen specimens, most of which, however, are fragmentary. There is a portion of a cross bearing the ordinary interlaced work. One of the most interesting stones is a portion, apparently of a slab, with very delicate knot work sculptured upon it. Another stone bears a sculptured representation of two men in combat; one has dropped his sword, which has been doubled in the conflict, and is seen falling to the ground. Three large stones with animals in bold relief, Mr. Brown believes to have been abaci of doorways. The inscribed stone, evidently a palimpsest, reads—*HIC IN SEPULCRO REQUIESCIT CORPORE HEREBERICH PÆB.* The *Liber Vitae* of Durham mentions two presbyters named Herebericht, and which of these, or whether another of the same name, the Wearmouth slab commemorates, cannot be determined.

In the library of the Dean and Chapter of Durham there are two very perfect and beautiful baluster shafts from Monkwearmouth, as well as a square slab, bearing symbolic or enigmatical sculptures. Of this slab we have a wood engraving in Dr. Raine's preface to the Surtees Society's issue of *The Inventories and Account Rolls of Jarrow and Monkwearmouth*.