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THE TOMBS OF THE DE BROHAM FAMILY,

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF SOME REMARKABLE DISCOVERIES RECENTLY
MADE IN THEIR BURIAL-PLACE IN THE CHURCH OF BROUGHAM.

[Communicated by William Brougham, Esq.]

IN the month of October, 1846, while repairing the burial-vault of the family of Brougham, situate within the chancel of the parish church of Brougham, in Westmorland, a skeleton buried *cross-legged* was discovered about two feet below the surface between the wall of the vault and the south wall of the chancel. It lay with the feet to the east, the left leg thrown over the right, and round the left heel was an iron spur of the prick form, the shank and neck perfectly straight, the point resting upon the soil which formed the bottom of the grave, and, to some extent, corroded off—the side or shank of the spur which lay nearest to the outer wall was also corroded off, to the extent of nearly four inches. Close to the spur was a piece of iron, one inch in length, which may have formed part of the point, and another bit of circular form which may have been part of the buckle or other furniture of the spur. No spur was found upon the right heel, nor was there any trace, either at that place or at any other part of the body, of rust, or any thing indicative of other pieces of armour. There was no appearance of decayed wood, of lead, or of cloth. The arms lay alongside the body. The skeleton was in a perfect state; the teeth were very white, although, after some days' exposure to the air, they became discoloured. All the teeth in the upper jaw were perfect, except the wisdom teeth. On one side their surfaces were much worn, while on the opposite side they appeared as if little used: upon examining the lower jaw, it was found that the corresponding teeth were wanting, and from the closed-up appearance of the socket, coupled with the unworn teeth of the upper jaw, it was evident that the lower teeth had been wanting for many years. The general appearance of the teeth remaining in the lower jaw, also indicated that the deceased had long passed the prime of life.

Near the head was found a singular fragment of solid vitrification shaped like half an egg, about an inch in diameter and rather more than an inch in thickness. The colour inside dark blue—outside enamelled in wavy lines of black and white alternately. From com-

Fragment of glass.

parison with a similar specimen of glass now in the British Museum, and supposed to be of Phœnician manufacture, there can be little doubt that this had formed part of a vitrification of that country, brought, as it may be conjectured, by the deceased from Palestine, probably as a talisman possessed of some extraordinary virtue, and buried with him as his most precious possession.

The incised slab which served to cover this grave was well known to the family as the "Crusader's Tomb." It is of red sand-stone, nearly seven feet long, three feet five inches wide, and about six inches thick. It has cut upon its surface a cross flory, with a smaller cross within it; at the right side is a sword, at the left a circular shield. The date of this incised slab may be considered as of the twelfth century.

W. BROHAM, del.

D. CHITT, sc.

Family tradition has always assigned this tomb to Udard de Broham, who flourished between the years 1140 and 1185, about which time he is supposed to have died. He

was governor of Appleby castle, in the early part of

Henry the Second's reign. In the year 1174 he was defeated by William the Lion, king of Scotland, who, having marched an army of 80,000 men into Cumberland, took the castles of

Incised Slab of Udard de Broham, A.D. 1185.

Carlisle and Appleby. Soon after this defeat Udard joined his kinsman Richard de Morville, and the other rebellious barons of the north, against the king, and he was in the year 1175 fined eighty marks. The record of this fine is as follows:

Pipe Roll, 22nd Hen. II.

Ite de Placitis Eorundem et in Westmarieland. Vdardus de Broha redd comp de q^{or}. t^a xx. m q. fuit cū inimicis Reg. In Thro xl. m. et debet xl. m.

Which may be thus rendered: "Also of pleas thereof in Westmorland. Udard de Broham renders account for eighty marks (four times twenty) because he was with the king's enemies. In the treasury forty marks, and he owes forty marks."

After the king had quelled the rebellion of the northern barons, and broken up their forces, Udard, according to the family tradition, took the cross in the second crusade under Conrad and Louis the Seventh of France. That he not only did so, but actually went to Palestine, seems now for the first time to be shewn by the discovery of his body as above described. The shirt of mail and sword, said to have belonged to him, are preserved among the armour at Brougham. The hauberk is of ring mail, of great size and unusual weight.

The discovery of Udard's body led to the examination of that portion of the chancel to the north of the place of his interment, which had not been used as a burying-place since the fifteenth century. This part, which measured about twelve feet by nine, had always been occupied as the family seat or pew, and was accordingly covered with a wooden floor. On raising this, the ground underneath appeared to be flagged. The first flag, five feet by about two, having been turned over was discovered to be an incised slab—a cross and sword being cut upon it, and on one side a large B, rudely cut. From the form of this cross, and of the arch in the base, the date may be assigned to the early part of the thirteenth century. The skeleton under this was of great size, the thigh bones measured upwards of twenty inches, and the length from the heel to the top of the skull six feet two inches. In this grave

Incised Slab, supposed to be that of Gilbert de Broham, A.D. 1230.

were found two pieces of iron, much corroded, which being joined at the part which was an evident fracture, presented the appearance of a *stirrup*.

From the date of the slab it is conjectured that this was the body of Gilbert de Broham, who succeeded Udard, and died about 1230. When King John, in the year 1200, summoned the barons to accompany him to the wars in Normandy, he obliged all who remained behind to pay a fine of two marks on each knight's fee, as the price of their exemption from this service. On this occasion Gilbert de Broham's name appears in the Oblata roll of 2nd John, preserved in the Tower, as one of the northern barons who made fine of fifty marks with the king, "ut remaneant ne transfretent termin ad passag dni regis." Alongside of this body lay another skeleton, covered by a stone, which, on being turned up, exhibited evident traces of letters, apparently of a very early character. The stone had been much broken on both edges, and also at the foot. The word at the top was 'IBERT,' evidently part of the Christian name, the surname being wanting. The other letters, in like manner, formed only parts of words, so that it was impossible to make out what the inscription had been. The skeleton under this stone was very perfect. By the side of this lay another body, covered with a slab, six feet long and twenty inches broad, having neither inscription nor incision upon it. This skeleton was somewhat smaller than the rest; at its side was found a remarkable ornament, of pale-coloured mixed metal, strongly gilt, so that, on being merely wiped, it appeared bright, and free from all tarnish, except a slight stain like verdegriis on one part. This is a circlet between two and three inches in diameter, and three-quarters of an inch in breadth. Upon the outside are engraved three cherubs, with hands upraised in supplication, each figure being connected with the other by that peculiar interlacing work which belongs to the Saxon period.

There is every reason to believe that this grave was a Saxon interment. Gilbert de Broham was patron of the church, for he sold the advowson to Robert de Veteripont in 1204, as appears by a deed now in the Rolls chapel, "Inrolled on the 6th of December, 1688, for safe custody, by order of Sir Harbottle Grimston." Gilbert's ancestors had endowed the church with lands, in consideration of which their estate was made tithe-free, and a right to bury in the south end of the

ENGRAVED CIRCLET OF GILT METAL, FOUND AT BROUGHAM

chancel reserved to them, and undoubtedly exercised by their posterity to the present times. That Gilbert's ancestors possessed Brougham in Saxon times is proved by the fact, that he is described in a record, now preserved in the Tower, as "one of the *Drenges* of Westmorland." The deed in the Rolls chapel also recites that he held certain lands "in Brougham per drengagium." Now tenure by drengage was a military service, but it had this peculiarity, that those only held their lands by drengage whose ancestors had possessed them *before* the Conquest. This is proved by Spelman, who, after citing his authority^a, says, "Sunt igitur drenches vassalli quidam militares, vel ut nostri forenses loquuntur, tenentes per servitium militare. Ex dictis autem notandum est, eos omnes,

^a Spelm. Gloss. v. *Drenches*, p. 186. ed. 1664.

eorumve antecessores qui è drengorum classe erant, vel per drengagium tenuere, *sua incoluisse patrimonia ante adventum Normannorum.*" The discovery, therefore, of a skeleton, which, from the whole appearance of its interment, undoubtedly dated from very early times, the presence of this ornament of Saxon workmanship, and the locality of the grave, make it more than probable that this was the tomb of one of Gilbert de Broham's Saxon ancestors.

It is not easy to conjecture to what purpose the ornament itself had been applied. It may have been the end or mounting of a Saxon drinking-horn, or possibly of a hunting-horn, the whole of which (except the metal rim) had decayed during the eight centuries it has lain in the ground.

The other skeletons found in this part of the chancel were five in number, making in the whole nine bodies in a space of little more than twelve feet, all of them laid with their feet to the east, and at a depth of about twenty inches below the surface of the ground. They rested upon a bed of dry gravel, without any appearance of damp, which may account for the perfect preservation in which the bones were found. In only two of the nine were any traces of a coffin visible; these were in two near the centre of the chancel (the Saxon grave being near the south wall); the coffins were indicated by the form of the coffin ends being impressed upon the soil, and marked by a black powder, the exact shape of a coffin end, and evidently of decayed wood. Why there were no remains of the sides, top, or bottom, can only be accounted for on the supposition that the *end* boards were of much thicker wood than the rest of the coffins. The only difference between the two was that in one case the wood-dust was black, in the other dark brown.

No trace of lead, cerecloth, or leather was found. In these early interments, therefore, the bodies were probably only wrapped in their shrouds.

In the remaining portion of the south end of the chancel (now used as the burying vault of the family) there is a large stone coffin, filled with bones, there being actually nine skulls in it. There are also some leaden coffins, quite plain: these, from the inscriptions on the floor of the chancel, are not more ancient than the fifteenth century, and they present nothing remarkable in their appearance; they were not opened.

Two thirds of the original size.

IRON PRYCKE SPUR, FROM THE TOMB OF UDARD DE BROHAM, BROUGHAM, WESTMORLAND.

The spur, discovered in the tomb assigned by Mr. Brougham to Udard de Broham, appears to have resembled in general form that which was in use in the latter part of the Anglo-Saxon period, and during the reign of the Conqueror. The shanks were straight, as those of the Frankish spur of the tenth century, in Sir Samuel Meyrick's Armoury, Skelton, ii. pl. 80. The neck appears to have been straight, not, as in that example, slightly curved, but, in the present corroded state of this curious relic, it is not possible to form an opinion whether it terminated in a short point, like the iron spur found in a kistvaen in Cumberland, with a sword, battle-axe, horse's bit, and part of a gold buckle and pendant. Archæol. x. 112. It is more probable that the neck was prolonged, and terminated in a pyramidal point. Compare the iron spurs found with Roman remains in Gloucestershire, represented in Lysons' Woodchester, pl. 35. The distinctive mark of the spur of those earlier times seems to consist in the straight shanks, whilst those of the spur of the succeeding period were curved and contracted, so as to bring the point high upon the tendon of the heel. For the sake of comparison, a representation of a good example recently disinterred in the church-yard at Chesterford, Cambridgeshire, for

IRON SPUR, FROM CHURCH-YARD, CHESTERFORD, CAMBRIDGE.

which we are indebted to the Hon. Richard Neville, is here offered to our readers. The circumstance stated by Mr. Brougham, that the left heel only was found armed with a spur, is deserving of attention, the fact having been carefully verified, and a notion has been entertained that this was in conformity with some peculiar established usage. It is obvious that if any weight be carried on the right arm, or any violent movement made therewith, as for instance, in wielding a lance or other weapon, it would be easier to spur with the left than the right heel. The natural tendency to counterbalance the change of equilibrium produced by the act of raising and moving rapidly the right arm, would bring the left heel towards the horse's flank. It seems, however, improbable, that for such a cause of trivial convenience alone, a person of knightly condition, in the thirteenth century, would have worn a single spur, or have been thus equipped, when laid in his grave, at a period when the spurs formed one of the most important parts of knightly attire. A curious fact, however, of an analogous practice, is recorded by Monsieur Troyon, in the Memoirs of the Society of Antiquaries of Zurich. At Bel-air, near Lausanne, an extensive cemetery was discovered in the year 1838, comprising interments of two periods. The bodies had been deposited in cists formed with stones, or hewn in the natural rock, and the feet lay towards the south-east. A few Roman coins were found, and a great variety of ornaments, weapons, fictile vessels, and objects which appeared to belong to a much later period. In a cist rudely formed with slabs of stone a skeleton appeared, *with an iron spur attached to the left heel alone*. It was satisfactorily ascertained that the right foot was not armed in like manner. Under the right arm had been deposited an iron plough-share, and the other objects found in the grave were a fragment of fictile manufacture, resembling the handle of an amphora, a fine single-edged weapon, in excellent preservation, with the remains of its scabbard, a dagger, buckle, and a comb formed of bone. The spur had a very short point, straight shanks, to the extremities of which were attached adjustments for two straps, one probably passing under the foot, and the second over the instep. No other similar instance of the use of a single spur appears to have been noticed; it must be admitted, however, that the remarkable interment found at Lausanne belongs to a period remote from the age of the Crusader disinterred at Brougham, and can only be regarded as a singular coincidence.

It does not appear that any well-authenticated instance had hitherto been recorded, of the discovery of actual interment with the legs crossed, in accordance with the peculiarity of monumental portraiture, chiefly prevalent during the period of the crusades, of which so many examples occur in England amongst sepulchral effigies. Maitland has stated that, on the site of the chapel of the Knights Templars, at Mount Holy, in Edinburgh, several bodies had been found, cross-legged, with swords by their sides: Gough, however, seems to have questioned the assertion, supposing that effigies were intended^b.

^b Hist. of Edinburgh, p. 176. Gough, Sep. Mon. II. cix.

A novel and very interesting fact has been further related by Mr. Brougham, in connexion with the "Crusader's tomb," namely, the discovery of a conical fragment of that remarkable kind of vitrification of which ancient Etruria, perhaps, has supplied the largest variety of examples. It appears to resemble closely those curious ornaments found frequently with interments of the British period, and which, as antiquaries have supposed, are to be regarded as the *anguina ova*, or Druid's eggs, of Pliny^c. The talismanic virtues of that fabulous egg secured for its possessor success in his projects, with the favour of the great, and immunity from various perils. It is very curious that an object of this kind, regarded most probably as endued with talismanic power, as Mr. Brougham has suggested, should have been found in the grave of a Christian knight of the twelfth century. It would even appear not without reason that this object should have been found *broken*; the spell had been dissolved, and its virtues proved to avail nothing against the stroke of death. Whatever may have been the motive which led to the deposit of this fragment in the tomb of Udard de Broham, there can be little doubt that it had been fabricated in the East. The resemblance which it bears to the ancient vitrifications discovered in Egypt and in Italy is striking: at first sight it might be supposed to be a fragment of one of those precious vials, probably for unguents, found in Etruria, but it is too thick to have formed the bottom of such a vessel. The annexed woodcut represents a choice specimen from the collection of the Marquis of Northampton, and discovered at Nola.

The round buckler which appears on one of the incised slabs described by Mr. Brougham is frequently seen in illuminations, but it is rare in monumental sculpture. It may be seen on the arm of an effigy at Great Malvern, probably commemorative of William de Braci, interred there A.D. 1289^d. That ex-

Etruscan glass from Nola

^c Examples of the *glain naidr*, or adder gem, are represented in Douglas' *Nenia*, pl. xxi.; *Archæol. Journ.*, iii. 255; Beesley's

Hist. of Banbury, pl. viii.

^d This figure is represented in Stothard's *Monumental Effigies*.

ample shews that it was occasionally nearly flat, resembling the bronze tarian of the Britons, such as have recently been found in Cambridgeshire. In other instances, however, it appears to have been of a convex form, rising to a central apex, as represented in the sculpture of St. Michael, over the doorway of Hallaton church, Leicestershire, and in figures given by Strutt, Horda, plates IV, V, XXXI^e. It is not improbable that in the northern counties the use of this kind of shield had been retained, whilst the fashion of the kite-shaped and triangular shield prevailed in other parts of the country, and even at the present time the roundel is not wholly obsolete in North Britain.

The curious circlet of gilt metal which had been deposited in one of the tombs at Brougham is deserving of notice, both on account of the singular ornaments engraved upon it, and the difficulty of ascertaining to what purpose it had been applied. It was conjectured that it had been an armlet, but this supposition appears incorrect: its form and size would indicate that it had served as the rim, or mounting, of a cup, a drinking-horn, or, more probably, an oliphant or hunting-horn. The representations of ancient tenure-horns, given in the *Archæologia*, suggest that such may have been the purpose for which this ornament had been fabricated: and the figures of the three seraphim, whose names occur in the composition of written physical charms, may have been introduced with a notion of some talismanic virtue. Amongst the curious interlaced ornaments, which seem to denote a Saxon or early Norman date, a sacred symbol is introduced, properly pertaining to the Eastern Church, and designated by the term *gammadion*, being compounded of the letter gamma, several times repeated. It was introduced very frequently in the decorations and vestments of the Greek Church, as also occasionally of our own; an example is supplied by the fine effigy of Bishop Edyndon, at Winchester. This symbol, retained in later times as an heraldic charge, was known as the "fylfot," a term hitherto unexplained. There is no instance, it is believed, on record, of the discovery of a horn in any medieval interment, but the conjecture suggested by this ornament may on various accounts appear probable. The horn was borne by persons of distinction not only in the chace, but in warlike enterprises; it served from early times both as a token of the conveyance of lands, and of official appointments. In the marches of Scotland, moreover, the tenure by cornage prevailed, namely, by the service, or grand serjeanty, of sounding a horn whenever the Scots or other foes of the realm should cross the Border^f.

A. W.

* A very good example of this kind of buckler is supplied by a figure of Goliath, given in the *Essai sur la Calligraphie*, by Langlois, from a MS. of the twelfth century, in the public library at Rouen.

^f It is indeed remarkable, as regards the conjecture that the object deposited in the

burial-place of the de Broham family may have been a horn of this description, that Lord Brougham actually holds some lands in the manor of Brougham by tenure of cornage, and an ancient horn is still in his possession, traditionally called the cornage horn.