

V.

AN ATTEMPT TO DECIPHER AND EXPLAIN THE INSCRIPTIONS ON
THE NEWTON STONE. BY THE RIGHT REV. CHARLES GRAVES, D.D.,
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In offering for the consideration of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland a fresh attempt to decipher and explain the inscriptions on the famous Newton Stone, I am conscious that I expose myself to the charge of a twofold presumption. By that act I appear to pronounce an unfavourable judgment on the previous essays of eminent scholars, and to intimate my belief that I have solved the problem which has baffled their learning and ingenuity. If I cannot altogether acquit myself of this charge, I may plead in extenuation that the great diversity of the methods employed, and of the results arrived at by those who have already dealt with this subject, suggests the notion that they have been looking for truth in wrong directions, and that the field of inquiry is therefore still as open as it was at first.

As regards my own attempt, I only claim for it the candid examination of antiquaries. They will, I think, admit that my method of investigation proceeds on what look like common sense principles, and leads to results which are recommended for acceptance by their verisimilitude. It will be observed that of the characters which appear upon the stone there are a few of which I have not attempted in this communication to determine the power. My explanation of the inscriptions is therefore confessedly incomplete, yet not so incomplete as to warrant me in withholding it. Should circumstances enable me to examine the monument, or good casts of it, I would endeavour to complete what I have done. Meanwhile I may venture to hope that I have succeeded in ascertaining the name of the person whom the monument was intended to commemorate, the actual year of his death, and the language in which the mystic legend on the face of the stone is written. These points being settled, the few remaining steps of the investigation will be made without much difficulty.

This monument presents two inscriptions—one in the Ogham character

which I shall call inscription A, running vertically down the side of the stone, and then turning upwards; the other, consisting of six horizontal lines of letters traced rather rudely and irregularly on its face. I call this inscription B.

In dealing with the two, I set out with the following assumptions, which are no doubt arbitrary. But it will be admitted that they have more or less antecedent reasonableness. They will be justified in the end if the results to which they lead are consistent with what we know from other sources to be quite or nearly certain.

1. That the Ogham characters in A are to be transliterated by the key ordinarily used in deciphering Irish and Welsh Oghams.

2. That the inscriptions A and B are to some extent equivalent in signification. In support of this assumption we may refer to several bilingual Ogham monuments in Wales.

3. That the characters in B are non-Semitic. It seems probable that they were such as were known in Scotland in early times to Picts, Britons, Scots, Angles or Northmen.

4. That the characters in B, which resemble letters in the Greek and Latin alphabets, are to be taken for what they appear to be; *e.g.*, the O, C, T, of the inscription to stand for those letters in the Latin alphabet, the \vee and λ to stand for the Greek γ and λ .

5. That the end of each line in B coincides with the end of a word or name. The irregularity in the length of the lines renders this highly probable.

6. That A commences with a proper name. This is the case in almost all the Irish Oghams.

The significance of Ogham characters depends upon the position of each stroke with reference either to a medial line (*fleasc*) traced on the surface of the stone, or to an edge along which two of its faces meet. In the case of Irish and Welsh Oghams, I know of only a very few instances in which a medial line was used. The practice seems to have been more frequent in Scotland. In the Ogham on this Newton monument it is only the last five characters which are referred to a *fleasc* cut upon the face of the stone; the greater part of the inscription being carried over a rough portion of the surface, where there was no

defined edge to guide the Ogham-graver. Some difficulty arises thus in the transliteration. But I think I have correctly determined the power of each character by considering its position with relation to those which immediately precede and follow it.

Let us now undertake the process of deciphering. Beginning with

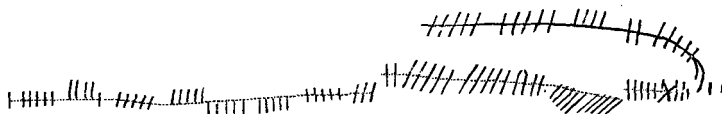


Fig. 1. Ogham Inscription, Newton Stone.

the Ogham, on the principle of proceeding from the less to the more obscure, and using the ordinary key, I read it thus:—

AIDDAI CUNNING ORRKONN IP [...] ROSII.

There may be reason to doubt whether this inscription begins with an A, that is, with a single short stroke before the group of five short ones which denote the vowel I. But I observe that antiquaries who appear to have examined casts and photographs of this monument with particular care, have expressed an opinion in favour of the existence of this A stroke. It might escape observation, or it may have been from the first only faintly marked, as its place just coincides with a natural indentation in the stone.


About the two Ds which follow no question can be raised. In Ogham inscriptions the practice of doubling consonants is not uncommon, particularly in those found in Scotland. This appears sometimes to be done without any obvious reason. But there are cases in which such duplication is used for the purpose of indicating the modification of the sound of a consonant. For instance, TT is put for TH, CC for CH, BB for P. I regard DD here as equivalent to DH.

Between the second AI and the Q or CU, there is a little space left, as if to separate two words. But I see no attempt at regular inter-punctuation, such as is shown in the Bressay Ogham.

The doubling of N is common, particularly at the end of words or

names. After the NN comes what appears to be a third N. But a straight line drawn through the right hand extremities of the strokes forming the first and second Ns seems to pass through the middle points of the next group of five strokes. I therefore read it as I. A vowel or diphthong is required here.

The symbol standing for NG, three oblique strokes, is of rare occurrence.

R is frequently doubled. After RR comes , an Ogham G, modified by a curved line connecting the tops of the two oblique strokes which stand for it. I take this modified G to denote the closely related K, which had no symbol to represent it in the Ogham alphabet.

The remaining part of the Ogham inscription, including a blank space between brackets, is so ill-defined, or represented so variously in the drawings or photographs which I have had access to, that I abstain for the present from offering my reading of it. However, I have carried the transliteration of the Ogham inscription far enough to warrant me in asserting that it gives us the name of AIDD (Aedh), CUNNING, King or Earl of the Orkneys. (Note A.)

Helped by what we have learned from the Ogham, we may now proceed to the transliteration of the inscription B. We observe that its first line, B. i., consists of four letters, two of one kind and two of another. As a matter of probability, the decipherer would say that the character in the second and third places is more likely to be a consonant than a vowel or a diphthong. As it is like T and D, and as we have in this inscription other Ts, I take it to be D. And this conjecture is supported by comparison with the Ogham which begins with a vowel or diphthong followed certainly by two Ds. Hence, if the four letters in B. i. constitute a word or name, B. i. 1 and B. i. 4 must be a vowel or diphthong; and as B. i. 1 is like E, or the rune which stands for Æ, we may read the line B. i. as ÆEDDÆ or EDDE. Consonants were frequently doubled in other kinds of writing besides Ogham, sometimes with and sometimes without any apparent reason. The consonants D and L were doubled in Welsh to stand for sounds cognate with those represented by the single letters; and GG represented the sound NG in more languages than one. (Note B.)

Passing now to the next line B. ii., we have B. ii. 1 = E or Æ or perhaps F. B. ii. 2 = U ; B. ii. 3 = R.

To prove this last equivalence, we have the inscription described and

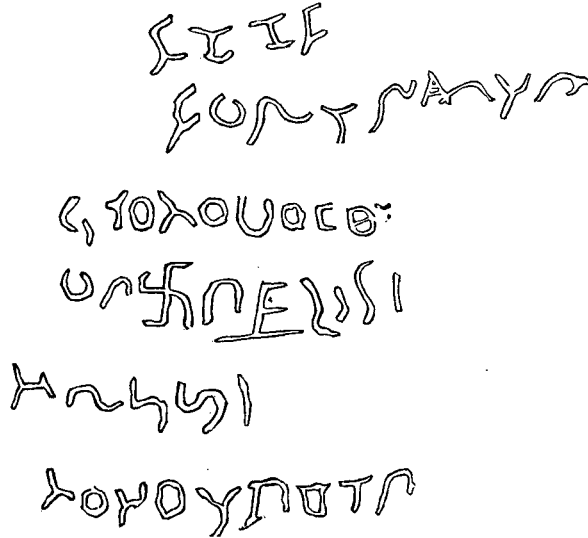


Fig. 2. Inscription—Newton Stone.

figured in Stuart's *Sculptured Stones of Scotland*, vol. ii. p. 67, and plate cxx. :—" At this place (Friarscarse) which is in the parish of Dunscore, Dumfriesshire, are several mutilated fragments of pillars with dressed



Fig. 3. Inscription on Pedestal of Cross, Lauchmoor.

pedestals. Of these the monument here represented is said to have been removed from a neighbouring site by Mr James Riddell of Glen Riddell, who was a collector of relics, towards the end of the last

century. On the stem of a rude cross, and beneath it in modern letters, the word LAUCHMOOR. On the top of the pedestal an inscription is cut, the first part of which seems to read *Ora pro anima*. . . . The cutting of the letters has probably been sharpened, and doubts have consequently been entertained as to the age and authenticity of the inscription. It is probably genuine, but the character of the letters is unusual." (Note C.)

We also have \mathcal{R} as the fundamental element in the Tironian Notes standing for R. It is plainly derived from the Latin R in the process of making writing cursive by getting rid of angles. The transition from R to \mathcal{R} is easy through one or two intermediate stages.

B. ii. 4 = T ; B. ii. 5 = R. After three consonants we have reason to expect a vowel. As it is not A, E, O or U, we may presume that B. ii. 6 = I. About the next character we may feel some doubt; but I suspect B. ii. 7 = H. B. ii. 8 = T. B. ii. 9 is either R or N. Thus the second line B. ii. will read,

$$\frac{E}{F}URTRI[H]T\frac{N}{R}.$$

This is probably equivalent in meaning to the CUNNING of the Ogham, either as a compound of FUR = FOR, with TRIHTN or DRIHTN = DROTTIN, having the signification *Chief Lord*; or as a compound of EORT with RIHTR, so as to form a word meaning *terre dominus*. The Anglo-Saxon elements I have offered are to be replaced by Norse ones. But these are guesses. I must leave the word B. ii. to be dealt with by scholars familiar with the different dialects of the old Scandinavian and German languages. Such a prefix as FOR assumes many different forms; and T, TH, D, and DH are interchangeable to a great extent.

The Lauchmoor inscription gives us A for B. iii. 1. B. iii. 2 = T. B. iii. 3 = O. B. iii. 4 = L, the Greek λ . B. iii. 5 = O. B. iii. 6 = U. B. iii. 7 = O. B. iii. 8 = C. I have formed no decided opinion as to the power of the character B. iii. 9, the last in this line. It stands for O on the St Vigean's Stone. Perhaps the transverse stroke was intended

to cancel it. And the OC may have been the conjunction meaning *and*. The third line of B is therefore to be read

ATOLOUOC[?].

Here I think we may recognise the name of Athole, variously spelt in MSS. Athfhotla, Athochlach, Atfoithle, Adtheadle. In Icelandic Atjöklar.

The fourth line B. iv. seems to read as URKNEYRI. To the Swastika, the third letter in it, I assign the power of K. Professor Stephens, in his work on Runic Monuments, makes mention, vol. i. p. 144, of bracteates on which the G Rune has this form. In Runic inscriptions, G is commonly written as a modified K (Stunginn \mathcal{K}). Here, as in the Ogham inscription on the same monument, K seems to be represented by a modified G, the Ogham ORRKONN answering to the URKNEYRI.

I do not pretend to any thing like certainty in reading the fifth line, B. v. The second, fourth, and fifth characters I represent by R, S, and I. The first, if not a vowel or a diphthong, might be B, F, H, or P. Comparing this line with the last part of the Ogham, I am inclined to regard the third character as representing some diphthong. The line would then stand thus:—

[]R[]SI,

at present I offer no interpretation of it. (Note D.)

The last line seems to read LOGOTRIOTR, without doubt the Icelandic *Lagaþriotr*, *despiser or transgressor of the laws*. The substitution of O for A is common, according to Professor Stephens, in old Scandinavian dialects (p. 33). He also gives instances of the use of T in place of þ, as in FATRAN for FAþRAN.

From what follows it will appear that I have good grounds for asserting that the reading of this word almost puts the stamp of certainty upon my reading and interpretation of the inscription B.

Though I have confessed my inability absolutely to determine the powers of some characters, and the meanings of some words in these inscriptions, I desire to state the results at which I think I have arrived.

They are these:—That the Newton monument is a bilingual one, exhibiting two inscriptions, alike in their purport, one being in a Celtic or Pictish, the other in an old Norse dialect, commemorating the death of a king or chief, who is declared to have been a *despiser of the laws*.

I now proceed to inquire whether historical documents enable us to confirm and throw further light upon these results. The EDD or ÆDD of the Norse inscription answers to the AIDD of the Ogham one, and we are not rash in asserting that these represent the Celtic AEDH. A reference to any *Index nominum* will show that it was a name in very common use in Ireland. Spelt as *Aed*, *Aedh*, *Aodh*, or Latinised as *Aidus*, it was borne by a score of kings. But I know of only one Scottish monarch to whom it belonged. This was Aedh, son of Kenneth M'Alpin, the fourth in the Catalogue of Kings, who though they were Scots by race were called kings of the Picts. We gather from the documents printed by Mr Skene, that after reigning for a single year he was put to death, A.D. 878, by some of his own subjects (*sociis*) in *civitate Nruriu* (Inverury?), or slain by Grig, son of Dungal, at Strathalyn. According to some authorities, he was buried at Iona. His death seems to have been the consequence of dissensions between the Scotch and Pictish elements in his kingdom (*see* Skene, pp. 8 and 151). He was the last of the so-called Pictish kings. But his throne was afterwards occupied by his son Constantine, on the expulsion of Grig and Eochaid. His name appears in the Chronicles in many different forms—*Aed*, *Aethus*, *Athe*, *Edh*, *Hed*, *Heth*. (Note E.)

I quote from Bellenden's translation a portion of the chapter in which Boece treats of the character and acts of this king. Whatever may be thought of the authority of St Berchan's so-called prophecies, or of Boece's history, it is remarkable that they both attribute to Aedh qualities in accordance with the epithet Despiser of the Laws. They probably had manuscript or legendary materials more full of details than the brief notices contained in the Annals:—

“The residew of Scottis quhilkis eschakit fra this unhappy battall, comenit at Scone, and maid Ethus King. . . .

“Ane comite was sene with firie bemis, rising afore none, and schane, all the moneth of Aprile. . . .

“It is said this prince was sa swift that he micht tak ane hert or ane hound be force of speed: nochtheless, quhatsumevir giftis of nature followit him, he apperit richt unabil to govern the realm; for, quhen he micht have recoverit, with sober besines, Fif and Louthiane with othir landis tane fra Scottis be injure of Inglismen and Britonis, he tuk na regard thair of, havand mair sicht to his lust, than ony common weil of the realm, as the samin suld not have bene reformit to ane better chance. He servit his unbridillit lust but ony respect to civil or religiis maneris; and thoct he was richt agil, and deliver of body, with mony othir giftis of God and Nature, he abusit them sa, that nathing semit him in his governance. The noblis, knawing his corrupit maneris noisum to the common weil, and abill to gener displeseir amang the pepil, that the realm suld not cum to mair affliction be his misgovernance, thay maid ane quiet convention amang thameself, to take the king; and to that fine, that thair intention suld not be divulgat afore it come to effect, they come haistely on him quhen he was at the huntis, in the wod of Calidon; and tuk him, be force of armit men, to prison quhare he deceissit, the thrid day efter, for melancoly in the secound yeir of his regne; fra the incarnation, DCCCLXXVI yeris.”—Hector Boece, *Chron. of Scot.*, book x. chap. 18.

My next quotation shall be from the version of St Berchan's prophecies, given by Mr Skene (pp. 86, 87).

“Another king shall possess it,
Little of gain is his portion.
Woe to Alban from that time out,
Whose name shall be Dasachtach.

Though short he shall be over Alban,
There shall not be a highway without robbery.
Woe to Alban in subjection to him,
Woe its books, woe its testaments.

Nine years to him as a king,
I shall relate to you, the tale was true,
He died without bell, without communion,
In the evening in a dangerous pass.”

Though the name of Aedh is not mentioned in these stanzas, it is not

improbable that they refer to him, as they come between passages referring to Constantine his predecessor, and Eochaid, son of Run, who succeeded him, reigning along with Grig, son of Dungal. They describe a state of social anarchy in Alban during this king's reign, and intimate that he died a sudden and violent death without partaking of the last rites of the Church. (Note F.)

The statement that his reign over Alban should be short is inconsistent with the prophecy that he should be nine years a king. Instead of ix we may suppose that ii was written in the last stanza. In the Irish and Pictish additions to the *Historia Britonum* we have *Aed filius Cinaeda ii annis regnavit*.

The death of Aedh is recorded in the *Annals of Ulster* at the year 877. It is there stated that in the same year occurred the death of Ruaidri, son of Morminn, and an eclipse of the moon on the Ides of October. The *Annales Cambriae* also assign 877 as the date of Ruaidri's death. But the *Annals of Ulster* are known to be antedated here by one year; and we learn from "L'Art de Vérifier les Dates" that this eclipse took place in 878. This, then, is the true date of Aedh's death.

In testing the correctness of my conclusion as to the identification of the ÆDDÆ of the monument with the Pictish king Aedh, we are bound to consider the original site of the Newton Stone, and the place where he is said to have been slain. I do not say the place where he was buried, for the monument may have been merely a memorial stone, like the "stone of blood between two glens," marking the spot where, according to St Berchan's prophecy, Grig, son of Kenneth, son of Dubh, was destined to meet his fate (Skene, p. 98). In the Pictish Chronicle it is said of Aedh, *in civitate Nrurim est occisus*. Johnstone, in his *Antiquitates Celto-Normannicae*, conjectures that this must have been Inverurie. Certainly the word, as represented in the facsimile given by Mr Skene, is rather doubtful; it seems to end with *uriu*, and may have commenced with an abbreviation of Inver.

Stuart (*Sculptured Stones of Scotland*, vol. i. p. 35), in his notices of plates cxiii. and cxiv., representing monuments existing at Inverurie, quotes the following from Chalmers's *Caledonia*, vol. i. p. 331:—"Another mound called the Conyng Hillock, near to the present manse,

probably covers the ashes of Eth of the swift foot, a Pictish chief, who is said to have been buried at Inverurie in the year 881." The Eth here named is beyond all doubt identified with the Pictish king Aedh by the epithet "of the swift foot," to which, if we may believe Boece, he was entitled; whilst the designation of his sepulchral mound as the Conyng Hillock seems to identify him with the Aiddai Cuning named in the Ogham inscription.

The later Chronicles given by Mr Skene, all of them apparently derived from a common source, assert that Aedh was *interfectus in bello in Strathalan et sepultus in Iona*.

Lord Aberdeen, in his letter to Dr Stuart, dated Sept. 10, 1855, says that the Newton Stone, before its removal to the place where it now stands, was situated in a fir plantation a few paces distant from the high road, and near to the Pitmachie turnpike.

The conclusions to which I have been led may be thus recapitulated:—

1. The two inscriptions on the Newton Stone exhibit the name AIDDAI or ÆDDÆ as that of the person commemorated by it.
2. This name appears to be equivalent to the very common Celtic name AEDH.
3. This AIDDAI or AEDH was a King or Earl (CUNNING in the Ogham inscription),
4. A Pictish Sovereign, King or Earl of the Orkneys, if I read the inscriptions aright,
5. Who was declared by the inscription to be LOGOÞRIOTR, a despiser of the laws. It is to be noticed as a remarkable confirmation of this reading that LAGABÆTR, amender of the laws, was the agnomen of Magnus Haconsson, King of Norway.
6. There appears to have been but one Pictish king of this name, Aedh, son of Kenneth M'Alpin, who after a reign of one year was put to death A.D. 878 by some of his subjects, having provoked them to rebel by his disregard of the interests and laws of his kingdom. He was celebrated for his fleetness of foot (Hector Boece, lib. x. cap. xviii.) (Note G.)
7. According to the Pictish Chronicle, *in civitate Nrurim est occisus*.

8. The Newton Stone originally stood at no great distance from Inverurie, marking probably the spot where Aedh was slain.

9. A mound, called the *Conyng* hillock, near to the present manse, was believed by Chalmers to cover the ashes of Eth of the swift foot (*Caledonia*, vol. i. p. 381).

I am aware that doubts may be raised as to whether Aedh, the Pictish king, who died A.D. 878, could at that time have been properly called King or Earl of the Orkneys; for the contests carried on between Harald Harfagr and his Earls dated from 872. But for some years later the condition of those islands seems to have been very unsettled, and the King of the Piets may have been styled King or Earl of the Orkneys, after he had ceased to be so *de facto*. They had been under Pictish rule at an early period. (Note H.)

It may appear strange to some, that a monument like the Newton Stone should record a condemnation of the person commemorated. As I believe that the Ogham character was intended to be cryptic, intelligible only to the initiated, it would not surprise me if we found here some term implying disparagement. M^cCurtin, a learned Irish grammarian, writing more than 150 years ago, tells us that "the Irish antiquaries have preserved this Ogham in particular (the *Ogham craobh*) as a piece of the greatest value in all their antiquity. And it was penal for any but those that were sworn antiquaries either to study or use the same. For in these characters those sworn antiquaries wrote all the evil actions and other vicious practices of their monarchs and great personages, both male and female, that it should not be known to any but themselves and their successors, being sworn antiquaries as aforesaid" (M^cCurtin's *English-Irish Dictionary*, Paris, 1732, p. 714). Perhaps we may find some such epithet or agnomen at the end of the Newton Ogham. And I cannot help suspecting that the person who denounced Aedh as a despiser of the laws, intentionally veiled the adverse judgment under the disguise of a recondite character invented for the occasion. He must have had some knowledge, enabling him to mix runes with letters belonging to the Greek and Latin alphabets; and doubtless there was in the ninth century no lack of ecclesiastics in Scotland who could have done this. At a certain period in the develop-

ment of civilisation, this was a common exercise of an ingenuity which was mistaken for learning. Professor Stephens very properly denounces the "barbarous and fanciful alphabets for secret writing, fabricated so largely in the middle age."

I have abstained from criticising the transliterations and interpretations offered by those who have preceded me in discussing these inscriptions. I doubt whether such a task would be in any way profitable. To me it would certainly be an ungrateful one; for I have an aversion to anything that approaches to a controversial treatment of literary or scientific questions. I put forward the conclusions stated in this paper in the belief that they deserve consideration; and I shall be ready to yield to the force of objections which appear to be fatal. My results, arrived at before I knew what had been done by others, were shown in the year 1871 to Mr Eirikr Magnusson, who encouraged me in the belief that I had correctly read the non-Oghamic inscription, and ascertained the language in which it was written. If I refrained from publishing them at that time, it was because I felt that my work was incomplete. And so it still remains to a certain extent. But if my line of inquiry has been rightly chosen, and properly followed up, the truth of my conclusions, so far as they go, will appear in their own light. Success in deciphering is generally proved by internal evidence, by the reasonableness of the results arrived at.

Note A.

This word *Cunning* deserves notice. It is essentially Teutonic. Identical in meaning, and philologically cognate with the English word *King*, it is found with slight variations of form in almost all the northern languages, as *Cyng*, *Cyning*, *Kuning*, *Chuning*, *Kuining*, *Konning*, *Köning*, *Koning*, *Konink*, *Keuning*, *Konligr*, &c. But it does not appear to have been a common noun, with the signification *King*, in the old Irish Celtic. The word which stood in that language for *King* was *Righ*. It is true that *Conaing* was a proper name in very general use in Ireland. In the Index to the Annals of the Four Masters, we find a list of no less than twenty-five persons who bore it. But where did it come from? Probably from the Scandinavian Vikings, who visited and plundered the coasts of Ireland long before the end of the eighth century, usually assigned as the date of their first invasion. In the Annals of the Four Masters at the year A.M. 3066 (*Anno Mundi* = 5198 B.C.), we find the

following entry :—"The demolition of the tower of Conainn in this year by the race of Neimhidh against Conainn, son of Faebhar, and the Fomorians in general, in revenge for all the oppression they had inflicted upon them [the race of Neimhedh], as is evident from the chronicle which is called *Leabhar Gabhala*; and they nearly all mutually fell by each other; thirty persons alone of the race of Neimhidh escaped to different quarters of the world, and they came to Ireland some time after as Fírbolgs."

Dr O'Donovan appends the following note on the words "tower of Conainn," occurring in the text just quoted :—" *Tor-Conainn*, called *Tor-Conaing* by Keating, and in the more ancient copies of the *Leabhar Gabhala*, where the destruction of it is given at full length. It was situated on Tory Island, off the north-west coast of Donegal. There is no tradition of this *Conainn* or *Conaing* on Tory Island at present. But there are most curious traditions of *Balor*. Giraldus Cambrensis call the Fomorians '*Gygantes (quibus tunc temporis abundabat insula,*' and '*pyrati qui Hiberniam graviter depopulari consueverant.*' In the Annals of Clonmacnoise, as translated by Connell Mageoghan, it is said that 'these Ffomores were a sept descended from Cham the sonne of Noeh; that they lived by pyracie and spoile of other nations, and were in those days very troublesome to the whole world.' . . . O'Flaherty thinks that they were the inhabitants of Denmark, Norway, Finland, &c. See *Ogygia*, part iii. c. 56, p. 303." Most of the Irish writers, like Mageoghan, have asserted that the Fomorians were Africans. O'Flaherty was not far from the truth when he expressed the opinion quoted above. He held that Fomorian was equivalent to Lochlannach. In this view I cannot agree. If these names were identical in signification, why should the former have been used only occasionally, and apparently for the purpose of denoting the people designated by it as a peculiar race? I have always maintained that the Fomorians were Pomeranians.

If it were safe to build upon so narrow a foundation as is furnished by the occurrence in the Ogham inscription of this word *Cunning*, used as a common noun, one might proceed to argue, or rather speculate thus :—The inscription itself is not in the Gaedhelic or old Irish language, and if so is probably in Pictish, as the monument stands in Pictland, and commemorates a Pictish king. That being so, we might expect to discover more remains of the Pictish language in the Scotch Oghams, when they are subjected to a careful analysis. And conversely, if in any other way we should find our small stock of Pictish vocables increased, we should be helped to decipher the Scotch Oghams, which are very unlike those of Ireland and Wales, and more enigmatical. If *Cunning* be a common noun meaning *King*, we might expect to meet with it as an element in topographical names. It appears in Cunningsburgh in Shetland, like Königsberg, Kingsborough, Kingstown, &c.

Note B.

Names or words with such a sequence of letters are common, such as ACCA, Bishop of Hexham ; OTTO, &c. Compare ÆDDI, better known as Stephen the Presbyter, the biographer of Wilfrid (A.D. 720). His name was Latinised as EDDIUS.

Note C.

Dr Stuart appears to have felt some doubt as to the reading of the Lauchmoor inscription. He only gives the first three words—*Ora pro anima*. Hübner, in his *Inscriptiones Britanniae Christianae*, strangely misreads the last two. The inscription runs thus :—*Ora pro anima Comerchie de Lauch*.

Note D.

Perhaps I ought to offer my provisional conjectures, such as they are, with respect to the fifth line of the Inscription B, and the concluding portion of the Ogham which I believe to be equivalent to it, or nearly so. In the first place, I suspect that they both contain some form of Ross, the name of the district which adjoined Moray, and along with it formed one of the provinces into which Scotland north of the Firths of Forth and Clyde was divided. And further, I am inclined to compare the IP... of the Ogham with the IPE which appears in the St Vigean Monument. I take the last two characters of the Ogham inscription to be Is, though they certainly appear to be Rs. On the other hand, the first character on the *steasc*, as it precedes a vowel, is more likely to be a consonant, though it appears to be an I. In the Scotch Oghams, vowels and consonants, having the same number of strokes, are not unfrequently interchanged.

Note E.

I assume, and not without reason, that the Æ in ÆDII, the AI in AIDUS, and the E in EDH and EDHUS, are phonetically equivalent.

Note F.

In stating my belief that these stanzas referred to Aedh, I was guided by the indications furnished by Mr Skene in his notes to the Prophecy of St Berchan. But the use of the epithet *Dasachtach* warns me that I am not on sure ground. It is applied in the Synchronisms of Flann Mainistreach to Donald, the son of Constantine M'Kenneth, who is represented there as having been the successor of Grig. The author of the Duan Albanach makes no mention of Grig or Eochaid, perhaps regarding them as usurpers. As the name of Aedh occurs in all the lists, it seems strange that the pseudo-Berchan should have failed to mention him, though he had the advantage of prophesying after the event.

Note G.

Aedh is called *albipes* in the *Chronicon Elegiacum* (Skene, p. 178). This is possibly a mistake for *alipes*, answering to the *agnomen* "of the swift foot," mentioned above. In the *Duan Albanach* he is called *Aodh fhionnscothach*, of the white flowers. But *fhionnscothach* may be a corrupt reading of *fhionncosach*, fleet-footed.

Note H.

Sigurd, the first Earl of Orkney [*circ.* A.D. 872], took part in the invasion of the northern part of the mainland of Scotland, including Caithness, Sutherland, Ross, and Moray. After his death Thorstein, the Red, ruled over those districts; and so late as in the twelfth century we find that Harold, son of Maddad, Earl of Athole, became joint Earl of Orkney in place of Paul, who was his mother's brother. There is nothing strange, therefore, in finding Athole and the Orkney mentioned together as under the rule of the same Cunning.
