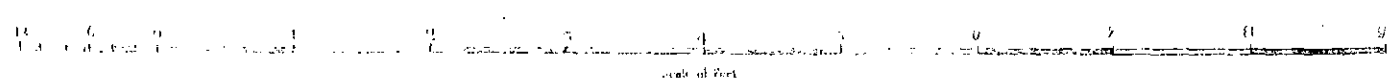


DRAWN BY THOMAS DE WYCK

DESIGNED BY J. P. WYCK

TRUSTEE'S MONUMENTS IN THE GARDEN BELONGING TO KNOTTSWELL MANSE.



XXIV.—*An Account of the Remarkable Monument in the shape of a Cross, inscribed with Roman and Runic Letters, preserved in the Garden of Ruthwell Manse, Dumfriesshire.*

By the Rev. HENRY DUNCAN, D. D. Minister of Ruthwell, Corr.
Mem. S. A. Scot.

[*Read to the Society 10th December 1832.*]

THE engraving which accompanies this paper is an accurate representation of a remarkable relic of former times, which at present stands in the garden belonging to the Manse of Ruthwell, being a column inscribed partly with Runic and partly with Roman characters.¹ It has been noticed by various authors, such as Hickes, Gordon, Pennant, and Chalmers; but all of them have given inaccurate and deficient descriptions of it, and the plates which have been engraved to represent it are very imperfect. The latter author, in the short notice of the parish of Ruthwell, inserted in his *Caledonia*,² calls it an ancient monument, “which our tourists have been studious to describe, and our antiquaries have been unable to explain;” and he joins with Gordon in characterizing it as a genuine specimen of Danish sculpture.

In another passage,³ Chalmers speaks of the pillar as having been probably erected by some of the followers of Halfdan the Dane, but without assigning any reason for the conjecture. Were there any truth in this, we might refer the date of the pillar to the middle or end of the ninth century, when this furious chief made inroads from the Danish settlements of Northumberland, on the Britons of Strath-cluyd, and, remaining several months in Scotland, extended his depredations into Galloway. But even granting the column to be of Danish origin, which is more than doubtful, it seems improbable that so fine a specimen of art should have proceeded from the hands of restless warriors, whose sole object was plunder, or should have been erected in a country where they are expressly stated by Chalmers himself to have remained only for a few months,

¹ See Plate XIII. which does great credit to the ingenious artist Mr Penny.

² *Caledonia*, vol. i. p. 466.

³ *Caledonia*, vol. i. p. 380.

“amidst doubtful conflicts.” It seems much more likely that the pillar in question should have been the work of a people at ease, who had settled down in the district, with the tools and instruments of the peaceful arts around them.

It appears, indeed, from the form of the characters, that the Runes on this monument are not Danish, but Anglo-Saxon;⁴ a circumstance which seems first to have been noticed by Wilhelm Carl Grimm, a learned German Grammarian; and this necessarily overturns every theory of the Danish origin of the column, and establishes that its date must be sought for during the period of the Heptarchy, or, at least, before the language and learning of the Anglo-Saxons had, by foreign conquest and admixture, undergone any violent change.

On inspection, the first thing that strikes an inquirer is the remarkable and anomalous fact already mentioned, of the union, on the same stone, of two different alphabets belonging to different periods of British history; and this naturally suggests the question, whether or not any essential change may have taken place in the form and character of the monument since its first erection.

To settle this point, it will be necessary to anticipate a little, by giving an account of some circumstances relative to the nature of the sculpture and inscriptions which it contains.

It consists of four sides, two of which, opposite to each other, have borders inscribed with Runic characters, and are adorned with elegantly formed vines and grapes, entwined with animals in alto relievo, while the other two exhibit figures evidently relating to Christian history, with borders of Latin inscriptions in the Roman character, taken partly from passages in the New Testament.

Now, it must strike an antiquary, at once, that this is a singular combination; and that the very circumstance of there being Runic characters on two of the sides, and Roman characters on the others, affords of itself a strong presumption that the sculpture has been executed at two different periods.

It is true, that, were the existence of Runic and Roman characters on the same monument the only peculiarity, it might be accounted for on the supposition that the monument was erected at the very period when the change from the Runic to the Roman alphabet was in progress, and the union in question might be held to be a striking instance of the step by which the transition was made. It might be plausibly argued, too, that in such a progress it was

⁴ See Mr Repp's observations on this subject, which follow this Paper.

natural for the native language to be inscribed in the native character, while the Latin was expressed in Roman letters.⁵ But there are other circumstances, which, combined with this, will leave little doubt on the mind of an unprejudiced inquirer, as to the fact that the monument has been remodelled at a period subsequent to its erection.

In the first place, the column is formed of two separate blocks of sandstone, both of them probably taken from the neighbouring hills, but evidently from different quarries; for, although they are both of a coarse texture and of a reddish colour inclining to gray, such as is to be found in the vicinity, the upper stone is distinctly of a deeper hue than the other. This, of itself, affords no slight reason for supposing that the former, which terminates in a cross, was added at a later period; for it is far from probable that dissimilar blocks would have been employed in its original construction, though necessity or convenience might have required this on its being remodelled.

In the next place, on examining the sculpture, there is found a bar or border of the width of three inches at the top of the lower stone, which runs horizontally round all the four sides, and on which there are inscriptions. This bar divides the vine work on the Runic sides into two compartments, and awkwardly interrupts its elegant convolutions—an intrusion which can only be satisfactorily accounted for by supposing that, on its original formation, the pillar at this point was made to terminate.

There is yet another argument in favour of the supposition that the sculpture has been executed at different periods, which, in the eyes of an artist, may probably appear stronger than any of the others. It is founded on the manifest superiority of the work, both in elegance of design and skill of execution,

⁵ Bishop Nicholson, in a letter to Dr Hickeys, written 1699, and published in 1809, in the first volume of that eminent prelate's correspondence, adverts to the union of Runic inscriptions with Christian figures and allusions in this monument, and seems to consider it as a proof of the controverted opinion, that the northern nations did not lay aside the use of the Runic character immediately after their conversion. Into this subject the writer does not enter, but the whole passage deserves to be quoted. “Id vero, ut hic publicandum roga-rem, duo moverunt: primum, quod, Christianum monumentum cum sit, ad ea debet accedere, quæ runas, apud septentrionales gentes, post receptam ab iis Christianam religionem, in usu aliquamdiu fuisse ostendunt;—dein quod præter communiore, primi alphabeti, runas, in quibus integrum exaratur monumentum supra descriptum, haud exiguus numerus runarum minus communem, quæ, secus ac magis communes delineantur, in eo reperiuntur.”

on the sides inscribed with Runic characters, when compared with those on which the Roman letters are found. There is a boldness, a freedom, and a beauty in the sculpture on the Runic sides, which would not disgrace a classic age, and which the Christian figures on the other sides are far from exhibiting in an equal degree. It is scarcely possible, indeed, that they could have been designed by the same artist, or executed by the same workman. This is apparent even where the subjects are different; but there is a still more striking proof of what we are contending for, in the inferiority of the workmanship on the Runic sides of the upper stone, where the design coincides. Here, an attempt has been made to carry on the vine-work in a manner similar to that on the lower stone; but the execution is so imperfect as clearly to indicate the hand of a bungling imitator. It may be of some importance also to mention, that the Runic letters of the upper stone, which run along instead of across the border, are formed considerably broader, while they are cut deeper and more sharply, than those below, of which they appear to be an imitation.

It may be proper to remark, that to the argument derived from this difference in the sculpture the engraving does not do sufficient justice, as it is difficult to give full effect, in a drawing, to the inferiority alluded to.

There appears, then, to be satisfactory evidence that the pillar has, since its first erection, undergone a great change; that it consisted at first only of one block, terminating with the bar already noticed, the upper stone containing the cross having been added at a later period: and further, that, making allowance for the waste of time, the sculpture on the two Runic sides of the lower stone is in its original form; but that the Christian figures, along with the Latin inscriptions on the Roman sides, were probably cut at the time of its change of shape, having perhaps originally contained carved work of a different kind.

The writer was at first inclined to think that the original design of the column might not have been of a religious nature, and might even have preceded the establishment of Christianity in this country; and also, that the Runic inscription, which has hitherto baffled all attempts of the learned to interpret it, had probably been mutilated and rendered illegible by narrowing the sides of the column in the process of alteration. But the very ingenious and apparently successful efforts of Mr Repp, which reflect so much credit on his learning and antiquarian talent, lead to an opposite conclusion in both these respects. To so high an authority the utmost deference ought to be paid; and the antiquarian world is under great obligations to that gentleman

for an attempt which has probably laid the foundation for a complete solution of this difficult problem.

The later history of this remarkable column is not much more indebted to tradition than that of an early date. In Sir John Sinclair's *Statistical Account* of the parish of Ruthwell, a report is mentioned of its having been set up in remote times, at a place called Priestwoodside (now Priestside), near the sea, from whence it is said to have been drawn by a team of oxen belonging to a widow. This tradition is still common in the parish, with some additional particulars. The pillar is said to have been brought by sea from some distant country, and to have been cast on shore by shipwreck; and while it was in the act of being conveyed in the manner described, into the interior, the tackling is reported to have given way, which was believed, in that superstitious age, to indicate the will of heaven that it was to proceed no farther. It was accordingly erected, if we are to credit the report, on the spot where it fell, and a place of worship was built over it, which became the parish-church of Ruthwell. It is not improbable that this tradition may bear some vague reference to the period when the alteration took place in the form, and perhaps also in the object, of the column, at which time its site may possibly have been changed. It is remarkable that the remains of an ancient road, founded on piles of wood, leading through a morass to the Priestside (which is a stripe of arable land inclosed between this morass and the shore of the Solway Frith), were in existence within the last thirty or forty years.

Whatever truth there may be in the tradition, it is at least certain that, at a very early period, the pillar was erected in the church of Ruthwell, where it remained, and was held in the highest veneration, till the Reformation; and where, even after that period, it was preserved from demolition to the middle of the 17th century, probably by the influence of the Murrays of Cockpool, the ancestors of the Earl of Mansfield, who were the chief proprietors as well as the patrons of the parish, and who had espoused the cause of the Episcopal party, in opposition to that of the Presbyterians.

In 1642, however, when the latter were triumphant over the court and its satellites, by whom they had been at once cajoled and oppressed, and when the progress of the dispute between Charles I. and the country party, which was rapidly coming to a crisis in both kingdoms, had greatly inflamed men's minds, an order was passed, by the General Assembly of the Church, for the destruc-

tion of this ancient monument, as idolatrous.⁶ The order seems to have been but partially and reluctantly obeyed by the local authorities. The column was indeed thrown down, and broken in several pieces, it should seem, by the fall; and it was probably at the same time that some of the emblems which were peculiarly obnoxious, because objects of popish idolatry, such as the crucifixion, were nearly obliterated; but, after this act of obedience was performed, it was allowed to lie within the church, beside the ancient site of the altar, on the spot where it fell, and probably served for more than a century as seats to part of the congregation, who weekly assembled to worship God under more simple forms, and with a purer faith than had formerly rendered it an object of adoration.⁷ In 1772, when inspected by Mr Pennant, it was still lying within the church; but, soon after this, it was removed to the church-yard, the increasing population, and the improved taste of the times, having rendered necessary better accommodation to the congregation.

In its new situation the prostrate column became more exposed to injury, for the church-yard was then nearly uninclosed; and, when the present incumbent acquired the living, he found it undergoing such rapid demolition, that he resolved to preserve it, by transferring it to a place of greater security. This resolution was carried into effect in the summer of 1802, when it was erected in a garden, which he had newly formed in the immediate neighbourhood of the church-yard.

Previous to this, however, a discovery had been somewhat singularly made, of a part of the column which was amissing both when visited by Gordon and by Pennant. A poor man and his wife having died within a day or two of each other, it was resolved that they should both be buried in the same grave, which, on that account, required to be made unusually deep. The gravedigger in the course of his labour came to a fragment of sandstone of considerable bulk, which was found, on one of its sides, to contain the upper part

⁶ This order is dated 27th July 1642, at St Andrews, where the General Assembly was then sitting.

⁷ This bears no distant resemblance to the conduct of the South Sea Islanders, who, when converted to Christianity, are said in many instances to have degraded their hideous idols into seats, in which they listened to the preaching of the missionaries, in those very Maraes which had, but a few months before, been stained with the blood of human sacrifices offered by the same worshippers to these very idols.

of the image of the Supreme Being, with the *Agnus Dei* in his bosom, and, on the reverse, a representation of the upper part of two human figures in the act of embracing. On applying this fragment to the monument, it was found to coincide with that portion of it which Pennant mistook for the top of a cross, the limbs and flowing robes of the image of the Deity being that which he describes as "the lower part of a human figure in long vestments, with his feet on a pair of small globes." It had probably been surreptitiously buried along with the body of some votary of the church of Rome, from a superstitious belief in its supernatural virtues.

The only large fragment of the column appearing to be irretrievably lost, is what contained the transverse arms of the cross, which may probably have been much shattered by the fall when the whole was thrown down or entirely destroyed by the zeal of the agents of the General Assembly. It was, however, quite evident at what part these arms must have originally projected; and the writer of this article, on comparing the monument with drawings of similar Popish relics, flattered himself that he could restore them in nearly their original form; which in the year 1823, by the aid of a country mason, he attempted to do. In this he was guided by the shape of the capital, which is nearly entire, and which, besides being in all probability a counterpart of the arms, contains, on two opposite sides, segments of a circle corresponding with similar segments in the stone immediately below, evidently indicating that the circle, on both sides, was originally completed, and formed the centre of the transverse limbs of the cross.

Before giving a detailed account of the sculpture and inscriptions on this ancient monument, it may be proper to take some more particular notice than has yet been done, of its form and general dimensions, which will be more easily followed by referring to the Plate. It consists, as has already been stated, of two distinct stones. Of these, the lower is formed of parallel sides to the height of four feet from the bottom, which may be called the base of the column, and which, as it at present stands, is sunk one foot nine inches into the ground. The breadth of this base, on the Roman sides, has been originally about two feet, and, on the Runic sides, nearly one foot seven inches. Above the base it begins to decrease in breadth, tapering gradually and uniformly on all the four faces, till at the top it is, on the Roman sides, fifteen inches broad, and, on the Runic sides, eleven inches and a quarter.

The upper stone is of such dimensions at its base, as to fit exactly the top

of the under one on which it rests, and the same tapering continues on the Roman faces to the very top of the pillar, and on the Runic faces till it is interrupted by the curves beneath the arms of the cross. The top of the shaft of the cross, which crowns the whole column, is, on the Roman sides, nine inches in breadth, and, on the Runic sides, nearly seven inches.

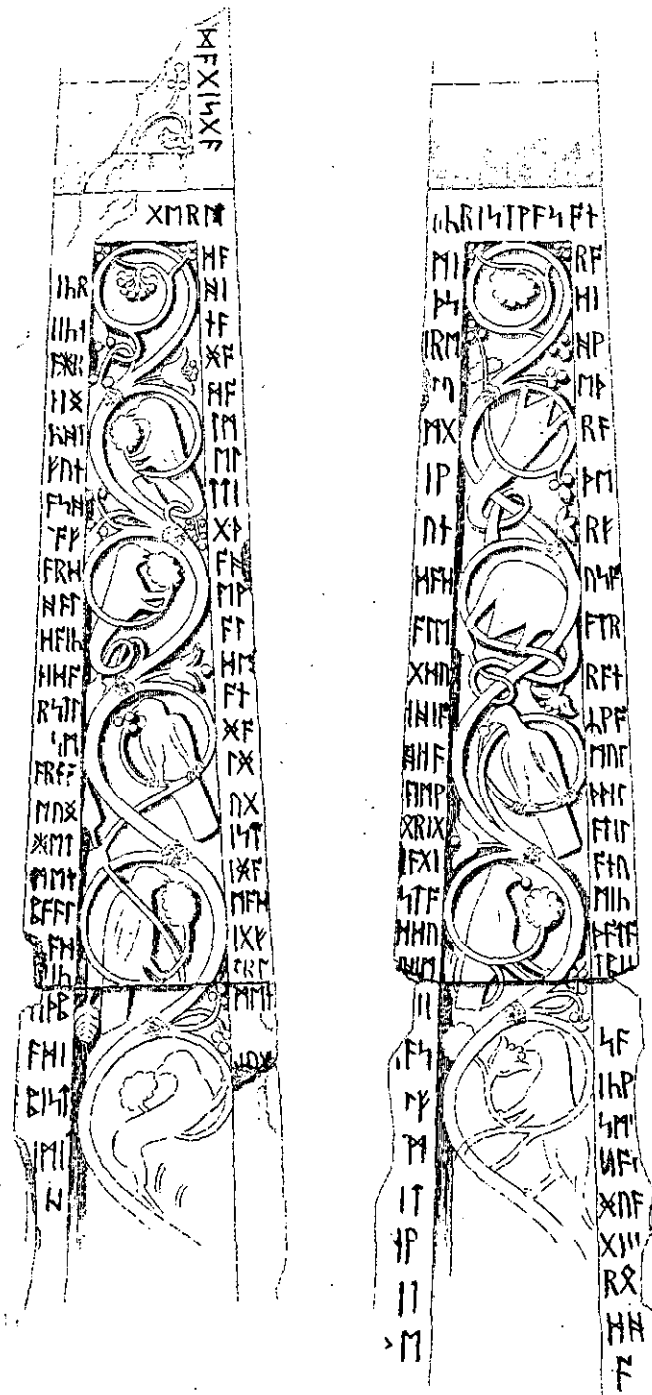
The whole length of the pillar is seventeen feet six inches, of which the lower stone measures twelve feet six inches, and the upper five feet.

The Roman sides are divided into compartments of various sizes, separated from each other by a raised border or bar, of from two to three inches broad, which is joined to a margin, equally raised, and of a similar average breadth, running along the edges of the pillar, originally without interruption from top to bottom. These represent the figures as it were within picture frames, and serve as a convenient surface for the inscription of the various legends.

On the Runic sides there is also a raised margin, carried round the whole of the sculpture, of nearly the same breadth with that on the other faces. On this the Runic characters are inscribed *across*, with the exception of the few letters which appear on the upper stone, where, as already stated, like the Roman inscriptions on the other sides, they run *along* the margin. Beyond the surface line of the margins the sculptured figures scarcely project.

The lower block is broken in two, about seven feet eleven inches from the bottom, and the upper stone is in several fragments. On its re-erection it was found necessary to fill up deficiencies, by the insertion of several new pieces of stone, which was done without any attempt to supply the place of the lost sculpture, except in the transverse limbs of the cross, already mentioned.

By referring to Plate XIII. it will be observed, that the two sides of the column which contain Runic characters are in many respects similar to each other. On the base they contain some very imperfect and mutilated remains of sculpture, of which it is impossible to trace the design; and above the base, on either side, a vine, highly relieved, is beautifully represented, winding up the centre in graceful serpentine undulations, with branches containing fruit starting from it at every turn, in regular and flowing curves. Among the branches, animals of different kinds are curiously and artfully sculptured, in the act of feeding; and, what is worthy of notice, because evidently done with some allegorical or mythological design, the animals on the two sides, though in different attitudes, are of similar kinds, and succeed each other in the same order.



RUNIC INSCRIPTION ENLARGED

On the lower part of the vine is the representation of an imaginary animal, which, judging of it by the figure on the least effaced side, has the head, body, and wings of a bird, while its tail is long, flexible, and curled, tapering till it approaches the top, where it ends in a sort of tuft, resembling that on the tail of a lion.

The next in succession, on either vine, is a quadruped; and then come two birds, one above the other. All these are exhibited as feeding on the fruit. Still higher are found two animals of the lizard or other reptile species, with long tails curiously entwined round the stem and branches, which, rejecting the fruit, are represented as greedily devouring the bark.

Here the vine, having gradually become more and more slender as the pillar tapers, after winding again into an elegant curve, terminates in a bunch of grapes. Above this is the border or bar formerly mentioned, which runs round the top of the lower stone, forming, as the writer has conjectured, the original termination of the column.

On the upper stone, the vine-work, after the interposition of another bar, begins again, still interspersed with birds and beasts, and is continued for about two feet, ending immediately below the curves connected with the arms of the cross.

With regard to the Runic inscriptions contained on these sides, the writer is happy in having it in his power to refer to the following paper, where the reader will find a new light thrown on the subject by the labours of the learned and ingenious Mr Repp; and he will now content himself with giving a very brief outline of the result of that gentleman's inquiries. Much obscurity has hitherto rested on the subject of Anglo-Saxon Runes; and indeed of these letters there is only known to have existed one specimen, the authenticity of which is generally admitted. This is the Exeter Manuscript, from which an alphabet was constructed, which was first published by the learned Hickes, and is here given for the better understanding of Mr Repp's remarks.⁸ It is a very remarkable circumstance, and one contributing much to the value of the monument which it is the object of this paper to illustrate, that the Runic inscription appears to be written in an alphabet which only differs in a few very minute particulars from that of the Exeter Manuscript, as will be evident from a comparison of the two.⁹ The Ruthwell Monument and the Exeter Manuscript

⁸ Plate XV. Fig. 1, a.⁹ Plate XV. Fig. 1, a, b.

thus mutually illustrate one another, and tend to dispel many of the doubts which hitherto were entertained upon the subject of Anglo-Saxon Runes. The Norse or Icelandic Runic Alphabet, being that which was in use among the Danes, is likewise given in one of the plates, to show how much it differs from that of the Anglo-Saxons.¹⁰

Taking the Exeter Alphabet for his guide, Mr Repp has rendered the Runic inscription, except where much defaced, letter for letter, into Roman characters; and although the precise dialect of the inscription is as yet uncertain, his intimate acquaintance with all the northern languages has enabled him to read several detached words and sentences which give us considerable insight into the history of the Monument.

On the left hand column of the left face he reads the word
Ashlafardhal, i. e. *The vale or dale of Ashlafr*;
Ashlafr being the genitive of a common female name, as *Asleifr* is of that of a man, among the northern nations. On the same column there occurs likewise the word

Menboat, i. e. *The expiation for an injury*.

On the right-hand column of the left face no intelligible word has yet been made out; but on the left-hand column of the right face, Mr Repp finds the following sentence,—

Cristpason mith sirtum XI. punda male, i. e. *The vessel of Christ* [or baptismal font], *of eleven pounds weight, with ornaments*;

while on the right-hand column of the same face this sentence is found—
Radih phedra [for *fedra*] *Therfusa aqrran*, i. e. *By the authority of the Therfusian fathers* [or Monks of Therfuse], *for the devastation of the fields*.

And afterwards the words
Kua XIII.; the former being the genitive plural of *Ku*, Norse and Anglo-Saxon for a *Cow*; the latter being probably numeral.

In confirmation of the interpretation of the commencement of one of the inscriptions rendered by him “The vessel of Christ, of eleven pounds weight, with ornaments,” it may be proper to observe, that there is preserved, along with the column, a fragment of an ornamented circular stone, which, according to tradition, to which its form adds great probability, was originally used as the

¹⁰ Plate XV. Fig. 2, c. 1.

Fig. 1

a	b	c
Alphabetum e Monum. Ruthwell.	Alphabetum Exoniense ex Hickes. Thes. III. Tab. II.	Alphabetum Runicum, quo Scandinav. gentes utebantur, haud justo Runico, sed Latino ordine positum.
A. F F F ?	ƿ	1 †
B. Ɔ	Ɔ	Ɔ
C. h	h	caret.
D. H	H	(†)
E. M	M	(†)
F. ƿ	ƿ ƿ	ƿ
G. X? X?	X Ɔ †	(ƿ)
H. N	N †	†
I. l	l	l
K. h ⁶ X? X? †?	Ƴ X	Ƴ
L. †	†	†
M. M	M	Ƴ
N. † †	†	† †
O. F X? F?	N X	† † †
P. †	Ɔ Ɔ	(Ɔ)
Q. †?	X †	caret.
R. R	R	R
S. h	h	h
T. †	†	† †
U. n	n A	n
Th. †	X. h X	Ur. † (final r)
Oe. X?	Y. Ƴ	Th. †
Ing. X?	Z. R	
Cl or Ki. X		

Nomenibus in Fig. 1. a. cu respiciunt quae de dubiis literis sub eisdem numeralibus signis in epistola sunt annotata.

Fig. 4

Lectio Gordonis. anno 1726.

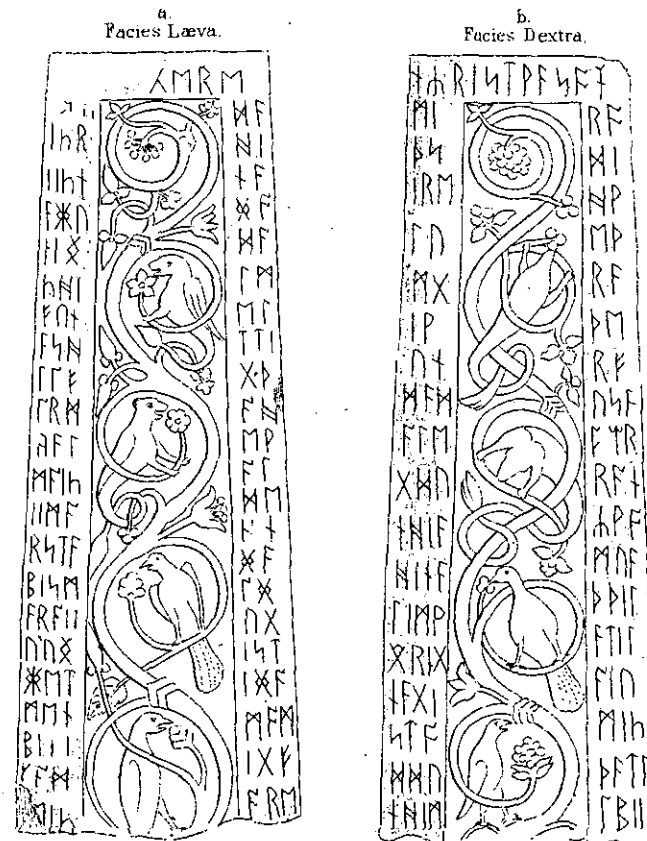


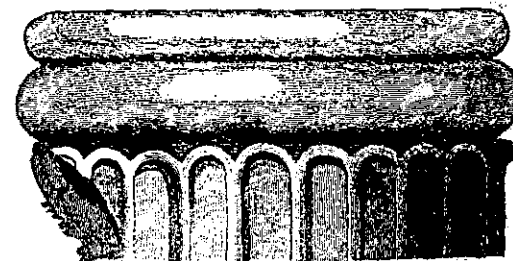
Fig. 2

Alphabetum Runicum Scandinav. servato ordine Runico. vide Tab. in Gramm. Raskii Holmiae 1818.

Figura	Nomen	Significatio Nominis
ƿ	fé	pecus
n	úr	pluvia
Ɔ	purs (thurs)	gigas
1 † †	ús	ostium
R	reid	rheda s. equitatio
Ƴ	kaun	ulcus
†	hagl	grando
† †	naud	ærumna - compedes
† †	ár	annus - annona
l	ís	glacies
h	sól	sol
† †	týr	Tyr (Deus) Diem Martis ab hoc deo nuncupant angli
Ɔ	bjarkau	betuld
l	løgr	liquor - æquor
Ƴ	madr	homo
†	ýr	arcus

Fig. 3

Pedestal of a Baptismal font in the garden of Ruthwell Manse on a scale of an inch to a foot.



W. Penny Sculp.

Runae curvis inclusae in priori Alphabeto Fig. 1. c. Runae punctatae seu vulneratae Vocantur eo quod puncto tantum, sine oratione u. simplicibus distinguuntur. Istae omnino sunt recentioris originis nam in antiquissimis inscriptionibus eorum loco simplices usurpantur.

pedestal of a baptismal font, or font for holy water. The writer's conjecture is, that this vessel stood before the pillar, on the circular stone; and this is the more probable from the well-known fact, that in Roman Catholic countries such an arrangement is far from being uncommon.¹¹

It is much to be regretted that his other important avocations have not permitted Mr Repp to prosecute the investigation farther; but this, it is to be hoped, will yet be done, either by one who appears to have so successfully overcome the first difficulty, or by some other individual deeply skilled, like him, in antiquarian research.

Upon considering so much of the inscription as has been deciphered, it may be conjectured that the monument owed its origin to the following circumstances. Some powerful chief having ravaged the lands of the church in a particular district, and having afterwards become penitent, had procured a reconciliation with the monks by various gifts, including a rich baptismal font, and perhaps an annual payment of cattle. All this was probably recorded by the holy fathers of Therfuse upon what is supposed to have been the original column, which did not in all likelihood receive its present shape till a later period, when it appears to have been enriched with the sculpture and quotations from the New Testament. For the assistance of the student who may desire to follow up the inquiry commenced by Mr Repp, the Runic sides of the monument have been engraved in a separate plate on a larger scale; and this has been done with the most scrupulous accuracy, according to the present state of the inscription.¹² But as some of the letters appear to have been more or less defaced since the publication of Gordon's *Itinerarium Septentrionale*, it has been thought proper to engrave for this paper the plate of the Runes as given in that work, which, although not perfectly accurate, is the most correct hitherto published, and may furnish many useful hints to the decipherer.¹³ It is obvious that, in future inquiries on this subject, it will be of considerable importance to fix the locality of *Ashlafardhal* and *Therfuse*, more particularly in connection with the tradition of the Monument having been brought by sea from some distant country.

Turning now to the Saxon sides, and beginning at the bottom of that represented on the right hand of the plate, we find, on the parallelogram which

¹¹ A representation of the pedestal will be found in Plate XV. Fig. 3.

¹² See Plate IV.

¹³ See Plate XV. Fig. 4, a, b.

forms the base, a representation of the crucifixion, much defaced. Along with our Saviour, the two crucified thieves seem to have been sculptured, and an orb, probably indicating the darkened sun.

Immediately above this compartment is one containing two figures, that on the left representing an angel, and the other a female saint in the attitude of devout astonishment. The latter is doubtless intended for the Virgin Mary, and the former for Gabriel announcing to her the miraculous conception. This may be fairly inferred from what remains of the inscription, though only two complete words and a few imperfect letters are legible. The words are INGRESSVS ANGELVS, inscribed on the bar immediately above the heads of the figures. The entire margin along the right side is broken off; but on the left border, above the right wing of the angel, these letters are distinguishable, TECUM BE. Now, on referring to the vulgate translation of the New Testament, we find the quotation of which this is obviously a part, in Luke, chap. i. v. 28. "Et INGRESSUS ANGELUS ad eam dixit, ave, gratia plena! Dominus TECUM; benedicta tu in mulieribus."

The next compartment contains two figures representing Christ in the act of curing a blind man. The legend, so far as it is legible, is as follows:— ET PRAETERIENS VIDI.....A NATIVITATE, ET S.....B INFIRMIT..... The first part of this inscription seems plainly to be a quotation from the vulgate of John, chap. ix. v. 1, and the whole might probably have been thus: "ET PRAETERIENS VIDIT hominem cæcum A NATIVITATE, ET sanavit AB INFIRMITATE. The mistake of substituting a B for a V in *nativitate* will not escape the attention of the antiquary, and may perhaps suggest some conjecture as to the language, or at least the dialect, spoken when the sculpture was made. It is well known that, in some of the continental languages and dialects of the present day, as for instance the Spanish and the modern Romaic, the B and the V are scarcely if at all distinguishable in the pronunciation.

The compartment immediately above that just mentioned contains a representation of the woman washing the feet of Jesus with her tears, and wiping them with her hair. The inscription round the margin is nearly all legible, and proves to be a quotation from the vulgate of Luke, chap. ix. v. 37-38, "ATTULIT ALABASTRUM UNGUENTI ET STANS RETRO SECUS PEDES EJUS, LACRIMIS CÆPIT RIGARE PEDES EJUS, ET CAPILLIS CAPITIS SUI TERGEBAT." The last word is in the vulgate *extergebat*, the *ex* being doubtless left

out for want of room. For the same reason, too, the final T is inserted below the A.

The next higher compartment is in the upper block, and contains two persons in the act of embracing; the feet however being separated from the bodies by the insertion of a piece of sandstone to fill up a vacancy occasioned by the mutilation of one of the fragments. The legend is altogether illegible.

Above this, again, and immediately below the arms of the cross, is a figure in a sitting posture, in the act of drawing a bow, which on a Roman column might have been taken for a Cupid. The inscription here is also illegible.

The capital (for it is unnecessary to speak of the modern figures on the recently added arms of the cross) contains an eagle in the act of fixing its talons in a human figure. Nothing can be made of the legend.

Commencing now at the bottom of the opposite side, we find the sculpture and inscription of the compartment at the base altogether destroyed. The next higher compartment contains a figure, supposed to be that of the Virgin, riding on an ass and carrying the infant Jesus in her arms, of which latter figure, however, all that remains is part of the glory which encircled his head. Before the Virgin, in the upper corner, to the left, is a shapeless mass, which it requires some fancy to transform into the head of her conductor Joseph, and which might more readily be shaped into a guardian cherub. Be this as it may, on the transverse base overhead, which separates this compartment from the one immediately above, are the letters MARIA ET JO—. The rest of the inscription is totally obliterated; but there can be no doubt that the figures were intended to represent the flight of the holy family into Egypt.

The next compartment contains two figures standing opposite to each other in flowing robes, in the act of breaking a loaf of bread. On the cross bar above are inscribed the words SCS PAULUS; and on the border to the right, apparently a continuation of this legend, we find ET A—. Pennant read ET AN— and erroneously supposed this part of the inscription to be connected with that on the same margin immediately above it. The N is now no longer in existence, and the whole remainder of the border on this side is broken off, so as to destroy the inscription; but on the left side, which is nearly entire, are the words "FREGERUNT PANEM IN DESERTO." As the representation in this compartment does not seem to refer to any incident noticed in Scripture, and may probably be founded on some Popish tradition, there is considerable difficulty in filling up the blank. It is possible, however, that the tradition may be

connected with Paul's journey into Arabia immediately after his conversion, of which he speaks in his epistle to the Galatians; and if so, Ananias, who opened his eyes, may have been given to him in the tradition as a companion of his journey; in which case the legend may be partially filled up thus,—“SCS PAULUS ET ANANIAS FREGERUNT PANEM IN DESERTO.”

Above this is a compartment longer than the rest, and reaching to the border which surrounds the top of the lower stone, in which is a representation of our Saviour trampling on the heads of two swine. On the transverse border already mentioned, are the Greek letters “ΙΧ ΧΡΣ,” while on the right-hand margin we read, “JUDEX ÆQUITATIS SERTO SALVATOREM MUNDI;” and on the left, “BESTIAE ET DRACONES COGNOVERUNT¹⁴ INDE.” It should seem that *serto* is a misspelling for *certo*, and that the two sides contain portions of the same legend; in which case the translation will be,—“*Jesus Christ the Judge of righteousness—Him assuredly to be the Saviour of the world, beasts and dragons knew from thence;*” alluding obviously to the miracle of the Devils (*dracones*) sent into the herd of swine (*bestiæ*).

The lower compartment of the upper stone on this side contains the image of the Father standing on two globes or worlds (indicating probably the world which now is and that which is to come), with the Agnus Dei in his bosom. The only letters of the legend which can be deciphered are DORAMUS, being doubtless part of the word *adoramus*.

The capital or top of the pillar above the arms of the cross contains an eagle perched on a curled fruit-bearing branch, which it grasps with one foot, the other being drawn up towards its body. The inscription is illegible.

Having finished this minute, and, he fears, tedious description of a column which has for many years excited the curiosity and hitherto in vain exercised the ingenuity of the learned, the writer leaves the subject in the hands of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, happy if, in an inquiry confessedly of some interest, he has been fortunate enough in any degree to arrest their attention, and call forth their more zealous research; for he ventures not to aspire after higher praise, in a department so foreign to his ordinary avocations.

¹⁴ It may not be needless to remark, that in the word *cognoverunt* the letter *o*, which twice occurs, is circular; whereas in every other part of the inscriptions it is in the form of a rhomb or lozenge.