

I.

NOTICE OF AN OGHAM INSCRIPTION IN THE CHURCHYARD OF ABOYNE, ABERDEENSHIRE. BY W. F. SKENE, Esq., LL.D., F.S.A. Scot.

A cast of the Aboyne stone having been presented to the Museum by the Marquis of Huntly, an opportunity of deciphering its Ogham inscription has been thereby afforded, and the results are communicated to the Society in the following letter to the Secretary by Mr W. F. Skene :—

MY DEAR STUART,—I examined the Aboyne stone on Friday, and copied the inscription. The Ogham on the edge is very difficult to read. The inner Ogham is very distinct, and there is little doubt about the reading.

Applying the same alphabet I used for the Newton stone (see vol. v. Plate xx.), and reading from top to bottom, it makes—

b r r o u d d a f o i n n a m,

but reading from bottom to top, it makes—

m a q q o i t a l l u o r r h.

The well known Maqqoi or Maqi for *filii* shows that this is right. If you look at the list of the Pictish kings in the Pictish Chronicle, you will see that this name first appears as Talore, then Talorg, then Tallorcen, and finally Talorgen. This stone gives the transition from first to second. The line is this, so that you can test it for yourself—

m a q q o i t a l l u o r r h

The image shows the Ogham inscription for 'm a q q o i t a l l u o r r h' written on a horizontal line. The characters are represented by vertical strokes of varying lengths and thicknesses, some with multiple parallel lines. The sequence of characters from left to right is: m (single vertical stroke), a (two vertical strokes), q (three vertical strokes), q (three vertical strokes), o (circle), i (single vertical stroke), t (two vertical strokes), a (two vertical strokes), l (single vertical stroke), l (single vertical stroke), u (two vertical strokes), o (two vertical strokes), r (three vertical strokes), r (three vertical strokes), h (single vertical stroke).

The other line, if read from top to bottom, gives an impossible reading, but if read from bottom to top, may read—

n e a h h t l a r o b b a i t c e a n n e f f

The image shows the Ogham inscription for 'n e a h h t l a r o b b a i t c e a n n e f f' written on a horizontal line. The characters are represented by vertical strokes of varying lengths and thicknesses, some with multiple parallel lines. The sequence of characters from left to right is: n (two vertical strokes), e (two vertical strokes), a (two vertical strokes), h (two vertical strokes), h (two vertical strokes), t (two vertical strokes), l (single vertical stroke), a (two vertical strokes), r (two vertical strokes), o (circle), b (two vertical strokes), b (two vertical strokes), a (two vertical strokes), i (single vertical stroke), t (two vertical strokes), c (two vertical strokes), e (two vertical strokes), a (two vertical strokes), n (two vertical strokes), n (two vertical strokes), e (two vertical strokes), f (two vertical strokes), f (two vertical strokes).

Neahhtla—a local form of Neachtan, thus, Saint Neachtan (8 Jany., Festology) is locally Nathalen and Nachlan.

Robbait—compare *Robaid*, *immolavit*, in *Book of Deer*.

Ceanneff is *Kinneff*, a church in the *Mearns*. Between castle and church is *St Arnty's kill* (*Stat. Acc.*), said to be *St Arnold's cell*; but *Reeves* shows that *Arnty* and *Arnold* are corruptions of *Adomnan*, and *Aboyne* was dedicated to *Adomnan*.

Maqqoi seems to be *Maccu* in old Irish, and probably dative singular; but *Maqqoi Talluorh* may be a tribe name. Compare the use of *Mocu* in *Adomnan*.—Yours very truly,

WILLIAM F. SKENE.

1st March 1874.