

**THE GLEDSTONES  
AND THE SIEGE OF  
COKLAW**

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The Gledstones and the Siege of Coklaw by Mrs. Oliver

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**MRS. OLIVER**

**THE GLEDSTONES  
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THE GLEDSTONES  
AND  
THE SIEGE OF COKLAW

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

HAWICK AND THE BORDERS

THREE HUNDRED YEARS AGO:

A Paper

READ BEFORE THE

HAWICK ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY

ON 10TH MARCH 1875.

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*Published at the request of the Society.*

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*with the assistance of the*  
*author*

THE GLEDSTONES

AND

THE SIEGE OF COKLAW

BY MRS. OLIVER

OF THORNWOOD

Written for the Warwick Archaeological Society

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1878



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THOSE who know nothing of archæology are accustomed to characterise it as a dry, musty science, and to ridicule the antiquarian's love for what they are pleased to call "old rubbish." The utilitarian can see nothing in the broken arch, the ruined cloister, or the deserted ivy-mantled tower, save handy material for building a barn or a cottage; while to the antiquarian they are eloquent of the past, of the mail-clad warriors who rode forth under that crumbling archway, of monks and friars who paced these dim aisles as the deep, solemn chant floated up to the lofty roof, and he



has taught the world to admire those venerable ruins, has opened their eyes to the beauty of these "poems in stone," till at length the taste for the antique has become fashionable, and people will travel hundreds of miles to admire a ruin which they would not have crossed the road to look at had not the antiquary linked it to some story of the past, and the poet extolled its beauty. The craze has spread till not only ruins, but all kinds of old lumber, are more prized than the choicest productions of modern art, and fabulous prices are paid for old cracked teapots, and such like, the older and uglier the better.

But the true antiquary does not value his treasures because they are old, or because of the price he paid for them, or even because of their beauty. It is not for what they are in themselves that they are precious to him. It is for the story they can tell—to him who has patience to listen—of races who have passed away, of generations who have preceded us—whose struggles are forgotten,

whose achievements are unrecorded, but who, nevertheless, laid the foundations on which our liberty and our civilisation is built.

It is because each relic bears a faint impress of him who fashioned it, of the system of things of which it formed a part. Those bits of broken earthenware, those useless old coins, and rubbishy odds and ends which have somehow escaped annihilation, and have drifted down the stream of time from the dead past to the living present, bring with them faint gleams of light, which enables us to pierce the darkness of the past—that mystic past, which is closing up, darker and more impenetrable, behind us.

Among many other suggestive treasures contained in our Museum, is an old Bible. Its moth-eaten, yellow leaves, and the almost illegible writing on its blank pages, are sufficient in themselves to excite our interest; for in every well-regulated household "the big ha' Bible, ance his father's pride," is at once the most sacred heirloom,

the most cherished household treasure. More especially was this the case before the age of public registration, when the blank pages of the family Bible were inscribed with the simple family chronicles. The marriage rite was hardly considered complete till the names, and date of the ceremony, were duly entered on the sacred page. As each successive olive branch blossomed into life, their names were added to the family tree; and as one after another their earthly race was run, the event was recorded with circumstantial exactness. These domestic registers were of the greatest possible value in preserving the pedigree of old families, and the destination of large estates has often been decided from the records in the old family Bible.

The volume in our Museum is not a "big ha' Bible." Size and dignity are so intimately associated, that, in accordance with our ideas of the fitness of things, we like to have our family Bibles, in which are bound up so much of the family dignity, as