

VALLE CRUCIS ABBEY.

BY E. P. LOFTUS BROCK, F.S.A., HON. SECRETARY.

THE charming valley surrounded with pleasant hills which shut out the world beyond, the hardly audible ripple of the flowing streamlet, and the absence of any prospect save of the enclosing hills, alike tell us that this is the site of a monastery for monks of the Cistercian order. They would alone be almost sufficient to record it, were the voice of history silent, and the ruins before us untraceable. Scenes of loveliness like this, upon which nature has bestowed so many charms, indeed breathe of peace and contentment; and we cannot but be sensible of their magic influence, which is enhanced by the thoughts of the white-robed monks wandering through the Gothic arches of their sacred home during the long period of the past. Let us hope that their lives were full of peace, and give all praise to this devoted order of reformed monks, whose influence tuned many minds powerfully for good at the period of their foundation, and for long afterwards.

The picture has a sadder and a sterner aspect which we must not forget. These monks were bound by their vow to rules which, to the temper of our day at least, seem to be of terrible and needless severity; and it is painful to think that the men whose lives were passed within these walls, and whose bones still lie beyond them, spent their days amid the awful silence enforced by the monastic rule. They met at the frugal meal, they walked beside each other in the cloister, they worked together in the field, and slept in the dormitory; but no words were to pass their lips, no words of encouragement from the elder to the younger,—none of sympathy. In the church alone were their voices raised in the service of their simple ritual, and in ordinary conversation for one single half-hour on the Sunday, and in the common parlour. At other times a monk could only speak by permission, and in the presence of the abbot. The naturally uneventful succession of lives thus spent, century after century, doubtless occasioned the scanty record of the history of monastic houses, for they had none; and I need

not remind such an audience as this of the number of those of which we have little more record than that of their foundation and their dissolution.

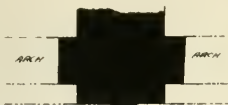
The foundation of Valle Crucis and its date even have been subjects of much doubt. Sir W. Dugdale, on the authority of Leland,¹ rightly ascribed the foundation to Madoc ap Griffith Maylor, Prince of Powys, but could only assume that this was about A.D. 1200. We are indebted to our associate Mr. Morris C. Jones, the active Hon. Sec. of the Powys-Land Club, for a discovery of no small importance with reference to the history of the abbey. By a process of close reasoning, he has demonstrated that one of the charters supposed by Dugdale to have referred to another building, in reality is the foundation charter of this abbey, granted by Madoc.² We learn by this discovery that Valle Crucis was an offshoot from the less celebrated but parent abbey of Strada Marcella, and that a few monks of that house were the first occupants here. Philip is spoken of as being then the Prior, showing that before the granting of the charter much preliminary work had been done. We may accordingly with confidence consider him as the first Prior, and place him at the commencement of the scanty list of those whose names have been recorded.

The foundation charter is undated, and we are therefore left no nearer to the verification of Dugdale's guess, while Mr. Jones is led in support of his argument to devote much of his reasoning to prove that this spot was known then, and later, by the old sounding title of Llan Egwistle. It may be worth while here to say that one of the latest seals of the abbey, extant in the Herald's Office, of a date early in the sixteenth century, has this name on its legend, thus indicating that even at this late date Valle Crucis was known by its original name.

It is my pleasing duty to adduce evidence, as my contribution to the history of this house, which will effectively determine, not only the date of the foundation, but the original name of the locality; and while it confirms Dugdale's suggestion, it strengthens Mr. Jones' argument. Mr.

¹ *Collectanea*, vol. ii, p. 303.

² This is discussed in a paper in vol. i of *Archæologia Cambrensis*, one of the goodly volumes of the Cambrian Archæological Association, a society to which all antiquaries are deeply indebted for more than thirty years' active and profitable work.

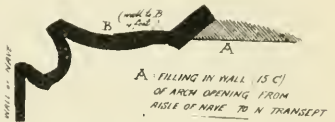


SECTION OF ARCHES ABOVE CAPITALS (CHAPELS & TRANSEPT)

SKETCH OF PATTERN OF WINDOW A WEST GABLE



FILLING IN WALL (AS C) OF ARCH OPENING FROM AISLE OF NAVE

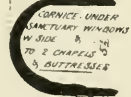
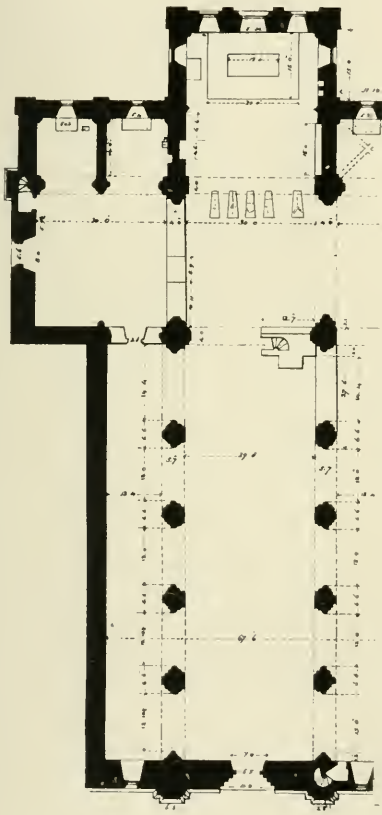


NORTH SIDE 1.65

WALL PILLARS OF SANCTUARY

SOUTH SIDE 1.65

Height of Bases 10 from floor



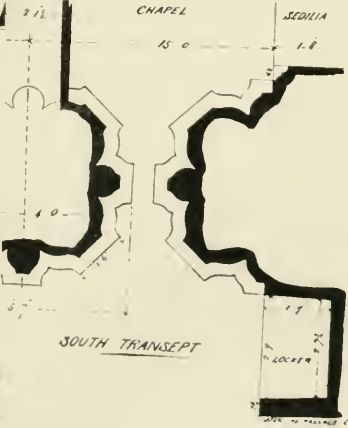
BASEMOLD WEST FRONT

CHAPEL 15.0

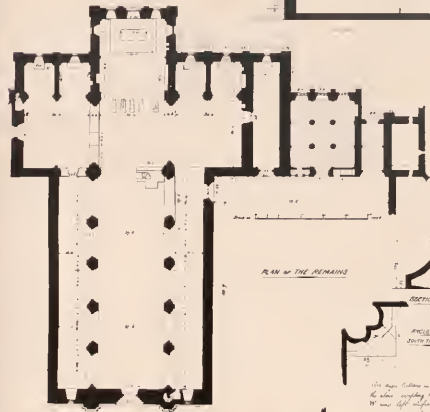
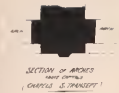
SEDLIA 1.8

THE CAPITALS ARE NICELY CARVED. THE HOLDINGS OF ARCH, POINTED AND SHARP AS JARREL. LABEL THE TRIGLETS OF WALL OF FEET PORTALS IN SAME ORDER OF STONE AS WITHIN THE OUTLINE CAPITALS ONLY

ENTRANCE TO CHURCH FROM EAST ALLEY OF CLOISTERS



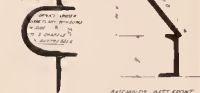
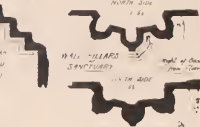
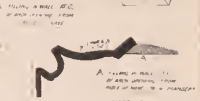
SOUTH TRANSEPT



THE LANTERNS ARE BUILT UPON THE WALLS OF THE CHURCH AND TRANSEPT. THE WALLS OF THE CHURCH AND TRANSEPT ARE BUILT UPON THE WALLS OF THE CHURCH AND TRANSEPT. THE WALLS OF THE CHURCH AND TRANSEPT ARE BUILT UPON THE WALLS OF THE CHURCH AND TRANSEPT.

REFERENCE TO WEST FROM EAST

Measured by W.C. Buckler
Printed by C. Pilsbry



SOUTH SIDE



SOUTH TRANSEPT

BASE OF WEST FRONT



W. de G. Birch, in 1870, published in the pages of our *Journal*, for the first time, two¹ manuscripts in the British Museum, which had not previously been noticed. The first is remarkable as being probably a contemporary transcript from some central registry of the foundation of, perhaps, almost all the houses of the Cistercian order throughout Europe. The second is another transcript, in many respects confirmatory of the first, and of a date apparently towards the close of the first half of the thirteenth century. The second has this entry under the date 1199, "De Valle Crucis in Cambria", but the first list, under the date 1200, "V Kal. Februarii. Abbatia de Valle Crucis". We thus obtain not only the date of the year, but the actual day of the month. Interesting as are these entries, I am able to adduce a third. The old Welsh chronicle, the *Brut y Tywysogion*, has been published by the Record Commission, and is one of the not least important of their volumes. It is therefore readily accessible, and the more so from the translation which accompanies it, by the Rev. J. Williams ab Ithel. Nevertheless, it is not frequently quoted in evidence of Welsh history, teeming as it does with notices of almost contemporary events and references to buildings; and I have some belief that, except to scholars, it is not so generally known in the Principality as it deserves to be. Under date of the year A.D. 1200 there is the following record: "The same year Madog, son of Gruffudd Maelor, founded the monastery of Llanegwistle, near the old cross in Yale." We have in this important entry not only the year, but the earliest record of the old name Llanegwistle, but direct reference to the old cross (Eliseg's Pillar), whence comes the modern name of the Vale of the Cross. I may add that the discrepancy between the two above-named dates, 1199 and 1200, is readily accounted for. We have seen that at the period of the granting of Madog's charter, the work of the foundation had already gone so far that the prior of the new community was actually elected. The first date is probably that of his election, which would naturally determine the foundation. The second is probably the missing date of Madog's charter.

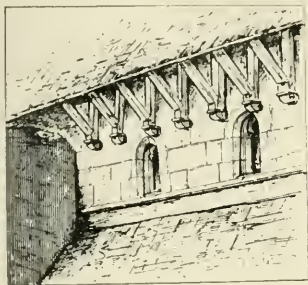
¹ MS. Cotton., Faustina B. vii, fol. 36; MS. Cotton., Vespasian A. vi. f. 54b.
1878 19

The buildings of the Abbey afford a perfect model, so far as they remain, of the arrangements of a Cistercian house, and we will survey these in order; but it may be as well to announce that, since no complete plan of these remains has yet been published, the Council of this Association has determined to have engraved one which was carefully prepared by the late Mr. J. C. Buckler, and which exists amongst many other papers of considerable interest which he bequeathed to the British Museum.

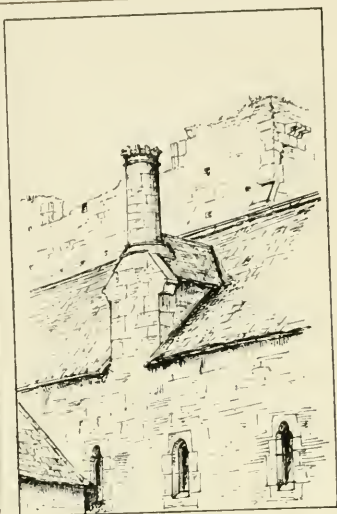
The church is of the usual cruciform type, an aisleless presbytery, transepts with two chapels forming an eastern aisle to each. There has been a low square tower over the crossing, and a nave of six bays, with two side aisles. The extreme length is 165 ft.; length of transepts, from north to south, 98 ft.; width of nave and aisles, 67 ft. 6 ins.; width of chancel, 30 ft.; and of transepts, 30 ft.¹ It will be seen that the east and west gables are all but perfect, and that the north and part of the south walls of the chancel remain. Also those of the south transept, with part of the vaulting of its two chapels, while there is left the lower portion of the walls of the north transept, and of the north aisle of the nave. The south wall of the nave is almost perfect, but is hidden by the luxuriant ivy, which here and elsewhere adds so greatly to the beauty of the building in its state of ruin.

The bases of the nave piers are traceable, thanks to the careful clearance of the ruins by Viscount Dungannon and Mr. Wynne in 1854. The east end and the transepts are designed in a severe style of First Pointed architecture, and the peculiar pilaster buttresses of the exterior are more curious than beautiful. The treatment certainly indicates some local influence, but whether we should consider it as derivable from Dublin, as a late writer suggests, or as evidence of a Welsh school of architecture, is open to question. The Principality is full of peculiar treatment of architectural detail, both of early and of late work, which seems to afford evidence that the old Welsh builders were not content to copy the styles prevalent in England, but impressed upon them their own peculiar treatment. The lofty eastern lancets spring from a bevel,

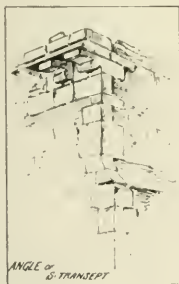
¹ The arrangement of the plan in squares of 30 feet, less thickness of walls, is very apparent.



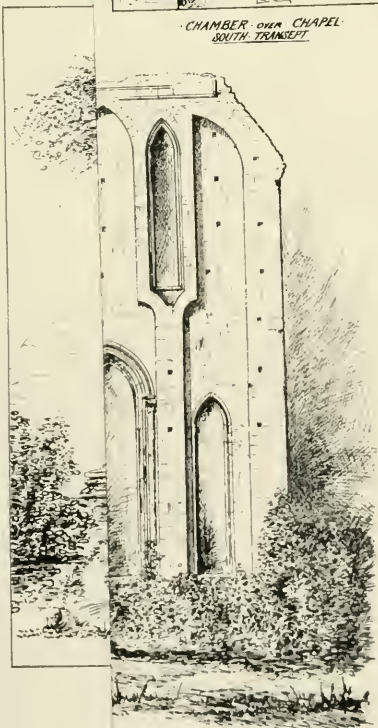
PENTICE OVER WINDOWS
DORMITORY



CHAMBER OVER CHAPEL
SOUTH TRANSEPT



ANGLE OF
S. TRANSEPT



END

Measured by W. C. Buckler.
Traced by C. Palmer.



PENTICE WITH WINDOWS
CLOISTER



DEER CHAPTER HOUSE



MASONS MARKS.



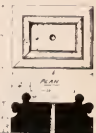
CHAMBER WITH CHAPEL
WEST END



ELISEGS PILLAR



ANGLE OF TOWER

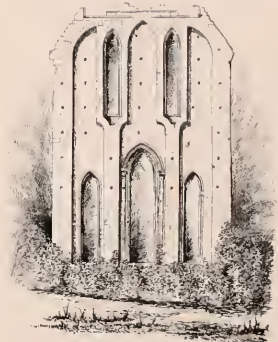


PLAN

SECTION
GROSS PLAN OF INTERIOR
CHURCH - NORTH TRANSEPT



WEST SIDE W. S. TRANSEPT IN THE CLOISTER
OF NAVE



EAST END

Measured by W C Huskier
Traced by C Palmer

which must always have been, for the size of the church, remarkably small in relation to the pavement; and there is just a trace of a moulded arched label over the two upper lancets. This arch probably indicated the line of the presbytery ceiling, whether of arched boarding or of vaulting.

The external corbel table around the presbytery and transept walls is bold and peculiar, and is of two patterns. The shafts internally afford some evidence probably of an intention of vaulting the ceiling, which was never carried out, and the sloping line of stone, visible inside and out in the wall, just east of the tower, seems to be indicative that the west end of the chancel was once covered by a hipped roof. This could only be prior to the erection of the central tower. The other sloping line crossing it is that of the roof of the Sacristan's passage to the little slit window. This slit, on the south side, is from a curious little room and passage, commencing at the back of the monks' dormitory. A great many guesses have been made to determine the use of this passage, and the loophole, probably from its resemblance to the position of the abbot's oriel in St. Bartholomew's, London, has been called the abbot's closet. It is, however, that for the sacristan, from which he would watch the perpetual lamp of the sanctuary at night. The high altar has not stood touching the east wall, but away from it, as at Fountain's Abbey and many other places. The aumbry in the south wall has a semicircular arch, and has been double. The bases of the four altars of the transept chapels are very apparent, and they have been covered with arcading. They are attached, as is usual in these positions, to the east wall. The intermediate arches dividing the chapels have probably been filled in only to a certain height, to allow of the picturesque effect of the vaulting seen through them being preserved. Each of these altars is furnished with a piscina. The northern altar of the north transept has a detached pillar piscina, the others have lockers in the wall in several instances, and the elegant and early carving of the brackets of the piscina will be observed with interest. There are two floor drains to the north-east chapel. The remaining arches of the transepts are designed in a very severe style, and the capitals are a tradition of some of earlier date. The three orders

of the arches are simple rectangles, without even a chamfer, but the effect is excellent.

We may, in the sheltered stonework of these chapels, observe that the whole surface of the wrought stone has been covered with a film of plastering, upon which coloured decorations are still traceable here and there. This use of colour was forbidden in Cistercian houses; and I am, for one, glad to think that in some cases their rules were sometimes more honoured in their breach than in their observance. The same is observable at Old Cleeve Abbey. These traces of colour have not, I believe, hitherto been noticed; and another feature of interest may have some attention directed to it,—many of the stones have masons' marks. I collected readily a large number of different examples, besides others slightly different, or reversed, and they deserve comparison with those which have been noted in other buildings elsewhere. They appear only in the stonework of the transepts, chancel, and nave-piers, and I have not been able to find any in the west wall of the nave, or in the monastic buildings, except in the position which will be noted hereafter.

The doorway for the passage of the monks from their dormitory into the church, for the services of matin vigils, remains in the south transept, but the stairs are gone. From there being no trace of them, they were probably of wood.

There is in the south wall of the south chapel a recess, low down, for a tomb. It is arched, and with a pediment over, the latter having large crockets. The whole is greatly decayed; but the architectural style is so much later than that of the chapel, that we cannot admit the local tradition of this being the tomb of the founder. The recess, which has been filled in with open, arched, panelling, and small shafts in the north-west angle of the presbytery, is probably the right position to be assigned to this.

The remains of the piers of the central tower are of much interest. Those on the south side, which remain, indicate the systematic way in which the shafts of the bearing arches were carried on corbels (which are of much beauty) in order to allow the whole of the wall-surface of the piers to be free for the monks' stalls. The cracks, which are apparent, indicate trouble for the safety of the central tower; and we

find that here, as at Furness and elsewhere, the old builders had to take vigorous measures to keep it standing.

The eastern bay of the nave has been walled up with solid masonry. To afford greater support, the west window of the transept has been removed, and its space built up; and several other works of buttressing are very evident, including a curious reduction of the width of the east arch into the south transept. These works are of interest, for they show that the old architects did sometimes carry up their work with too little regard for their foundations; and sweeping blame to modern ones is as unfair as universal praise to the older craftsmen.

The efforts here to save the tower were successful; for if we are to take Churchyard's poem literally, the tower was still erect above the ruined building in the days of Elizabeth; but we have no evidence whether or not it fell later, or was demolished. There is a very charming piece of early carving below the corbel which supported the south-east arch of the tower.

A little peculiarity of style in the base of the north transept door is worth observing. It has many circular mouldings rather than shafts. This is usual in Wales; but here they spring, not from bases, but from a line of foliage.

The ritual choir probably extended originally more westwardly into the nave than appears by the present foundations of the rood-loft, and its staircase against the western pier of the central tower. This appears to mark a contraction of its space. No trace, except part of the northern wall, remains of the ritual choir; and this and the rood-loft are probably of the date of the works for the support of the tower. The base of a nave-altar still remains on the south side.

The broad piers of the nave are the only remains of the nave-arcade; but the recent excavations have brought to light several fragments of capitals plainly shaped rather than carved. These are stacked along the base of the side walls, and we may have no difficulty in concluding that they are the remains of those of the nave-piers.

There is evidence of the existence of a clerestory, for one deeply splayed jamb and part of the sill, with a string-course, of one window remains in the west pier of the central tower. We learn by it the heights, and that the clerestory

windows were single lancets. They were rebated for glass. One corbel, for a principal of the nave-roof, also remains, proving, as might be expected, that the nave had a timber roof.

The tablet fixed in the south wall, with its inscription, dated 1852, is an interesting record of the excavations, and our praise is due to the executors of this work, not only for the result which has made these ruins, apart from their picturesque beauty, amongst the most interesting for study in the United Kingdom, but for the tablet itself. The date of any such work as this, fixed on the building itself, affords valuable evidence of its history, and the practice should be held up for imitation. The west front was repaired by Sir Gilbert Scott in 1872.

The charming west front has three windows of similar pattern, the central one being somewhat higher, each having a mullion and a foliated circle;¹ and the western entrance is formed by a doorway of much beauty. The gable has a small rose-window; and above this is the well known inscription carved in bold, projecting Gothic letters, now somewhat worn; but they can still be made out when the sun helps us by a slight shadow. It records that this part of the work was performed by Abbot Adam.² The gable and rose-window are of later date, as is evidenced by the inner arch, designed originally to enclose the three windows internally, which has never been completed. The stonework is also different workmanship internally; and we may conclude, from the insertion, that Abbot Adam is commemorated by his successor rather than by himself. The deep splay of the windows add greatly to the amount of light derived from them, and the telling design of the mouldings is worthy of careful study. There is no useless work bestowed, while the effect from what cannot be called elaborate execution is most excellent, and unlike much modern work, where the effect is frittered away from the useless but costly multiplication of mouldings.

There is a staircase in the south angle of the nave. Whether or not this was only for access to the roofs, etc., or

¹ The mullion of the central window is gone.

² ADAM ABBAS FECIT HOC OPUS I PACE; and in a line above the *end* of this part of the inscription, as if the writer had found that there was not room enough for his lettering, QUIESCAT AME.

to the monastic buildings always abutting upon the west end of the church, it is impossible to say, for there is no evidence remaining. It is probable that it did, as at Old Cleeve Abbey; but we are not able to throw light as to whether the building was a "Domus Conversorum", or guest-house, since it has disappeared entirely, and nothing has yet been done to throw light upon the subject by endeavouring to find the foundations.

Taking the conventual buildings in order, we find the whole of those occupying the east side of the cloister quadrangle remaining. They are in a line with the south transept. The north side is occupied by the south wall of the church, against which a farm-shed has been built. The buildings of the south side have disappeared, and a small modern house is erected at the west corner. The west side is also vacant.

Next to the south transept is the slype, still retaining its circular barrel-vault, and having its arch of opening from the cloister of a very early type. The carving of its capitals shows, however, that it is of the same date as the presbytery. The bands of torus-mouldings are very common in early work in Wales, but more frequently without the capitals. Next is the chapter house, vaulted in nine square compartments; next, still going southwards, was the entrance to the cemetery, to the east;¹ and beyond this still, the common parlour.

Over all these buildings extends the monks' dormitory, a spacious building, 60 feet long and 22 feet wide, and which we approach by the monks' day-stairs, which still remain. Sufficient of the floor remains to indicate that it was paved with flags, above the vaulting of the rooms beneath. It is lighted by a series of small single-light, trefoiled windows with wave-mouldings. It will be noticed that the neatly jointed stonework of the walls has never been plastered. The cold stone paving and the unplastered walls must have been sufficiently uncomfortable for the occupants; but it is satisfactory to find that two arrangements are apparent, showing that something was done for their well-being,—all the windows are rebated for glass, to exclude the elements,

¹ The Rev. Preb. Walcott has shown that the monks' graves were partially dug, and kept so. The aspect of these from the dormitory overlooking them, must have been deplorably cheerless.

and there is the unusual luxury of a fireplace ; but then this building is of later date than the church.¹ The fireplace has a chimney of elegant design externally.

At the south end of the dormitory is a small apartment opening from it, and which has been covered with a penthouse roof, apart from, and abutting upon, the south gable of the dormitory. It is probably the sleeping apartment of the custodian of the dormitory rather than the abbot ; and its small niche commanding a view of it, shows that the room was in some way designed for the oversight of the dormitory. At Old Cleeve a building in a similar position is considered by the Rev. Mackenzie E. Walcott to have been the novices' dormitory. From its small dimensions it is hardly likely that it could have served a similar purpose here.

At the back of the dormitory fireplace is a narrow room, parallel with the former. It is probably the muniment-room ; while I would assign to the sacristan another small apartment at right angles, since it communicated by a passage over the vaulting of the south transept chapels with the slit window before alluded to. The cloister-space has no traces of the cloister-buildings ; but from the position of the corbels for the roof-timbers, etc., and from the absence of remains, it is probable that here, as in many cases elsewhere, they were formed of wood.

It has sometimes been stated that all the buildings are of the same date ; but a small amount of inspection will assure us that the east end of the church is the oldest,—say of a date within the first twenty years following that of the foundation ; the transepts a little later ; and the west front, as represented by its style, is about 1260.² The ground-floor of the conventual buildings is of the same date as the transepts ; the slype possibly older, but with the insertion of much later work ; but the dormitory floor above is at least one hundred and fifty years later than the foundation, since we cannot assign an earlier date than the middle of the fourteenth century. The square-headed doorways have the same flowing mouldings as the windows. At this

¹ At Old Cleeve is a fireplace, but the windows have never been glazed.

² I give the date of the style. It is probable, however, that it was executed in harmony with the design somewhat later. The gable above and the rose-window are later still.

time the arches and flowing tracery of the chapter house were added into the older openings, as well as the whole of the internal arches and vaulting.¹ The western lancet of the south transept is filled in with tracery of fifteenth century date, into the older opening.

There are traces of the use of stonework of earlier date than that of the buildings. The fireplace in the muniment-room has an inscription which has often been given, which shows that it was once part of a tombstone, and the carving is of great beauty. The sill of the little unglazed niche looking from the room at the end of the dormitory into it, has been part of an incised slab; and there is another with an early cross, forming the roof, just within the door of the day-stairs.

The present rough roof of the dormitory is modern; but the water-tables in the south transept gable show that it is of the same pitch as the original one. The door in the south side of the refectory is an unusual feature. It was probably for hoisting up the trusses of straw for the monks' beds, and for the passage of articles which could not be brought up the narrow day-stairs.

The brothers Buck give two views, which show the aspect of the ruins in 1742, and I am glad to say that they have altered but very little since. They have, however, in some respects. A five-light window is shown in the south transept gable. The foundations of the buildings on the south side of the cloister were in existence, and are partly shown. Several rectangular apartments are indicated, and it is probable that the refectory extended north and south. These features no longer remain, but just a trace of a wall at right angles to the day room, going west, may be observed amongst the farm appliances at this corner, and also an angle buttress. All the walls are constructed of thin dark blue slaty stone, with dressings of reddish free-stone. All of great durability and excellent workmanship.

¹ These arches have continuous wave-mouldings from base to apex of vaulting, a peculiarity observable in many Welsh buildings, notably in the nave-arches of St. Asaph. It occurs also in later work in the Chester churches. The junction of newer to older work is very apparent at the east side of the chapter house, and above it. The cemetery passage has an arch of First Pointed work enclosed in a later one, while the later walls of the muniment-room have blocked up some of the corbel-table and the arches of the dormitory, themselves later than their substructure, as we have already seen.

The main windows of the church are not rebated for glass, and it is probable that they were fitted in with stained glass, secured to the iron stanchion bars, which have been numerous, and wedged into the stonework. Since these would not be furnished with open casements, the ventilation of the building has been assisted by several small square apertures—the original putlog holes of the builders, but which are formed quite through the walls. They are so numerous that we must conclude that many were designedly made, as well as those which had been formed for the putlogs. The income of Valle Crucis at the dissolution was £188 clear, and £214 : 3 : 5 gross, and the largest of any Cistercian house in Wales ; that of the parent abbey of Ystrad Marchel was only £64 : 14 : 2. The surrender was in the twenty-sixth Henry VIII, and was thus among the lesser monasteries. We have references to various benefactors who were buried here. The *Brut y Tywysogion* records that in 1269, “the 7th day of the month of December, Gruffudd, son of Madog, lord of Maelor, and Madog the Little, his brother, died, and were buried at Llanegwistle”. He was lord of Dinas Bran.

The recent excavations revealed a few geometrical tiles, but in such small numbers as to afford an additional evidence of the scarcity of this class of decoration in the churches of the Principality. They were probably imported, since the same patterns have been met with at Strata Florida Abbey, and at Acton Brumall, in Shropshire. It is a peculiarity attendant upon the demolition of Welsh abbeys that any feature of importance in the neighbouring churches is spoken of by local tradition as being a portion of the destroyed building re-used. This occurs with respect to every abbey, and we hear that the roof of Llangollen Church came from Valle Crucis ; but this is very unlikely, since the slope of the roofs is so different, and the roof appears to have been made for its position. The lectern is at Wrexham Church, so we hear, but it bears a date 1528, and a record that it is the gift of a donor who is mentioned. The elaborate candelabra of the fourteenth century is said to be at the church of Llanarmon, in Yale, where is also the effigy of Gruffudd ap Llewelyn ap Ynyn, brother to Llewelyn, Bishop of St. Asaph, who was buried at Valle Crucis. Another tomb, that of Ieva ap Meredydd, is said

to be at Bryn Eglwys ; and another, a fragment, at an old house at Pengwern, near Llangollen, is that of Gronwy ap Iorwerth.

The list of the priors is very incomplete, but since there are several notices of others, which have not yet been added, it may be as well to note the following, which affords perhaps the most complete list yet attempted :—

Philip, first abbot. His name appears, and he is styled abbot in what Mr. Morris C. Jones has shown to be the foundation charter.

Adam (Vras). He was the builder of the west front, but probably it was designed at an earlier period. Mr. W. W. E. Wynne, F.S.A., of Peniarth, has ascertained that he was living in the middle of the fourteenth century, and it may therefore be probable that there were two abbots of this name.

Madoc.

David,¹ abbot about 1450.

Sion (John) ap Davydd (probably his successor).

David ap Iorwerth, afterwards Bishop of St. David's in 1500.

Owen, afterwards Bishop of St. Asaph.

John Lloid. He is spoken of in the will of David ap Meredith of Llanarmon, proved 21st April, 1548.² The

¹ Notwithstanding the rigor of the Cistercian rule, this abbot appears to have obeyed the dictates of his hospitable nature. *Archæologia Cambrensis*, vol. 1849, recites part of a poem by Gytto'r Glynn, commencing as follows :

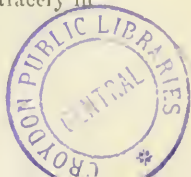
“The Abbot of Valle Crucis will make
Our laud altogether an entire feast.
At his own charge shall
Wine and meat be free”, etc.

This must have been for guests, for Cistercian monks partook of neither, and only of meat at a later period. Another poem by the same hand (*Arch. Camb.*, i, p. 26) speaks of the

“Much drinking and various
Victuals.
In the Palace of Engwistle several dishes.
There is old liquor to make us merry,
Pale and dark metheglin.
We shall have bragget and sharp ale from the pipes,
Wine and nuts.
We shall have a thousand apples for desert,
And grace, honour, and dignity.”

He made additions to the buildings, and to the abbot's house. The tracery in the transept-window is probably his work.

² See *Arch. Camb.* of 1876, p. 227.



date renders it very improbable that Sion ap Davydd and John Lloid were the same persons.

John Derham, given by Bishop Tanner, with the date 1536, but the house was dissolved in 1535.¹

John Hearne, last abbot. He retired with a pension of £23 per annum.¹

There is a record in the Book of Visitors to the English College at Rome of the arrival of Richard Bromley, a monk of Valle Crucis, as a pilgrim² in 1504. He was charged, doubtless, with some mission, since by the Cistercian rule no monk could perform a journey to Rome without being accompanied by a bishop of his order. The right rendering of the arms of the abbey has been given by Mr. T. W. King, *York Herald*, from MSS. in the Heralds' Office, of a date just prior to the Reformation, in the volume of the *Archæologia Cambrensis* for 1849 (p. 24), and need not be repeated here; but reference may be made to the fact that various renderings with certain changes exist. The same has been observed with respect to the arms of Llanthony Abbey. The old name, Llan Egwistle, points to the existence here of a church long prior to the foundation of the monastery, but, for the sake of brevity, I must omit all notice of the tradition with respect to it, and also of the old cross, Eliseg's pillar. The fishpond remains almost perfect due east of the church. A lovely view of the ruin is obtained from this position. The cemetery is known to have been in its usual place, east of the conventual buildings. A spring of clear water now flows close to the door of the monks' day-room, but no use is made of it. I have been unable to find any masons' marks on the stonework of the conventual buildings. The exceptions already alluded to may now be noted, but they can hardly be masons' marks. The fylfot cross is neatly cut, exactly central, and therefore designedly, over a small loop window in the monks' day stairs, and also over the larger opening close to it. I am unable to offer any explanation of the occurrence of this mysterious sign in these peculiar and prominent positions.

¹ I give these names separately, but they may refer to the same person.

² Given in *Collect. Top. et Genealog.*, ii, p. 255.