

a flight of steps leading into a deep damp vault which has been bricked up. In the yard is the broken cross here figured, the face divided into two compartments, the upper with a Greek cross with four broad, plain, deeply-incised limbs, a boss in the centre surrounded by a circle, and a small circle in each of the spaces between the arms of the cross, which are not connected together, and cannot therefore be called a wheel-cross. In the lower part is an inscription which I cannot decipher, but which I have endeavoured to represent in the accompanying figure, beneath which are two circles within the square panel. The stone is 4 feet high and 2 feet broad, the edge ornamented with a serpentine line ending both above and below in a small circular boss and circle.

Described from a sketch made on the spot, with rubbings and a photograph made by Lord Dunraven and kindly placed at my disposal.

PLATE XXII. FIGS. 1 & 2.

COYCHURCH. EBISAR'S GRAVE-STONE.

Near the east end of the church of Coychurch, or Llangrallo, founded by St. Grallo, nephew of Iltutus of Llantwit, stands a rude stone, now for the first time figured, 3 feet high, 23 inches wide, and 14 inches thick, with the angles rounded into semicircular columns, having a space of a foot at the top of the west face occupied by an inscription, of which I can only decipher the upper line, which is clearly Ebissar, written in large-sized minuscule letters, the SS being of the capital form. The name is evidently identical with one on Samson's cross at Llantwit, which has been supposed to be a corruption of the Latin word 'excisor,' but which is here shown to be a proper name.

The lower part of the face of the stone is ornamented with rude interlacings above, and with the Chinese-like diagonal pattern below. The narrow edge of the stone is also ornamented with rudely interlaced ribbons much injured.

In the 'Beauties of England and Wales,' vol. xviii. p. 697, the 'Cambrian Visitor,' p. 520, and other works, the names of Samson and 'Samuel the Sculptor,' are stated to occur on this stone on the authority of Edward Williams. I have not however been able on several visits to Coychurch to find any such names.

PLATE XXIII.

COYCHURCH. THE WHEEL-CROSS OF EBISAR.

In the churchyard of Coychurch, on the south side of the church, stood this cross, now for the first time figured, the square stem of which is 2 yards high exclusive of the block on which it is fixed, the front and sides being 15 inches wide; the conical base of the cross is 15 inches high and 6 inches thick, the cross itself about 30 inches across. The latter is however considerably injured, and the whole monument is greatly defaced. The shaft of the cross has the angles squared off, and is divided, on its front or south side, into five panels with the Chinese-like angular pattern, and the sides with very much defaced interlaced ribbon patterns; the top of the shaft has a row of small round bosses. At the top of the west side is the name of Ebisar clearly inscribed, divided into two lines, in minuscule characters.

The top of the monument is formed of a detached stone, the base of which forms a truncated cone ornamented with interlaced ribbons, and the head itself is a wheel-cross of the Maltese form, with dilated ends to the equal-sized limbs; the centre of the cross has a raised boss, and the arms, which are ornamented with the conjoined triquetra pattern, are united by curved bars, completing the circular wheel, the bands being sunk and with the spaces between them and the arms of the cross pierced.

For convenience the shaft of the cross in the accompanying Plate has been divided into two parts, the points of junction being indicated by the two stars.

It is worthy of remark that we should find in the same spot two monuments dedicated to the same person, unrecorded, so far as I can find, by the Welsh historians and hagiographers.

I regret to state that whilst this sheet was passing through the press the cross here described and figured was destroyed by the fall of the tower and south transept of the church, an event the more deplorable, as the sacred edifice was restored only seven years ago at an expense of £1800.

PLATE XXIV.

THE CAPEL BRITHDIR STONE.

This stone (well described by the late Thomas Stephens, Arch. Camb., 1862, p. 130, and also, with an admirable figure, by the Rev. H. L. Jones, *ibid.* p. 220) stands in a very desolate spot in a district difficult of access, about a mile distant from the Tir Phil Station of the Rhymney Railway, close to and on the north side of the chapel named Capel Brithdir, in a field on the west side of a mountain road. It is a rough sandstone slab 6 feet 8 inches high, 3 feet 3 inches broad, and about 3 inches in thickness. A sketch of the inscription having been taken by Dr. Jennings of Hengoed, was given in his 'Life' published at Cardiff, and was read—

TFSERMACNS KILIEAS FDANI HIC SIA CIT.

In 1822, one William Owen of Anglesey undertook to translate this, and manufactured the following interpretation by assuming that the first two letters stood for Tydfil, treating the others in the same manner, and inventing names hitherto unrecorded:—

'Tydfil the queen martyr
Under Censorius Kilimax
Ascended to the abodes of peace
Her body lies here.'

This ingenious discovery did not need much demolishing, all that was wanting being to read the letters rightly. This was done satisfactorily by Mr. Stephens, who, from the particular forms of certain of the letters, attributed it to the seventh century (Arch. Camb., Report of Swansea Meeting, 1861, p. 351).