

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).

With the assistance of a photograph (of which Mr. Stephens was so good as to send me a copy, by which I have been able to produce the accompanying figure, slightly corrected from that of Mr. H. L. Jones) Mr. Stephens read the inscription—

‘ TEGERNA
CUF FILI
US marii
HIC IA CIT.

‘The first letter of the second line is wanting, as also the last but one of the third line, but the one was evidently c, as I learn from a sketch taken in 1817, and the other may have been i. The Δ in Tegernacus and Marii seems at first sight to have been a v, but on comparing the inscription with the Tegernacus inscription at Cwm-du I conclude it must have been intended for an Δ —possibly the long Δ or au, as the modern o in such names as Teyrnog was formerly represented by *au*, as in Madauc, Catguallaun, etc. In English the inscription would read thus—Teyrnoc the son of Mar or Marius here lies.’ (Stephens, loc. cit.)

The letters on this stone are of a debased Roman character passing into minuscules, many of them assuming a square character. The cross top of the minuscule g (the third letter) seems replaced by a vertical stroke, seen in the photograph to the right of the curved top of the letter, the minuscules u and f are more debased in form than usual. The x has the middle stroke horizontal, as in various early Anglo-Saxon and Irish MSS. The triangular form of the a, thrice repeated, is quite unique. The f and m are also peculiar. The photograph shows but little of the top stroke of the r and the i at the end of the third line, and Mr. Stephens objects to the name MARTI, as there is no such British name as Mart, whilst he quotes several instances of the names MOR and MAR in support of his reading MARI.

Mr. H. L. Jones adds that ‘the squareness of the letters was caused by the lamination of the stone, which would greatly hinder an unskilful sculptor from forming curves upon its surface. It will be observed that, contrary to the analogy of many Welsh stones, the name of the principal personage is in the nominative case; and it will also be perceived that although the scribe has committed the common error of using JACIT for JACET, yet he has so far respected the orthography of the Roman tongue as not to have forgotten, as many other sculptors have, to spell HIC, the first word of the fourth line, correctly. I am inclined to think that this stone may have been incised as late as the eighth century.’

The earlier date of the seventh century suggested by Mr. Stephens indeed appears to me to be contradicted by the rude minuscule form of several of the letters as seen by a comparison of the inscription with those represented in my 13th Plate, nor can I understand on what palæographical grounds Mr. Stephens should have been willing to refer this stone to the seventh century, whilst he maintained that the Llantwit stones are not earlier than the ninth (see ante, p. 12).