

of the inscription, followed by the word 'obiit,' is very uncommon; but with the assistance of a rubbing the proper reading is found to be—

HIC IACIT MVLI  
ER BONA NOBILI[S?].

The stone, which is nearly 5 feet high, formerly stood about a mile from Caerwys, used as a gate-post to a field where numerous copper coins of the Roman Emperors have been found, but was removed, about the close of the last century, to the grounds at Downing, in the neighbouring parish of Whitford.

In Gough's figure the fifth letter of the upper line is formed into two v's united †, the tops crossing, and the angle of the lower letter reaching to the bottom of the line, making it appear like a conjoined A and v; the τ is made to want the right-hand side of the top bar, which is, however, quite conspicuous in my rubbing, and no traces are represented of the N A N in the middle of the second line, although portions of each of these letters are quite distinct. The M in the upper line is of a form common in the earliest of our national manuscripts, though rare in lapidary inscriptions, of which several instances of it are noticed in preceding pages, especially in Plate LXXXVII. fig. 3. The I at the end of the upper line, following the L, is extended below the line, as was very often the case in our early manuscripts, and some few instances of the same peculiarity are to be met with in early Welsh inscriptions; and there appears to be the same irregularity in the last two letters of the lower line, probably intended to indicate a monogrammatic conjunction of LIS, there being no other separate indication of the terminal s. With these peculiarities, the rest of the inscription consists of rude Roman capitals. As now deciphered, the inscription is one of the most touchingly simple memorials of the dead which I have ever met with,—

HERE LIES A GOOD AND NOBLE WOMAN.

(J. O. W., in Arch. Camb., 1855, p. 153.)

Professor Rhys, however, rejecting a terminal s after the letters NOBILI, translates the inscription, Here lies the good woman of Nobilis, 'Mulier bona being a literal rendering of the Welsh Gwreig-dda, but who Nobilis was I have no idea' (Notes, p. 10),—a reading which he has again repeated in the second edition of his Lectures under No. 23.

#### PLATE LXXXVIII.

##### THE MAEN ACHWYNFAN.

This monument, together with the crosses at Nevern (Pl. LXII), Carew (Pl. LVII), and Penmon (Pl. LXXXIV), are the only gigantic structures of the kind in Wales. The Maen Achwynfan, or 'Stone of Lamentation,' stands in a field near the road-side, nearly two miles and a-half east of Newmarket, at the junction of the Sarn Hwlcin with the cross-road which runs southward to the Traveller's Inn on the Holywell road. The Maen Achwynfan is here seen with its top towering over the hedges of the field in which it stands, far removed from any village or any remains either of a religious or civil nature, and devoid of any tradition on the spot which would give a clue to the reason of so remarkable a

monument being placed in such a situation. The surrounding district, however, has been the scene of many conflicts. Close to Newmarket is the Cop'r'leni, with an immense *carneidd* of lime-stones on its summit. On the brow of another adjacent hill is Bryn Saethau ('the Hill of Arrows'). Near to this is Bryn y Lladdfa ('the Hill of Slaughter'). Below this, again, is the Pant y Gwae ('the Hollow of Woe'); and, indeed, says Mr. Pennant, the tract from this place to Caerwys was certainly a field of battle, as no place in North Wales exhibits an equal quantity of tumuli,—all sepulchral, as is proved by the urns discovered in them. The Maen Achwynfan must, however, certainly be considered to be of a much more recent date than the events indicated by the names of these localities; although probably not more recent than the tenth or eleventh century, wanting that precision and regularity in the design which give to the earlier stones of South Wales such a great resemblance to the early Anglo-Saxon and Irish illuminated MSS.

The height of the cross is about 12 feet. The head is formed into a circle rather wider than the upper part of the column, and not set on upright. At its base it is 27 inches wide on the east and west sides, gradually diminishing upwards to about 20 inches; and the thickness of the shaft, near the bottom, is  $9\frac{1}{2}$  inches. Its surface has been very much weathered from its very exposed situation. It is here represented from sketches drawn by myself on the spot in 1848, corrected by rubbings reduced by the camera lucida, originally published in the *Archæologia Cambrensis*, 1865, p. 364.

The eastern side of the cross (fig. *b*) is divided into three compartments, leaving about a foot and a-half at the base unsculptured. The lowest compartment contains, in the centre, the figure of a man seen in front, with his legs bent and his arms stretched upwards, as we have already seen to be the case on several other of the carved stones of Wales. Here, however, the attitude can hardly be that of prayer, as the figure seems to bear a spear in his right hand, whilst a short sword seems suspended on his left side. The stone is, however, too much rubbed to enable us to decide this point. The figure is surrounded by a rudely executed series of double ribbons arranged in circular whorls. The central compartment is ornamented with a four-rayed star pattern (or St. Andrew's cross) of very unusual character; the open spaces filled in with incised lines arranged labyrinth-like; and the upper compartment is formed of a rudely executed, simply interlaced ribbon or basket-pattern; the lines not running regularly, so that the interlacings are not symmetrical.

The western side (fig. *a*) is divided into three compartments (also with a plain space at the base), the lower one being formed of double ribbons interlaced more regularly than those on the eastern side, but having the surface almost worn away. The middle compartment is formed of two series of large and rude knots composed of broad ribbons; whilst the upper part is ornamented with two double concentric circles interlaced with ribbons crossing each other in the centre, and uniting at the angles, outside the circles.

The head of the cross, on each side, is occupied by a cruciform design with a slightly ornamented boss in the centre, and with the four limbs ornamented with the triquetra pattern, the intervening space being incised. The upper limb on the east side alone is ornamented with an irregularly interlaced ribbon-design. The rim of the cross exhibits a plain interlaced ribbon-design, which Pennant, followed by Gough (*Camden*, iii. p. 225), mistook for letters,

The southern edge of the cross has also been stated to be inscribed with letters; but this also is a mistake, repeated by Hübner, the limbs and tail of a quadruped having been given as letters. Although greatly defaced, the various patterns can be tolerably made out, those on the northern edge (fig. *d*) consisting of a St. Andrew's cross pattern at the bottom, over which is a long-tailed, short, twisted-necked quadruped; a twisted ribbon-design followed by an interlaced circle, like that on the top of the west side; two circles linked together; and at the top is a considerable space occupied by a double series of *r*'s set in opposition to each other. The southern edge of the cross (fig. *c*) is ornamented, from the bottom, with a rudely-drawn, long-tailed quadruped (which has been mistaken for letters), followed by some irregular lines in which I could not trace any decided pattern. Above this appears the stunted figure of a man with his arms uplifted; then an interlaced double ribbon-pattern, and at the top a series of interlaced rings.

A tolerably accurate engraving of the cross appears in Gough's Camden, and also in Pennant's Tour in Wales. A more pretentious engraving of it, representing all the four sides, as well as the two small Diserth crosses, was published by Watkin Williams; dedicated to Sir Roger Mostyn, Bart., on whose estate near Gelli Chapel, in the parish of Whiteford, this monument is described to be standing. The engraving was sold at the 'price 4s.;' and surely there never was a more wretched representation of an object of antiquity; and yet a 'N.B.' is added,—'an imperfect description and representation of this pillar may be found in the last edition of Camden's Britannia.' A better figure is given in Williams and Underwood's Illustrations of Denbighshire Village Churches.

#### PLATE XC.

##### THE DISERTH CROSSES.

On the south side of Diserth Church, in the churchyard, stood thirty years ago the small cross (here represented, figs. 1, 2, 3, 4), one of the faces of which was partially hidden by a grave-stone fixed against it. It is nearly 6 feet high, and about 9 inches wide; ornamented on both faces with interlaced double or treble ribbons rudely executed, and wanting the geometrical precision of the South Wales stones. The head is formed into a wheel cross, of which nearly half has been long broken off, leaving two large trilobed incisions between the arms of the cross, and a round central boss in high relief. On one side the head of the cross is surrounded with a row of small circular impressions, and on the other with a narrow interlaced ribbon pattern. On one face the outer limb of the cross is occupied with a double spiral line rudely executed, which on the opposite face is replaced by a quadrangular pattern divided by diagonal lines into four triangular spaces filled in with parallel incised lines, of which design there is also an enlarged example at the base of the same side of the stem of the cross. There is also a narrow projection on the outside of the wheel of the cross, a similar one having doubtless existed on the opposite side and top of the wheel, giving a more decided cross-like effect to the head. The edges of the stem and head are ornamented with narrow interlaced ribbons with raised bosses