

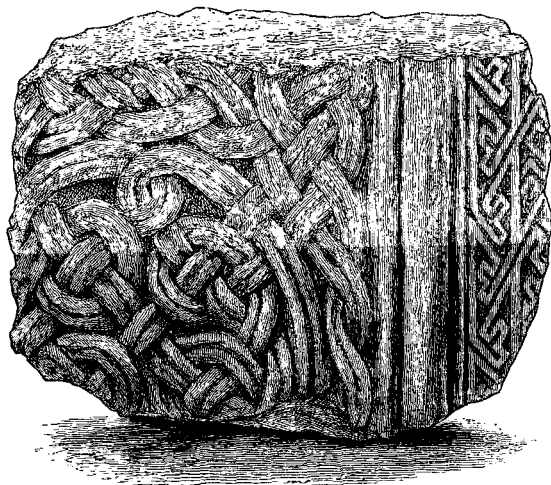
VI.

NOTES RESPECTING A FRAGMENT OF AN ANCIENT SCULPTURED
STONE OR ANGLO-SAXON CROSS, FOUND AT GATTONSIDE, NEAR
MELROSE, AND A PORTION OF THE OLD CROSS OF JEDBURGH.
By JOHN ALEXANDER SMITH, M.D., F.S.A. Scot.

Last summer, when walking through the village of Gattonside, which lies on the north bank of the Tweed, nearly opposite to the town of Melrose, Roxburghshire, I accidentally noticed a sculptured fragment of stone built into the garden wall of one of the cottages, and Mr B. N. Peach, of the Geological Survey, who was then a resident there, kindly offered to try and procure it for me. Accordingly, through his polite attention to my wishes, I have now the pleasure of presenting it for preservation to the Museum of the Society. (See woodcut.)

It is a squared block of old red sandstone, corresponding very much in character, it appears to me, to the same rock *in situ* near Dryburgh, where, indeed, it has at one time been extensively quarried. This stone has been, perhaps at no very distant date, squared into a block for use in building, having apparently been broken up for that purpose. It now measures 7 inches in height, by 9 inches in breadth, and $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches in thickness, and has formed part of a large sculptured stone or cross, the sculpture still remaining on one surface and on one end or side of the stone. On its broad surface it displays a large pattern of inter-

laced knotwork, formed by a double cord or ribbon laid side by side, which is crossed by another similar band in the centre of the figure, and passes through four loops or knots round this cross-like centre, the outer folds forming an encircling ring, and the cords then pass outwards to fill up the flat surface or field around this central circular pattern. Along one of the corners of the stone there runs a large vertical rounded bead or moulding, with a smaller one on each side of it; and on the return of this corner, being part of the side of



Portion of Sculptured Stone found at Gattonside, near Melrose, Roxburghshire.

the original sculptured stone, there is a zig-zag pattern formed of short vertical lines, terminating above and below in oblique lines, which again are abruptly bent, and expand into angular ornaments, filling up most of the surface of the stone. Similar sculptured patterns to those on the stone occur in some of the "Sculptured Stones of Scotland," figured by Dr Stuart in his great work published by the Spalding Club. One stone at St Andrews, the shaft of a cross, in Plate xvii.,

displays interlacing knotwork somewhat similar to this one. The ornament on the side of this stone belongs to a class and style of ornament which also occurs in several of these sculptured stones; as, for example, on the edge of the small fragment of a sculptured stone discovered some years ago at the island of Inchcolm, in the Firth of Forth, figured by Dr Stuart, and also by Sir J. Y. Simpson in his paper published in vol. ii. of the Proceedings.

The general character of this sculpture seems to correspond with the period of the finest work on these sculptured stones. It is certainly much older than any part of the present ruins of Melrose Abbey, and is similar in character to that on Anglo-Saxon crosses and monuments of an early date; to which period, therefore, I consider this stone also to belong. From the use it had been put to as an ordinary building stone, it is not improbable that other remains of the same sculptured stone may yet be found in the locality, I have accordingly requested a search to be made, and hope that some other parts of it may still be discovered.

Some of the very old people of Gattonside still remember the existence of a plain square-shaped stone, which was known by the name of "the Cross," it had a socket cut in it as if to support the shaft of a cross; but it has long since been broken up, and no remains of it are now to be found.

The Rev. Adam Milne, in his "Description of the Parish of Melrose" (1748), in describing Gattonside, says:—"There has been a fine chapel in this place, all built of hewn stone, near the vicar's house. This person is called so, because some of his predecessors few'd the small vicarage tithes of this town from the Commendator; tho' others say they had a gift of them before the Reformation from Abbot Durie, one of that family having married his natural daughter. Many of the stones of the chapel are to be seen in his house, and some of them curiously carved. The people here, in digging and ditching their yards, particularly near where the chapel has stood, find several vaults, and a great many hewn stones, by which it appears that at the time of Popery there have been several good buildings here."

I have seen the charter granted to the feuars of Gattonside by James Douglas, Commendator of Melrose in 1590, but do not remember any reference to ecclesiastical buildings in the village.

Alexander Jeffrey, Esq., Jedburgh, in his valuable "History and Anti-

quities of Roxburghshire, 1855," says:—"It is doubtful whether there ever was a chapel here (at Gattonside), as I have not been able to find any trace of it, and even Mr Milne does not advance any satisfactory grounds for his statement." (Vol. iv. p. 81.)

Many years ago, in the course of repairing one of the old village peel towers of Darnick, which was formerly occupied by a family of the name of Fisher, it was accidentally discovered that the kitchen hearth-stone was actually an old memorial stone or tombstone, as it was rather rudely sculptured over its under surface with what appeared to be, as far as I remember, part of the floriated shaft of a cross. The stone was afterwards taken to Abbotsford, where it still remains. It, however, belonged to a much later date than the sculptured stone just described.

Sir Walter Scott erected an ancient "Sculptured Stone" on a knoll in a group of old firs, in a stripe of newer plantation running south from Abbotsford House, close by the old middle road from Darnick to Selkirk. The place was called "Turn-a-again." This stone, however, had no connection with the district, having been sent to Sir Walter from Forfarshire. It has since, I understand, been removed by the late Mr Hope Scott, and is now preserved at Abbotsford House. A cross covered with ornamental patterns, with representations of animals in each of its angles, is sculptured on one side of this stone, and on the other figures of horsemen, &c. Dr John Stuart describes and figures it in Plates *xviii.*, *xcix.* of his first volume of "The Sculptured Stones of Scotland."

The only other remains of a character apparently approaching to that of the "Sculptured Stones" with which I was acquainted in the surrounding district was brought under my notice by Mr Alexander Jeffrey, in December 1866, when he sent me a small photograph of a stone, which seemed much weathered and destroyed, but still showed a portion of a rounded moulding at the base, and apparently the remains of sculptured representations of animals, &c. Mr Jeffrey wrote me as follows:—

"JEDBURGH, *December 8, 1866.*

"I enclose you a photograph of one side of the old cross of Jedburgh. The other three sides will be taken the first good day that occurs. The

stone seems to me to be the lower part of the shaft next to the stone steps. On the upper part is a tenon. It is impossible to say the number of parts the cross consisted of, but, I think, it very probable



Portion of the Old Cross of Jedburgh, now at Hartrigge (from a photograph).

that there was only another part of the shaft, which we know was surmounted by a unicorn in the thirteenth century. It seems to me the cross may belong to the beginning of the ninth century or older. It is irregular. The average height of the part is 4 feet $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The north

base is 2 feet $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches ; the south, 3 feet 3 inches ; the east, 2 feet $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches ; the west, 2 feet $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The north top is 1 foot $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches ; south, 1 foot $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches ; east, 1 foot 5 inches ; west, 1 foot 3 inches. The other sides are sculptured also, and I hope they will be brought out by being photographed. On the west side I thought I could discover two large birds with their breasts nearly touching, and their heads turned back. Their legs are discernible. The animal on the side sent seems to me to be a deer in a forest. The three black spots at the top, and one at the bottom, were cut by some Goth to place the crooks of a toll-bar gate, the stone having, at one time been used as a post of the gate to the turnpike. Only think that this beautiful cross was removed from the centre of the market place by the Town Council to give a little more room for coal carts ! Town Councils seem to be the same in every part of Scotland. . . . In the course of a few days I hope to have the whole photographed, and shall send you all the sides with a short paper for the Society. I may add that the late Lord-Chancellor Campbell wrongfully took possession of the stone, and it is now placed near to his mansion of Hartrigge."

Mr Jeffrey adds in a note :—

"I may mention to you, that the mason-marks¹ on the old deep-ribbed bridge of Jedburgh are the same as the marks on the oldest part of the Abbey."

Unfortunately, from the state of Mr Jeffrey's health and other causes, neither the additional photographs nor the paper on the cross were forthcoming, and so the matter lay over altogether.

Some time afterwards vol. ii. of "The Sculptured Stones of Scotland" was published, and Dr Stuart gives there, in Plate cxviii., a figure of a richly sculptured stone, also found at Jedburgh, showing birds, dragons, &c., perched on circular scrolls, proceeding from a central ornamented stem, like the branches of a tree. There are also ornamental patterns on the front and sides of the stone. Dr Stuart tells us—"The stone figured on this plate was brought to my notice by my friend the Rev. William Greenwell of Durham. It was built into the south aisle of the chancel, as the lintel of an opening, but at my request it was

¹ "Exhibition of Mason-Marks copied from Melrose Abbey, Dryburgh, Jedburgh, &c." (Plates.) By J. A. Smith, M.D., Proceedings Soc. Antiq. Scot., vol. iv. p. 548, 1862.

removed from the wall by the kind permission of the Marquis of Lothian, for the purpose of obtaining a correct drawing of it, and it is now placed in the north transept. Portions of other two crosses are built into the cape-house on the tower, but, judging from the exposed portions, they seem to be of less elaborate work than the present example. They are probably, however, of the same period."

This carved stone was, of course, long known to the frequenters of the abbey, and Mr Jeffrey alludes to it in his "History" of the county, vol. i. p. 254-5, and also, he tells me, in an illustrated work on the "Antiquities of the Border," published in 1836, now long out of print.

Mr Jeffrey figures and describes in his "History" another stone of great interest, bearing an inscription in Roman letters, and believed to be of Roman workmanship, which had been used as a common building-stone, forming the lintel of the doorway to the north-east turret stair of the old abbey. It is to be hoped more respect will now be paid to these ancient memorial stones, and that this will be also rescued from its old position and placed where it may be more easily and satisfactorily examined.

Dr Stuart, with his reference to this sculptured "cross," gives a sketch of the early ecclesiastical history of the district, from which, as it also includes the site of Old Melrose, I shall make the following quotations:—

"Till the beginning of the eleventh century the country stretching from the Tweed towards Edinburgh, and westwards beyond Abercorn, formed part of the Saxon principality of Northumbria. On the foundation of the see of Lindisfarne, A.D. 635, King Oswald bestowed on it large territories on both sides of the Tweed. That on the north of the river comprehended the land between the Eden and the Leader, and all the land belonging to the monastery of St Balthar at Tinningham from the Lammermoors to Eskmouth. . . . We have seen that at the church of Norham, which Egred built, there were many crosses of Anglo-Saxon character. The Cross at Jedburgh, here figured, seems undoubtedly to be of the same early period, and must be classed with similar remains found at Abercorn, Norham, Coldingham, Lindisfarne, Jarrow, and Hexham, all sites of Saxon foundation."

When describing specially the Sculptured Stones found at Lindisfarne (above referred to), Dr Stuart says:—"It seems to me that the crosses, of

which fragments are now delineated (Plate xxvi.), were probably in connection with the church erected between that of Finan, built in 652, and that of the priory, founded in 1093 or 1094. We elsewhere find many traces of what seems to have been an early custom, viz., the erection of crosses as memorials of the great departed."—Pp. 19, 20.

We find, however, that not only were memorial crosses erected to the great departed, but that the wealthy and powerful living, though not perhaps great in other respects, were also in the habit of erecting memorial crosses to themselves! Dr Stuart tells us that—"Ethelwold became bishop [of Lindisfarne] in 742. He had originally been a monk in the church of Lindisfarne, and afterwards became Abbot of Melrose. Before his elevation to the see he had caused a cross to be made of stone, and his name to be cut on it in memory of himself."—P. 19.

From this account it was apparently at Lindisfarne that this memorial cross was erected. We learn, however, from these remarks of Dr Stuart's that memorial crosses had at one time existed probably over the whole district, and also that a man fond of erecting them was at an early period an Abbot of the neighbouring foundation of Old Melrose.

Much as some writers denounce the carelessness and ruthless utilitarianism of our own and earlier days (as shown, for example, in the fragments of this carved stone now described by me, being built as a common building stone into a garden wall); still more has it been the fashion to blame our reforming forefathers for the destruction said to have been caused by them, when the real fact of the case is, that the great destroyers of all our abbeys, at least in the south of Scotland, were "our auld enemies, of England."

To show how thoroughly the English invaders had gone about this work of destruction, let me remind you of the "Contemporary Account of the Earl of Hertford's Second Expedition to Scotland in September 1545," brought under the notice of the Society by David Laing, Esq., in 1854, and published in vol. i. of our Proceedings, p. 271; I shall quote one or two sentences to illustrate the style of their proceedings:—

The 'York Herald' tells us:—"Thes Wenesday did I Yorke, someyn [summon] the abbaye of Chelsse, [Kelso] and thes day the said abbay was batterid and enterid by day, and by midnyght hit was wone by the

Spanards par force.' . . . 'Thes day the Spanard did spuiell the abbey at their will, and euvery man.' . . . 'a friday messur was thakeyn for to fortifie the said Abbey, but hitt was or nown thetarmennyt [but it was ere noon determined] the contrarie;' . . . 'thes day my Lord commandyt to briek the abbey and thake of the leied [take off the lead] and outermiyuen [undermine] the towers and strong places, and to owaiertrow [overthrow] all.'" A little farther on we are told, "A Satterday my Lord Warden of the myddel marches" went with his followers, "and the [they] birynd ii abeyis [Dryburgh and Melrose] and 30 townes, and corn worth a 1000 lb str., 9 myell Scottes, a myell byeyend Mourosse [Melrose];" "and a Sunday the abbey of Kelse was razed, and all put to royen [ruin] howsess toueris and stypeles, and the witaielles cam and cartes loden again wt the leed [lead] of the said abbay." . . . He then tells us, "On Munday wy departyt from Kelsey Abbey that was, to Rokesborwe maenes." . . . "and a Wenessday burend Jedwourd [Jedburgh] abbey, and the fryers menore and all the townes ii myell beyond," &c.; and so the record goes on with its business-like tale of destruction.

Mr Laing supplies from another quarter a contemporary list of "*The Names of the Fortresses, Abbeys, Frere Houses, Market Townes, Villages, Toures and Places brent raced and cast downe,*" &c., by the same expedition. In it we find—"On the River of Twede," "First the Abbey of Kelso raced and cast down; the toun of Kelso brent; the abbey of Melrosse *alias* Mewrose, Darnyck, Gawetonside," &c., so that for aught I know they may have been the original destroyers at Gattonside of the very Cross, a portion of which I have described as still existing. "The abbey of Dryburghe the toun of Dryburghe," &c., &c.; "*On the Reyver of Jedde,*" "The abbey of Jedworthe [Jedburgh], the Freers there, the toun of Jedworthe," &c., &c.

The catalogue finishes with a summation or abstract of their work. I merely quote—"In Monasteries and Frear houses, 7;" "in Villages, 243;" "in Spytells and Hospitalls, 3;" the sum total being 287 places destroyed (see Proc. vol. i. p. 279).

Mr Laing adds the pertinent remark—"As it is obvious that, during the intermediate period of fourteen years to the Reformation, the injuries which these Ecclesiastical buildings sustained could only have been partially, if at all repaired, it is attributing too much to John Knox and his brethren

to give them the credit for a work of devastation which had previously been done to their hand" (p. 276).

It is curious also to notice that, even in pre-Reformation days, the very co-religionists of the people who sculptured and erected these beautiful memorial stones, nay, even the very monks, the architects and builders, it may be, of the fine old Abbeys themselves, paid apparently so little regard to the ornamental and memorial work of their predecessors that they broke them up, and built them away whenever it suited their purpose, with a remorseless utilitarianism, using them for lintels and building stones; as shown, indeed, in the beautifully sculptured cross itself, figured by Dr Stuart, which he got dug out of the very walls of Jedburgh Abbey, and more carved stones, he also tells us, still remain built into the old walls. Old sculptured stones have been frequently found built into many other ancient churches. A notable instance indeed, is given in the last published volume of the Proceedings of the Society where the Rev. W. Duke tells us of the sculptured fragments brought to light during the recent restoration of St Vigean's Church. Upwards of twenty pieces, representing nearly an equal number of monuments, being found. Mr Duke says:—"The original monuments had been broken up and used for building materials at an early period, the latest wall in which they were found dating probably from 1485, while there is reason to believe that many of the stones had been used so early as the twelfth century. It cannot be doubted that the ancient walls that have not been disturbed, comprising about two-thirds of the mediæval church, contain many similar fragments."¹ I can also show the same ruthless use had been made of stones, sculptured with memorial devices, which have actually been built in old times, as window soles or ordinary building stones into the beautiful ruins of Melrose Abbey.

¹ Notice of the Fabric of St. Vigean's Church, Forfarshire; with Notice and Photographs of Early Sculptured Stones recently discovered there. By the Rev. William Duke, M.A., F.S.A. Scot. Proceedings Soc. Antiq. Scot. vol. ix. p. 481. (1872.)