

which is the very counterpart of the Bewcastle obelisk in its rude and undressed state. It is evidently the relic of a stone which has been split at some distant date into two equal parts, the mark of the wedges used in the operation being still distinctly traceable. The obelisk is of a peculiar species of rock; a very hard, gritty and durable white freestone, with rather a yellow tinge, thickly covered with spots of a grey hue; precisely such as is found at the Longbar and the adjacent rocks on the south side of the White Lyne river. The Maiden Way passed near both the present site of the obelisk and its supposed original site, with an easy incline across the moor from the Longbar to the Maiden Way, which explains the facilities for conveying the stone from one to the other." The stone measures, as Mr Maughan stated, 15 feet in length; but at one end, in close proximity to it, is a shattered block which was evidently a part of the original stone before it was split by the workmen. It is possible, therefore, that the half which was removed may have measured 17 feet in length. The breadth of the stone is 10 inches at one end and 39 inches at the other; while the depth varies from 29 inches to 26 inches. The removal of a stone having these dimensions, weighing at least 7 tons, must have been a matter calling for no small effort; and the crowd of men who wrestled with the difficulties of the undertaking must have experienced a sense of relief when they got the huge block across the moor, however easy the incline. Even when the Maiden Way was reached it would be found that the surface and gradients were not such as engineers of the present day would view with approval.

The cross at Bewcastle is believed to mark the grave of Alcfrith, deputy King of Deira, who died about 665. The upper part of the obelisk, the cross proper, is said to have been removed by Belted Will at the beginning of the 17th century, and sent to Camden the historian, and it has never been recovered. The idea or tradition that Cromwell injured the cross, by a stray shot, when he demolished the Castle at Bewcastle, need scarcely be considered; it was not in his line of fire (N.E. to S.W.), and

the fracture at the top of the cross is obliquely downwards from west to east. Nor need one give heed to the suggestion of local vandalism; there is no evidence of such—unless it be the placing upside down of a stone with a cross on it at the door of the church! Every one will admit that the cross is a rare treasure, a beautiful example of early art, and would fain see it better protected against the action of the weather. We admire the symmetry of the column and the skilled work it displays; yet, somehow, the designs upon it seem elementary, if historically interesting, and their arrangement rather suggests a "Sampler," and some critics may consider that there is a lack of breadth and freedom about the whole conception. But, apart from such considerations, it is the spirit of the memorial and its great antiquity which appeal to us. Visiting a cathedral or church, one has had the feeling that men plead pathetically with stones and brasses to remember them, to remember even their names; but the shaft at Bewcastle creates other thoughts. The men who erected it loved Alcfrith, and remembered with pride his good life and works; they seem to tell us of their grief and ask us to pray that the soul of their King may find peace. The appeal is so living that we can almost feel the presence of those mourners, and we join them in their grief and in their prayers. There is a dignity, too, about the inscription, set out in runic letters.

"This slender token of Victory Hwaetred Wothgar Olwfwolthu set up in memory of Alcfrith a King and son of Oswy.

Pray for the high sin of his soul."

RUFUS E. EVANS.

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Contributors to the "B.M." frequently ask us the length of article desired for its pages and we invariably recommend brevity. As variety in each issue is most desirable, no article should exceed 2000 words. The spirit which animates all our contributors is summed up in the words of one who writes: "My services are always at your disposal in the furthering of the interests of the Borderland."—Ed. "B.M."