

ART. XIV.—*On an Inscribed Cross at Lanercost.** By
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Communicated at Lanercost, July 1, 1886.

IN a crypt forming part of the conventual buildings at Lanercost, are preserved the remains of a large stone cross, with an inscription, of which we owe the preservation, in its original form, to Lord William Howard—the ‘Bauld Willey’ of Pennant, and ‘Belted Will’ of Scott. A copy of the chartulary of Lanercost Priory, made in 1777, is preserved in the Fraternity Library at Carlisle. I do not know the whereabouts of the original. The copy bears at page 267, the following note, signed ‘William Howard, 25 Maii, 1607.’ (An edition of Camden appeared the same year, in which he writes of Naworth Castle as being repaired for Lord William’s residence 7 or 8 years before). ‘In crucem lapideam in cimiterio exteriore nuper prioratus de Lanercost com. Cumb. ante Portam Borealem ejusdem ecclesie existentem haec sculpta sunt: *Anno ab incarnatione MCCXIII et VII anno interdict. optinente sedem Apocam Innocent. III. Imperante in Alemania Othon. Regnante in Francia Philippo, Johe in Anglia, Willmo in Scotia facta h. crux.*’ On a stone cross now extant in the outer cemetery of the late priory of Lanercost, in the county of Cumberland, before the northern portal, are inscribed these words: *In the year from the incarnation 1214, and the 7th year of the interdict, Innocent the third then holding the Apostolic chair, Otho being Emperor in Germany, Philip reigning in France, John in England, William in Scotland,*

* See also an article by Rev. John Hodgson, in *Archæ. Aeliana*, O.S., vol. ii., p. 197.

was made this cross.' A basement still stands in the precincts of the Priory, a little north-west of an old doorway, which has been walled up, at the west end of the nave of the conventual church. This basement agrees with the remains of the cross in material, and, allowing for their mutilated condition, in size and pattern. The cross itself has been broken into two or more pieces, part has been lost, and on the part which remains, of which we give an engraving, the old inscription has been chiselled away to make room for the following epitaph, in a rude cursive hand of the 17th century: '*. . . . Who was buried | ye 20 of July | 1667 | 2d yere of his age.*' The surviving portion of the old inscription now begins with the word [A]lemania.* The portion bearing the name of the Scotch King has shelled off. There is, perhaps, an abbreviation for *est* after *facta*, not appearing in Lord William Howard's note. This part of the cross is well engraved in Lysons' Cumberland, where the same note is somewhat inaccurately incorporated with the text (p. ccii). Part of the top of the cross is preserved in the same place with the inscribed fragments.

The material is a red sandstone used in the Priory buildings and common in the neighbourhood. The ornamentation is a late form of what is rather vaguely called *dog tooth*. The lettering is of the Lombard type.

But the interest of this memorial lies in the fact that, whereas in general the *date* of such old work has to be inferred from the style of art, lettering, and execution, we can here date the latter, almost within a few days, by the equations of time recorded on the stone.

The sovereigns mentioned are:—Otho the 4th of Germany, Philip Augustus of France, our King John, and

* The portion of the inscription remaining on the 1st July, 1886, was:—[A]LEMA
| NIAO | THON | REG[N]AN | TE IN FR | ANCIA | PHILIP | PO IOHE | |
| SCOT | FACTA | H. CRVX.

William

William the lion of Scotland. The interdict was pronounced upon the kingdom of England by Pope Innocent, on March 23rd, 1208. The date of the cross is therefore not before March 23rd, 1214. The Emperor Otho was deposed in 1212, but he might fairly be considered to retain his dignity *de facto*, until the battle of Bouvines, fought on July 27th, 1214, in which the French King finally triumphed over the House of Guelph and its English ally. King William of Scotland died in 1214, on the 4th of December. The Interdict is sometimes stated to have lasted 6 years 3 months and 14 days, *i.e.*, till the 6th July, 1214. Other accounts represent it as finally taken off on July 3d. The cross therefore must have been erected between March 23rd and July 3 or 7, 1214, possibly in prospect of the termination of the Interdict, about a year before the Great Charter was presented at Runnymede.

According to Lysons this very interesting memorial was fixed, in 1816, on one side of a barn. From that somewhat unworthy position it has been removed, but its present locality is too much exposed both to weather and mischief. I may, perhaps, suggest that there would be no impropriety in fixing it either on the original basement, with a cover, or within the church. It would be well to leave a space for the lost parts; or to replace them by detached pieces of some different coloured stone, so as to show what the whole originally was, but not to confuse the new with the old.
