

ART. XVIII.—*A Note on Ambleside Market Cross.* By  
BRUCE LOGAN THOMPSON.

*Read at Grange-over-Sands, September 18th, 1928.*

AT Calgarth Park, Windermere, is an old sundial bearing the following inscription on its four sides:—

	G·B	16	51
VITAVT	HERBA		

This inscription is cut in a block of sandstone,  $8\frac{1}{4}$  inches square and  $9\frac{1}{2}$  inches deep. The stone is a good deal worn, so much so that the coats of arms upon the shield are difficult to make out.

Towards the end of the seventeenth century, the inscription was seen and copied by the antiquary Machel. He noted it as "upon the dial post on the cross in Ambleside," and he observed elsewhere in his MSS that the Braithwaites' motto was upon the cross. From this Society's Transactions, it appears that the arms of Braithwaite of Ambleside were "Bugle horn, garnished and furnished sable," and that the motto might be seen in a window at High House, Hugill, (which was another home of the Braithwaite clan), in the form VITA UT HERBA, an anagram of the family name, and the invention of Richard Braithwaite.

In 1650, Ambleside was granted a market and two fairs. At that time, the Braithwaites were the leading people in the place, and the head of the family was Gawen Braithwaite of Ambleside Hall, who died in 1653, and left £5 for cleaning Ambleside's streets. It is perhaps not an unlikely guess that so public-spirited a man gave



SUNDIAL AT CALGARTH  
Part of Ambleside Cross.

*Photo. by B. L. Thompson, 1928.*

FACING P. 248.

the cross, or at least this dial, to the town, when the market was instituted.

The earliest sketch of the market place, a water-colour drawing by G. Seaton, "Ambleside Fair, 1806" shows a headless cross-shaft standing by the Cross House, and so do the many drawings by William Green published in the 'teens and 'twenties. In 1863, the Mechanics' Institute was built, and the cross removed from its old site. In 1885, it was re-erected in its present position, on the other side of the hill. The late Cornelius Nicholson wrote a pamphlet at the time, in which he attempted to reconcile the two traditional names "Danish Cross" and "Market Cross" by suggesting it had been first one and then the other and Ambleside folk would perhaps still hold that their cross dates from before 1651.

The shaft, as it stands today, is of sandstone, octagonal and tapering, measuring 5 feet 6 inches in length and eight inches across the top. It is therefore possible that the Calgarth dial, being of the same stone and of a suitable size, actually surmounted the Ambleside shaft. Surely it must have been a most awkward height, quite apart from the three steps round the foot.

When and why the dial was taken away, nobody knows. Bishop Watson began to build Calgarth Park in 1789, and the removal may conceivably have been at his bidding. Whether he did or no, we have the definite knowledge that in the late seventeenth century, it was seen in Ambleside market place, and that in 1807 it was not there.

*Note.*—

The windows at High House no longer contain the ancient glass mentioned above. It is said to have been removed some years ago to the museum at Ulverston, but it is not there now.