BY THE ROMAN WALL.

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Notes on a Summer Holiday

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With Illustrations from
Sketches and Photographs by the Author.

DAVID NUTT
AT THE SIGN OF THE PHŒNIX, LONG ACRE
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To

MARY L. HEPPEL

IN MEMORY OF

MANY HAPPY, TRAVELLING DAYS

In the still night when Time beats dull and slow,
And all the mystic courses of the blood flow back
To mingle with the dim mysterious past,
I was not I—or to some earlier life
Returned, and knew the centuries long ago.

Upon the Wall I stood, a sentinel,
Where the great Barrier rises with that land
Which heaves huge shoulders to the north, and falls
In strange fantastic crag or precipice;
There stood I gazing o'er the misty Fells.

Near from the Camp upon the sloping hill,
Came the rough murmur of the soldiers' talk,
Rough Tungrian words and harsh Batavian speech;
But I was Roman of the Flavian House,
Sent here, alas! to rid me of my sins.

Sin! What of sin? The Gods who lie above
Watch with calm eyes the foolish ways of men,
And send sharp curses down to punish us.
But they too pass—are passed, old Caius saith,
Who talks of One—a Man-God—crucified.

His father's father saw Him—so he says,
Hanging upon the cross in Palestine.
And now they worship Him and prophesy
That He will conquer all the Roman World,
And kill the old Gods, send them fleeing fast,

As we drive back the savage hordes that sweep,
Against our Wall, and clamour at the Gates,
And sometimes, when our men keep careless watch,
Almost prevail to drive us from our post:
That's why they've built the second postern up!

But what is that? A shadow creeping by
Along the misty valley far below.
Hark! there a stone falls—that's the tread of feet
Crushing the bracken! Ho! Let trumpets blow!
It is the Foe—the Foe! Quick, Comrades, Man the Wall!

INTRODUCTION

How we came to visit the Wall

"HADRIAN built a Wall!" Such was the clear and definite statement that we had learnt in the remote past, and which had fixed in our youthful minds the fact that once a Roman Wall had extended from the mouth of the River Tyne to the Solway Firth. From what source we had acquired the information, whether from *Magnall's Questions*, or *Mrs. Markham's History*, or the *Child's Guide to Knowledge* memory has not recorded.

For years our mental attitude towards the Wall somewhat resembled that of the Sunday School child towards places mentioned in the Bible, for on her teacher speaking of Mount Tabor in the present tense this scholar cried "Why it ain't there still, is it, teacher? I thought it had gone up to 'eaven long ago!" We did not, perhaps, think that Hadrian's work had taken that flight, but it was long before we realized that the Wall, or some part of it, still existed. But illumination coming, we decided "some day" to go and see it, and at last we changed the "some day" into "this August!"

The decision made, the next thing was to acquire definite information as to what was really left of the Wall, and how to approach it. This we found in Dr. Bruce's book on the subject, which became in the end our Guide, Philosopher and Friend, and led us faithfully and wisely along all that is best and most interesting of the remains of that mighty Barrier.

That mighty Barrier! The words are used deliberately. One's childish idea may have pictured a magnified garden wall with, perhaps, broken glass or iron spikes at the top, but certainly one's most imaginative dreams fell short, far short, of the great reality. For study of the subject revealed it as one of the greatest works of that amazing Roman people. We found it to be not only a Wall, but a vast and complicated line of fortification extending nearly eighty miles across a wild and mountainous country, and consisting of three parts, i.e. first, the Stone Wall with a Fosse to the north of it; second, the Earthwork, called the Vallum with its Agger and Fosse, to the south; third, the series of military camps or stations connected with both Wall and Vallum, and the Military Road linking the whole together.

This line of fortification began at Wallsend at the mouth of the Tyne. The stone wall—the *Murus*—varies in width from seven to nine feet. What was

its original height it is impossible now to say. Bede speaks of it as being about twelve feet high, but another early writer gives twenty-one feet; probably it was from fifteen to twenty feet and may have had some sort of battlement, behind which the soldiers could shelter. It was built of stone: a core of rubble set in mortar, with the outside framed of dressed, rectangular stones, well bonded into the central mass. Even to the eye of the ordinary tourist the beauty and excellence of the masonry is apparent.

At about every mile a castellum was erected, rectangular buildings whose foundations measure about fifty by sixty feet, and each of which had two gates, opening north and south. Between these mile castles were four turrets.

On the north side of the Wall was a deep fosse, traces of whose existence are often visible where the Wall itself has disappeared. Beside all these there were, at about every five or six miles, large Stations or Camps, each a fortification in itself, for they were surrounded by stone walls with fortified gates and corner towers, and each sheltered a numerous garrison. Surely it must have been a strong and vigorous foe against which such defences were considered necessary.

The study of Dr. Bruce's book had shown us that very little of the Wall is visible for twenty

miles out of Newcastle. Here and there a Centurial Stone or a Roman Altar is built into some cottage, or a trace of Vallum or Fosse may be seen, but the Wall is practically destroyed. General Wade, that eighteenth century roadmaker, had used it for the foundation of his military road from Newcastle to Carlisle, and his name is still attached to it by the country people. This decided us to begin our Pilgrimage at Chollerford, where the Wall emerges from obscurity, and which is close to Chesters, the country seat of the late Mr. Clayton, who did so much splendid antiquarian work in connection with the Roman Wall. He not only excavated the Roman Station on his own property at Chesters, but he acquired, whenever he could, solely with a view of preserving the ancient relics, other land on which he believed discoveries might be made. So after a brief visit to Durham, and a few more days spent in the pious duty of visiting the tombs of long-dead ancestors near Rothbury, we turned our steps towards Chollerford. It is only about twenty or thirty miles from Rothbury to Chollerford, but it took us four solid hours to traverse the distance by a train which trotted about the country side, apparently intent on paying morning calls at little stations where nobody got in and fewer got out. We had to leave Rothbury at a little after seven in the morning even to accomplish this.

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CHAPTER I

Our First Sight of the Wall

WE arrived at Chollerford on a Saturday morning. Chollerford is not a large place. Indeed, it consists only of the railway station and the *George Inn*. The railway station is like other country stations, but the *George Inn* is not like other country inns. It is a long, low house, with a garden sloping down to the river, just where the stream flows through the seven-arched, buttressed bridge which there crosses the North Tyne: its outside is charming, and its inside is perfection! Added to this entire comfort of the body, we had the good fortune to fall in here with kindred spirits, enthusiasts, Pilgrims of the Wall, as eager to track its devious course as ourselves.

No sooner was luncheon over than we hurried off to Chesters, for it was the day when the grounds are open to visitors. Our way led along a rising road bordered with fine ash and plane trees, which barred our path with shadows as the fitful sunshine gleamed out from time to time. Around us rose

steep hills, on whose green fields well-to-do cows browsed contentedly, and overhead floated great mountainous clouds sending an infinite and beautiful play of light and shade over the prospect. In about a quarter of an hour we reached the lodge gates and were directed to go to the Museum which stands close by, and into which have been gathered many of the antiquities which have been discovered in the neighbourhood.

In our secret souls we had always regarded museums as rather dull and dreary places, but that at Chesters impresses one differently. As you enter and face those ancient stones, a curious thrill quivers along the nerves; a haunting sense of presences, strange, mysterious, awful, steals over the mind. Reverence awakes and a quickened sense of the pathos which underlies all human life. Perhaps it is their nearness to their ancient habitations which invests these relics with their peculiar force. Generally all one sees in museums is so far detached from its true surroundings and is so without locality or atmosphere, but these altars standing here, with their inscriptions still legible, mingling the names of unknown gods with those of Jove and Apollo, were found close by, and thus something of their old solemnity hangs about them. Beside these altars, which face one in a long row on entering, there are numerous milestones which have marked

the distances along the military roads, still traceable across these lonely Northumbrian hills, where the Legions marched sixteen centuries ago; sculptures too and steles, and dedicatory tablets, but mostly altars, for the Romans were a great people, and a great people has ever a solemn consciousness of the Immortal side of Mortality, and are not ashamed to record their Belief.

In the centre of the Museum are cases containing pottery and the smaller objects which have been found, fibulæ, brooches, bangles, beads, writing implements, even a Roman shoe, an old Roman shoe, which had been roughly sewn up by some careful soul ever so many hundred years ago. Mr. Tailford, who was Mr. Clayton's head excavator and is now in charge of the Museum, told us he had dug the shoe up himself at a depth of about eight feet, that he had washed it over and over again to get it clean, and then it was sent to London to have a wooden foot made to fit it. There is also a copy of what is known as the "Chesters Diploma." The delicate bronze plate which the same excavator was fortunate enough to find is at the British Museum, but a copy was made to be placed here. It is a document granting the privileges of Roman Citizenship, and giving permission to marry to certain troops serving in Britain.

By the time we had glanced round the Museum,

a number of people had assembled who were anxious to see the Camp and asked Mr. Tailford to be the guide, so we started off. The mansion at Chesters is built absolutely on the Wall, and the Roman Station lies some hundred yards or so in front of it, and is just above the river where the Roman Bridge crossed the stream. Now, the day was proving showery, the grass was long and wet, heavy clouds swept across the sky with a cold, strong wind, but notwithstanding these drawbacks we followed our guide heedfully, and listened to all he said as far as we could hear it, but the company crowded round him, and the breeze often carried his words away. He took us first to the north gate of the Station, the foundations of which have been laid bare; then to the remains of the barracks where the soldiers lived; then to the Prætorium, or officers' quarters. From here we diverged to inspect the remains of a building which lay outside the Camp, and about the use of which the antiquaries differ. Some think it was a Bath, others a Temple, others a villa, and some a protection to the Bridge which crossed the river just below. In one of its apartments seven small recessed arches have caused much searching of hearts, and no one yet has offered an entirely satisfactory explanation of their use and purport. From the banks of the river, a rapid and beautiful stream, the guide pointed out the position

of the piers which carried the Bridge. The abutment and remains of the Bridge are much better examined on the other side of the river, of which more is to be said.

We then returned to the Camp, and noticed particularly the tall and slender hypocausts at the officers' quarters. Also we looked with longing eyes at the little clusters of *Erinus Hispanicum* (or *Alpinus*) growing upon the walls, that tiny Spanish plant which has sprung up since the excavations, and which is believed to be a legacy from the Asturian Cohort, the Second Ala of which was long stationed at Cilurnum, as the Romans named this Camp of Chesters.

One of the peculiarities of the architecture of these Camps is that the corners were always rounded on the outside, while square internally. The curve is well shown at the south-eastern corner of Chesters, as our guide pointed out. We then visited the southern gate and so to the central building of the Camp, the Forum, where the Market was held, and where the Government business was carried on. In one of the chambers set apart for this purpose, a very curious, dungeon-like cell has been excavated. It has a stone vaulted roof, and is supposed to be the Treasure Chamber.

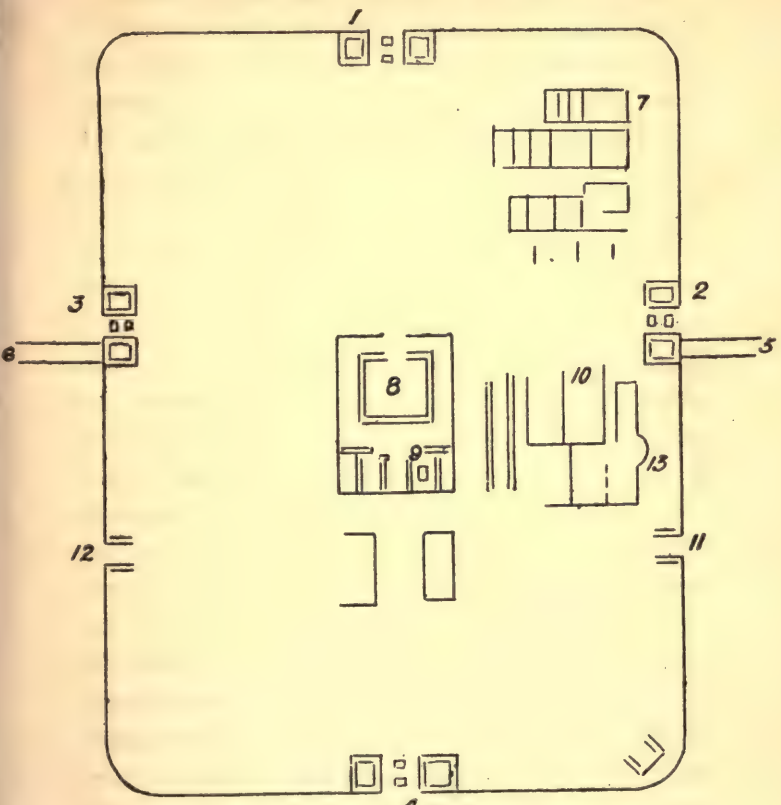
But just at this point a fierce, drenching shower sent us all scurrying back to the shelter of the

Museum, so our explorations for that day were concluded.

This Station of Cilurnum has been carefully excavated so as to bring to light its principal parts, and it was a great advantage to us in beginning our pilgrimage to go carefully over it, and fix well in our minds and memories the salient characters of a Roman Military Camp. This we did during our stay at Chollerford, spending several hours on another day in closely examining it, so that when later on we came to less excavated Camps, we were able at once to grasp their structural points, and to understand them in a way we could not have done save for those preliminary studies at Chesters.

For their characters are very similar, though each has some peculiarity arising from local causes. Always they are rectangular spaces surrounded by strong, stone walls, the corners rounded outside, but square within, and defended by a turret or tower. Always at least four gates, north, south, east, and west (Chesters has six), each gate having a double entrance, and being flanked by guard-rooms. In the centre, a market or Forum, itself enclosed by a wall, with a central open space surrounded by a cloister or arcade, whose roof has been supported on pillars. Always roads or streets from each gate crossing at right angles, generally at a point in front of the principal entrance to the Forum.

Plan of the Roman Camp at Chesters



1 North Gate
2 East "
3 West "
4 South "
5&6 Roman Wall
7 Barracks
8 Forum
9 Treasure Chamber
10 Prætorium
11 Small East Gate
12 " West "
13 Hypocausts.

The chief peculiarity of the Station at Cilurnum is that the great Wall, instead of forming the northern wall of the Station, or coinciding with it, strikes the Camp at the southern tower of the principal eastern and western gates, thus leaving a considerable part of the Station outside, or to the north, of the great Barrier. This leads to the conclusion that the Camp was there before the Wall was built. If Agricola founded the Camp it adds to its interest. The Camp must also be considered in connection with the bridge over the North Tyne, which must have required special measures of defence. The accompanying rough plan will make the arrangement of the Station clearer to the reader than words can.

Next day was Sunday and we felt that now we must go and see the great Wall itself. True our eyes had rested on a small portion of it, where a few feet have been excavated as it strikes the Station, but it had been, as it were, overwhelmed by the Camp. We wanted to see it on its native heath. We went in the morning to church at Humshaugh, which is a village about half-a-mile from Chollerford. It was not an interesting church ; it had been built, we suspected, in the dark days of the early nineteenth century, and was of the parallelogramic order of architecture. Afterwards when we had found out Chollerton Church, we regretted we had not gone there.

After early dinner we started off on our quest up the road past Chesters. A strong wind was blowing and huge threatening clouds came stormily sweeping up, while the trees swung and tossed their great branches in the gusts. Past Chesters the road swerves towards the north, and while we were freely dissenting from each others' views as to *where* the Wall ran, lo ! we were upon it ! For this is General Wade's road, and at this point, part of the foundation becomes visible. It gave one a thrill to look at those venerable stones ; surely they merited a salute, a genuflection ! The road here mounts up steeply, and the rush of the rainwater probably keeps the stones bare.

After this, our differences being so satisfactorily settled, we went on amicably and happily, past a cluster of cottages and in front of Walwick Hall. As the ascent increased, views of great beauty opened out on either side. Below, on the left, through a gap in the hills, we caught sight of the distant towers of Hexham, while to the right, line after line of distant hills were visible between the masses of trees. But just past the Hall, we came to a pause ! There, in the field to the right, was a something, a hollow, an excavation, and signs of the remains of a building. But what was it built of ? Was it stone, was it brick ? One of us swore it was one, and one of us swore it was the other ! So as a

convenient gate gave access, we went to see. We found a deep hollow, one side of which was walled with natural rock, cut straight as if with a knife, on the other was a steep earthen bank, and here was the building which appeared to have been semi-circular and was constructed of small narrow stones about the size of bricks. But what was it and what was the hollow? Was it part of the fosse of the Wall, or of the fosse of the Vallum. Then we noticed that the hollow ended in a wall of natural rock. Perhaps it was a quarry? And then we caught sight of a long, straight depression running across the field to the north, a most evident line of fosse. But alas! where was the Wall? We consulted Dr. Bruce, but he threw no light on the subject, only he spoke of Wall farther on, Wall visible and tangible, unmistakable! So we returned to our road, hoping at some future time to unravel the mystery of the little ruin (which we never did) and so trudged onward.

We climbed another long hill on which was a nondescript building which we supposed was the Tower Taye of Dr. Bruce; beyond it was a plantation of firs and beech trees, among which the wind wailed drearily. Past the crest of the hill we saw to our right a farm at a little distance from the road. Was it Black Carts Farm, for, if so, there was Wall! So we took our courage in both hands, and went

through the farm gate, the wind raging so that we were at some trouble to close it after us, and meekly evading two huge carthorses who had possession of the roadway, we went up to the house, hoping we should see somebody about whom we could ask for information, without being obliged to knock at the door and disturb the Family's Sunday Afternoon Nap! But only a dog came and barked at us, while a cow poked her head round the corner of a barn to observe us. Fortunately, however, the dog's remarks had aroused an elderly lady, who came to the door and told us where the Wall was. She was most kind and did not seem at all annoyed with us. If we went on a little further up the road we should see the Wall. It was not on the road; a piece of the field intervened, but she was afraid the grass was rather long and wet. We thanked her very sincerely for her information and withdrew.

And at last we came to the Wall: there we could see quite a long stretch of it crowned with a growth of low trees and bushes, but between us and it lay a field of rippling barley which our consciences would not allow us to tramp through. But it continued, and the next field, separated from the barley field by a narrow road which we believed to be Hen Gap, was plain, short grass with a gate—oh! reward of virtue—a gate which opened! We went through and—! Did we fall on our knees? I am not sure,

but I know the pilgrim spirit swelled in one breast at least.

It is a beautiful bit of wall, beautiful in workmanship, in colour, in situation, for on all sides spreads out a wonderful view. We walked along it slowly, touching the old stones tenderly, reverently, thinking of the dead hands that had wrought so well

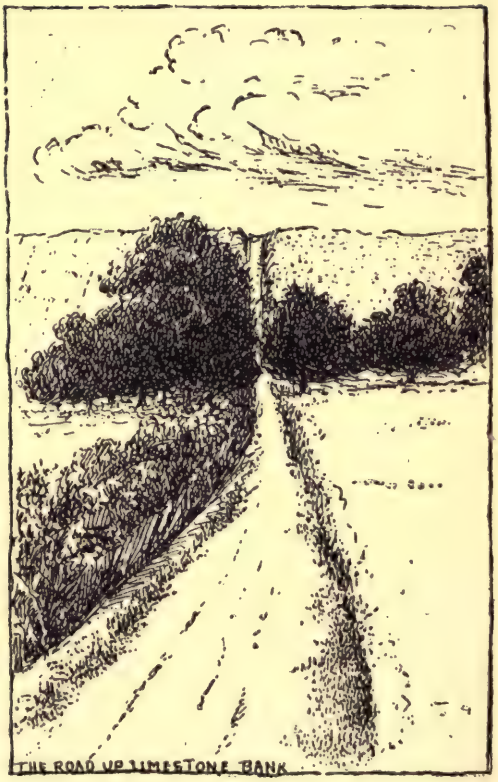
THE WALL NEAR BLACK CARTS FARM.

those many centuries ago. We climbed on to the top, and, looking over, saw that on the other side the fosse is well marked, and glancing backward one could trace the double line for a long distance.

At last the Wall seemed to merge into an ordinary stone dyke, and we returned to the road, which we reached by climbing over a very inconvenient stone barrier. We were now on the summit of

the Limestone Bank, and a most beautiful panorama spread out round us. We stood as it were uplifted above a high land of sweeping curves. Far to the north, purple against a sky of gloom, stood out rugged heights, which another day we were to traverse; to the right and left the subtle lines of the great moors fled towards the blue of the Cheviots far away. Never, even among the mountains of Switzerland, had one felt a keener sense of elevation, of being on the Roof of the World. The sun, hidden behind a mass of cloud shaped like the outspread wings of some enormous bird, poured down rays of silvery light and misty softness over the western hills, and the wind blew hard as if it designed to sweep us bodily away. And all this the Roman soldiers saw as they kept watch and ward on their Wall.

But we had not yet quite done with our explorations. Here the road runs straight as an arrow up and down the hills. It lies manifestly on the old Roman military way which General Wade seems to have adopted when the Great Wall itself was not so convenient, and it is accompanied on its southern side by the Vallum and its fosse. This appears to have been an important point in the defence, for the fosse—and this to the south of the Wall—has been deeply cut through the solid basalt, and the great blocks of stone which the Cohorts hauled out lay



THE ROAD UP LIMESTONE BANK

still by the brink of the chasm. It is supposed that the Vallum was further defended by a strong stockade, so there was protection on both north and south for the marching Legions and garrison troops.

But now it grew late and very cold, and we turned our steps homewards, discussing the point as to whether we should be too outrageously late to ask for tea, and arrived in due time, two very tired but contented pilgrims, at the hospitable door of the *George Inn*. And we were not too late for tea!

CHAPTER II

Borcovicus

THE next two Stations on the Wall mentioned in the *Notitia Dignitatum* (which is a sort of Roman Army List) are Procolitia and Borcovicus. These have been identified with Carrawburgh and Housesteads, two lonely farms near the North Road, but several miles away from anywhere else. The best way to reach them seemed to be by driving from Chollerford, and as our fellow pilgrims wished also to see them, we decided to order a conveyance and all go together, with our luncheon in a basket. The *George* treated us with its usual liberality, and instead of the common or garden waggonette we expected, we found waiting for us a very comfortable landau with a capital pair of horses, smart in silver-plated harness, and with a coachman in livery.

The way led along the same road we had traversed on Sunday, and we were able to point out our discoveries to our companions as we bowled along. At the summit of Limestone Bank we got out of

the carriage and examined the Fosse and its masses of basalt : then we went on again over the lonely open country till we came near the rugged hills we had seen on Sunday. The day was cloudy, there was not much wind, but certain atmospheric appearances in the west roused anxiety in the

VALLUM. FOSSE AND BOULDERS. LIMESTONE BANK

breasts of our companions. It would begin to rain, said one, at noon, and if it did not then, two o'clock was a fatal hour, and four was rather worse! Our coachman, who appeared to take a depressing view of life, remarked somewhat cynically that in these parts it wasn't particular as to time, but would perversely rain at any hour! He, however, quite agreed that it was going to be horribly wet, and would begin very shortly. The only optimists were our two selves, and we stoutly affirmed that

it would be fine. In the end we were nearly right; there was only one short shower.

The geological formation of the country here is very curious and striking. The land heaves huge rounded shoulders to the skies, and then falls abruptly to rushy valleys, to rise again beyond. These cliffs look as if they ought to be on a sea-shore. It seems as if an earth-sea of fluid matter, roused by some elemental storm into gigantic waves, had suddenly heard a mighty voice which—

> Commanded, and the silence came,
> "Here let the billows stiffen and have rest!"

If a section could be taken of these heights it would somewhat resemble the accompanying diagram.

Along the highest summit run the ruins of the Great Wall (as at 2). It was evidently the Roman intention to dominate the land completely, so that from the loftiest point the Sentries might survey the prospect o'er, and descry afar off the gathering of the hostile tribes.

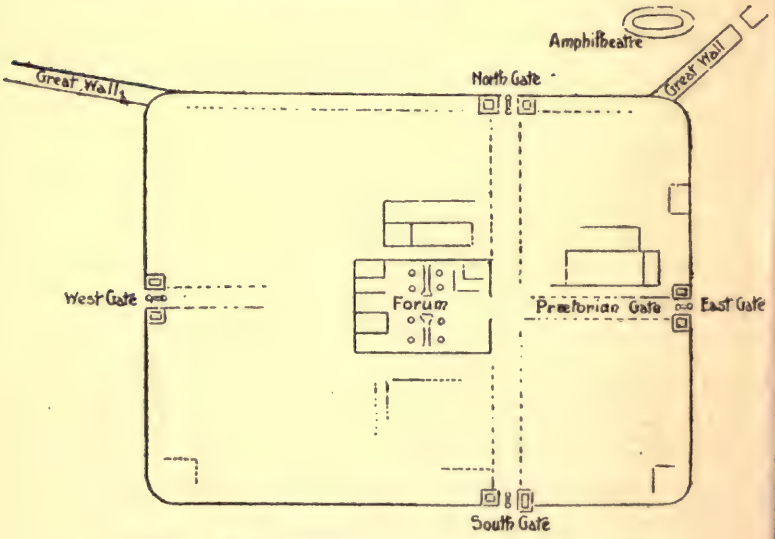
We did not pause at Procolitia (or Carrawburgh) which lay to our left hand, deciding to visit it on our

return. The farm of Sewing Shields we saw on our right, under its little plantation of trees. Murray's guide informed us that the name Sewing Shields means "cottages by the fosse," from "seugh" fosse, and "Shiels" huts, which destroyed some nebulous romantic ideas about Knights of the Round Table, which the name and the legends of King Arthur connected with the place had conjured up.

After about three more miles of our lonely road, our coachman drew up at a farm gate and said we had arrived. Yes, that farm-house was Housesteads and there was the Station, those few lines of grey ruin on the hillside.

The Station of Borcovicus must have been one of the most important on the line, and it occupies the highest situation. It lies on the southern slope of a ridge of hills, and the Great Wall forms its northern boundary. Between it and the present road is a deep depression, and another low ridge of hills. At one point the remains of a Temple have been discovered, and the spot still bears the name of Chapel Hill. The farm track winds down between this and another small eminence, where was unearthed a semi-subterranean cave or Temple of Mithras. A sculpture of the god rising out of an egg, was found here, and several altars. On the declivity below the Station are the curious

furrows or lines which are said to show that the terrace cultivation, so common in Italy, had been carried on here. Up this slope we toiled with our luncheon basket, which we hid by the well, while we went on to examine the Camp. It was excavated



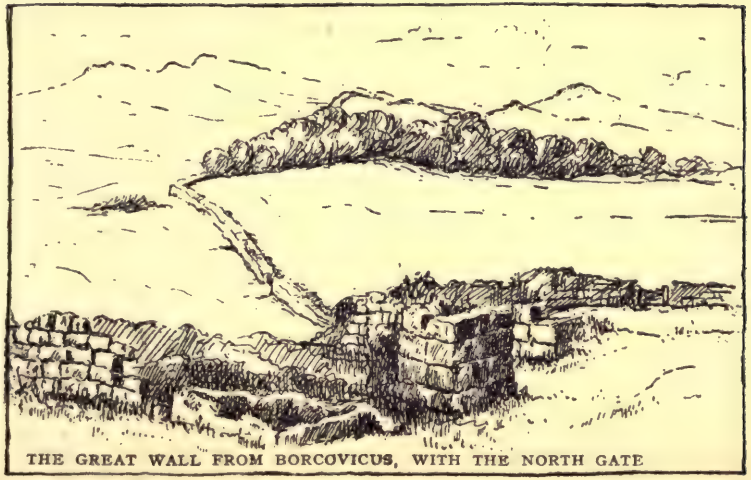
PLAN of BORCOVICUS.

by the late Mr. Clayton, but visitors did so much damage that he had it covered in again. Though now again partly excavated, it is not in the same condition as Chesters, but having seen that Station, it was easy to grasp the main features of this one, of which the accompanying rough plan taken on the spot will give some idea. Its lofty situation, and

its position relative to the Great Wall, makes it extremely interesting. Standing on the north gate you look across a deep grassy valley to ridge after ridge of grey rolling hills. On your right hand you see the Wall descending the adjoining height, crossing the marshy land where the Knag Burn flows under it, and mounting to strike the north-eastern corner of the Station at a bold angle. To the west, the Wall runs off at a much slighter angle, and climbs the further ridge.

From the north gate the land falls so steeply it is difficult to think of wheeled vehicles entering there, unless there has been considerable change of level; but on the threshold of the eastern gate there are to be seen clearly marked the ruts made by the cart and chariot wheels of old.

There are four gates, those to the north and south being opposite one another, at about a third of the distance between the east and west walls, so that the roads which led into the Camp crossed near the entrance to the central Forum. This, as usual, was walled round, and within were two open courts, the roofs of whose arcades were supported on pillars. Their bases are still *in situ*. The two open courts were divided by a wall and portico, and the small chambers for Government business are at the west. Remains of other buildings occupy much of the area of the Camp; there is a solid



THE GREAT WALL FROM BORCOVICUS, WITH THE NORTH GATE

platform of masonry near the east gate, which may have been used to carry a catapult or balista. Other buildings seem to have been altered and adapted to other uses, shortly after the Romans left Britain. Down below the Station to the north and near where the Knag Burn runs under the Wall, is a circular depression in a turfy knoll, and this is thought to be the site of an Amphitheatre, where the Cohort of the Tungrians, who garrisoned Borcovicus, refreshed themselves by witnessing gladiatorial combats between, perhaps, some captive Picts and Scots. The Roman officers exiled to this bleak and barbarous land must have been doubtless very dull. There has been a gateway in the Wall close by which would give access to the place.

Outside the Station to the south are the remains of suburban houses, where probably the wives and children of the garrison lived and any civilians who were attached to the Station.

Though Borcovicus is not nearly so thoroughly excavated as Chesters, it is perhaps more inspiring. The very order and tidiness of Chesters, the proximity of the modern Mansion and its well-cared for grounds, the coming and going of tourists, detract from its visionary force. But here in this lonely place, with no sound but the mournful cry of the plover, the plaintive bleating of sheep, and the sigh of the wind through the long bents of the

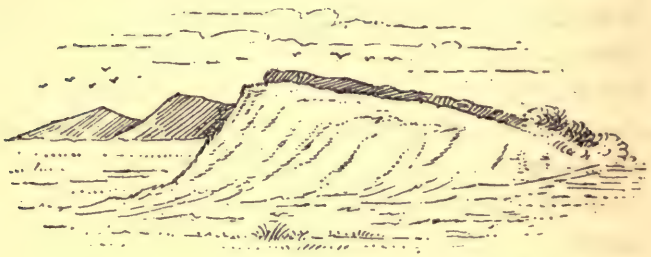
rough grass, it is easier to sit and dream; to send one's spirit into the past and conjure up the scene. Slowly and dimly the grey, ruined walls rise and are capped with battlements: the great Camp stands four square to the wintry wind: the lofty Wall strides up the hill, marked off by its massive castelli and watch-turrets. There runs the military road, where detachments of troops march up, and the chariot of the officer, or the wealthy Briton, bowls smoothly along, while the rough market cart, bringing oil and wine and flour, comes creaking in at the guarded gate. Beyond lie the suburban houses, and farther still the pillars of a Temple catch the morning light, and there too is the entrance to the cave where mysterious rites are going on. Children cry, women chatter and scream, men laugh and shout over there where human blood flows freely in the arena. There is a clatter of arms, the harsh shout of military orders, the clamour of strange rough tongues!

Then somebody comes and remarks that the party are beginning lunch in the guard-room, and you wake with a start and go and partake of sandwiches and hard boiled eggs, and around one are only the grey fragments of ruin, and the lonely hills, and the grey sky overhead with the circling, wailing birds.

In returning, we two optimists had made up

our minds to walk along the Wall as far as the farmhouse of Sewing Shields, for the road goes south of both Wall and Vallum, and we particularly wanted to track the Great Barrier along its most perfect and continuous part. Our friends desired to do the same, but the aspect of the weather gave them pause: it was going to rain, and certainly the strange contortions of twisted cloud, and the faint glimmer of a ghostly sun seen through a veil of misty vapour, supported their view. But we meant to go, rain or no rain, and they very kindly agreed to wait for us at the gate leading from the road to the farm at Sewing Shields. So with an *au revoir* we parted below the Knag Burn, and started on our walk. Crossing the lower ground we came to an envious wall or dyke, which seemed to baulk all our hopes, but at last we managed to scramble over, and landed on a rather marshy bit of ground on the other side. Through this we splashed, and the Wall presenting the appearance roughly delineated in the accompanying outline (see next page), we climbed the grassy cliff, and continued our way between its shelter and the steep descent where the ground falls either in precipitous green slope, or broken fantastic crags to a marshy, rush-grown valley where a few sheep feed, and then rises again in the long swelling waves before described. Wider and wider grew our outlook over

these grey fells; one after the other, four little lakes came into sight, one especially prominent, for we seemed to circle round it, but except for a distant farmhouse there was no sign of human



habitation, only the ridges of grey hills, with grey clouds scudding swiftly overhead, and bringing the rain, of which our friends had been so certain. Overhead, too, gulls circled with their plaintive wail or cynic laugh, and a few frightened sheep stood staring, or scuttled away before us. But on our right hand was the Wall, broken, grey and ruinous, but eloquent of the centuries past.

At the summit of the highest ridge the Wall disappeared, or rather was transformed into an ordinary dyke, while another at right angles barred our narrow path on the cliff side. Here we ought to have seen the two hills where King Arthur and Guinevere once exchanged some little conjugal pleasantries. Queen Guinevere, it is said, sat one

morning on a hillock combing her golden hair, King Arthur was on another near by. Something the Lady said irritated the Gentleman, and he picked up a boulder weighing a ton or two, and threw it at her head. But the Queen was prepared—perhaps she was accustomed to his little pleasantries—and cleverly caught the boulder on her comb, and there it lies in the valley beneath, with the marks of the comb on it, to attest the truth of the story. But we could not decide out of a variety of small hills which were the two wanted, and as the rain had really begun, we did not go and search for the comb marks. It is a little startling at first to those who are accustomed to connect King Arthur with Cornwall and South Wales and the Meads of Winchester to find him disporting himself in this unchivalrous fashion up here, for there are other legends about him duly detailed in the guide books.

At the summit of the hill, therefore, we had to climb the dyke, and continued our way along what was manifestly the foundation of the Wall, and where a growth of lilac scabious and golden ragwort made a little welcome colour among the sombre greys and greens. Our view extended now to the south as well as to the north; we could see where the road ran below the long sloping shoulder of the ridge, and we gazed along its ribbon-like stripe

to see if our friends were coming, but there was as yet no sign of them. We plodded along as quickly as we could, for the long foretold rain was sprinkling us now, and also we were anxious not to keep our friends waiting, in case they might be on beyond where we could not yet see them. We hurried through the plantation sheltering the farm of Sewing Shields. This we had to traverse till we reached the farmyard and so into the farm track. Not a living thing did we see but a few cocks and hens, and two or three young black cattle sheltering under the walls. But now we heard the sound of wheels: we saw the carriage draw up below us, and very soon we were in it, not having kept our friends waiting more than five minutes.

CHAPTER III

The Goddess Coventina

THAT shower was a transient thing, and by the time we had reached Procolitia (or Carrawburgh) it was over, and we were able to descend and visit the Shrine of the Goddess Coventina.

Poor Goddess Coventina! Her lot seems somewhat hard, for though the great Gods fled when Pan died, yet their memory has never failed: their names are still with us embedded in our every-day language. Their Temples are still visited, even their power is invoked, for do not modern schoolboys still swear by Jove. Are we not still martial, and do not Apollo's lyre and Neptune's trident remain familiar things?

But the Goddess Coventina, who once had her shrine and her votaries, whose power was invoked, whose image, floating on lily leaves, was sculptured, to whom prayer was addressed and thankofferings presented, has been forgotten for some fifteen hundred years, and only curious men digging among ruins have brought her memory to light. Poor

Goddess Coventina. There she is pictured on her grey stone, but men only stare wonderingly at her,

THE GODDESS COVENTINA

in utter ignorance of her attributes, or of her rank in the Court of Olympia!

Dea Coventina had once a sacred Well where rose a pure and copious spring. Over this stood

her shrine, a Chapel or perhaps a Temple. Even the spring is gone now, drained away by some lead miners, but these same miners were the cause of her resurrection, for digging about in the hope of discovering new lodes of metal, they came upon courses of old stones, and so set the excavators on the trail. In 1876 Mr. Clayton decided to begin, believing that these foundations must have to do with a well which had been mentioned by Mr. John Horsley in his *Britannia Romana* published in 1732. Setting his men to work, discoveries soon rewarded Mr. Clayton's efforts. A structure of solid masonry, measuring 8 ft. 6 in. by 7 ft. 9 in. was found, and to quote his own words in a paper contributed to the *Archaeologica Aeliana* :—

" Within a foot of the surface the excavator in digging down came upon a mass of copper coins, many of them of the debased metal of the lower Empire, and a human skull, the concave part upwards filled with coins. He then began to meet with altars and fragments of bowls of Samian ware, and glass and bones of animals, and at a depth of about three feet found two elaborate vases of earthenware, both bearing inscriptions, and also a sculptured stone representing three Naiads or water-nymphs. He had then come upon copper coins of superior metal of the higher Empire, and he met with the head of a statue—and with other

vases, with brooches, rings, dice, and other objects. Going lower still, he continued to find altars, and nearly at the bottom he met with a massive votive tablet, dedicated to the goddess Coventina by Titus Domitius Cosconianus, a Roman military prefect in command of the first Cohort of Batavian Auxiliaries. The lettering of this tablet is of the best character, and Professor Hübner pronounces it to be of the date of Antoninus Pius A.D. 140. This tablet is inscribed to a goddess, the Goddess Coventina, whose name is unrecorded in the roll of Roman divinities. On it the goddess is represented as floating on the leaf of a gigantic water-lily, and waving in her right hand a branch of palm or of some other tree. On one of the altars she is called Dea Nympha, and therefore it is clear that this goddess was a water deity, which is confirmed by a representation of her three attendants on the sculpture of the three Naiads, each of them raising in one hand a goblet, and in the other holding a flagon, from which is poured a stream of water, and by the existence of a well or reservoir for water within the walls of her temple. She was probably a local deity to whose name a Roman termination has been given!"

The site of that well is now enclosed by a rough wooden railing, within which one perceives some remains of stone walls choked by a matted growth

of rushes, grass, and wild plants. A tiny rill soaks down the slope and lies in small pools here and there among the reeds. The well is outside the Station, some little way from its western gate. The outline of the Camp itself is dimly traceable, marked by low heaps and mounds in the grassy field. The great Wall which formed its northern boundary is replaced by General Wade's road.

Standing there looking at the desolate scene while the grey clouds raced overhead and the wind whistled across the dark Fells, one tried to picture what was the last scene in this tragedy of the Roman Wall! Was it a sudden inroad of those terrible Picts and Scots, those Caledonians who were so fierce and warlike? Did they come pouring over the hills there, and did the weakened garrison seek safety in flight? But however it was, the votaries of the Goddess meant to come back, and meanwhile they trusted their treasures to her care. In what hot hurry, with what beating hearts, perhaps by the faint misty moonlight, did they fling all into her well! Tablets, altars, sculptures, votive offerings, even the contents of the treasure chest, all went splashing in, with probably fervent prayers to her to guard them till they came back. They never came back, poor things, but through all the silent centuries Coventina fulfilled her trust. For fifteen hundred years at least that treasure has lain

hidden. Caledonian, Moss Trooper, Scotch Borderers, Cattle thieves, Marauders, Highland Rebel and English soldier have wandered and marched across those uplands, drank of the well, perchance, and sheltered them in the ruins, but never found the treasure. Yes, even the farmers who have used Procolitia as a quarry and laid its walls level with the ground, never dreamt of those thousands of coins so close below their feet! Well done, poor Goddess Coventina, you have been faithful to your trust!

It is curious to think how persistent are human traits! The Goddess Coventina's Shrine was decked with *ex votos* as those of Madonna Mary are now. Men have been often reproached with ingratitude, but is it not an unfair accusation? When Wordsworth wrote—

> I've heard of hearts unkind, kind deeds
> With coldness still returning;
> Alas! the gratitude of men
> Has oftener left me mourning.

Was he not right? Do not the tears come very near the eyes on looking round on the *ex votos* in some little, rough, chapel-shrine among the high snow mountains? Are not those little waxen legs and arms and quaint little pictures eloquent of—ah! so much human suffering—of such fervent prayer and simple faith, and last though not least,

of simple gratitude? As it is now, so it was then, before ever the Hebrew Maiden took that journey to Bethlehem. Men and women fled for comfort and help to the Unseen Presences, and believed their prayers were heard and showed their grateful hearts as best they could. In the Museum at Chesters there is a bronze hand found here—a beautiful work. Some one had had a suffering hand—was it Titus Domitius Cosconianus perhaps? —and had prayed, and was healed, and there his gratitude is visible to this day, though name and Goddess and Shrine and Well have perished. One lingers long gazing at that hand: it is embalmed thankfulness! Does she come sometimes, the Goddess Coventina, on the misty autumn nights and sit, a dim white figure, by her ruined shrine? The Blessed Maid of Nazareth has displaced you, oh! Venerable Spirit, but yet—yet where prayer and gratitude have been poured out it is still Holy Ground!

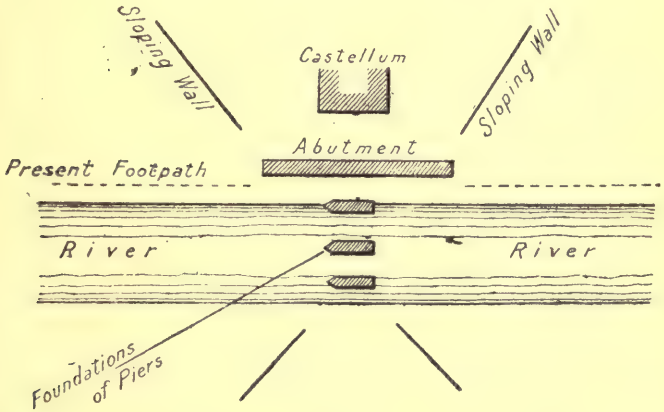
CHAPTER IV

The Roman Bridge

ONE of the distinctive interests of Chesters is the Roman Bridge. It crossed the North Tyne just below the Camp, and must have been an important point in the line of defence. The remains on the western side of the river are scarcely visible, for there the current has encroached, carrying away the bank, while it has left the abutment on the other side stranded above the water. To this last part, therefore, we turned our steps, following a narrow pathway which starts just below the present bridge and winds under trees by the riverside, among an undergrowth of splendid dock leaves, tall, blossoming campanula, lychnis, and stately cow-parsnip.

The abutment of the Roman Bridge is securely railed in and protected by barbed wire, thanks to the idiotic British Public which is always cutting its own throat by the mischief it does, forcing the owners of interesting sites to close them to prevent their destruction. But peering through and over those railings one gained a good idea of the arrange-

ment of the foundations. Two walls converge towards the water enclosing the ruins of a Castellum which defended the entrance to the Bridge, while a passage has apparently run between it and the long, stone abutment facing the river. The remains of the stone piers which supported the actual bridge



are visible when the river is low, but to-day it had "come down," and was racing by swiftly, its chocolate-brown tide breaking into creamy foam over the weir, or wherever it met any stone or other impediment.

As far as one can see—through the railings—the above is a plan of the arrangement of the bridge as it abutted on the river. The foundations of the piers have been put in from the guide-book; as has been said above, they were not visible on the day

of our visit. Antiquarians tell us that the remains of two bridges have been found, perhaps the first was swept away in one of those floods which have destroyed so many later ones. Mediæval and modern builders have chosen another site for their erections higher up the river. There was a ford there, and possibly experience suggested that it was a safer spot than that which the Romans selected, but these latter must have been limited in their choice by the position of the Camp and Great Wall.

After this inspection, the afternoon being fine, though very windy, we started off up the Newcastle road to visit St. Oswald's. It was a long, steep ascent for two or three miles. On our way we diverged to see a portion of the Wall in the grounds of Brunton House, which part, however, is not very accessible now on account of the decay of the wooden steps leading to it. But it is a privilege to be admitted to the pretty garden and the little glen with its trees and ferns and tiny stream above which the Wall rises. Another portion of the Wall is left standing in a field—Plane Trees Field—farther on the road.

We were not sorry when we reached the few cottages on the summit of the windy hill which constitutes St. Oswald's. The little Church, which if not entirely new, has been restored out of all appearance of age, lies to the left hand, on the spot

where St. Oswald set up the Cross at the battle of Hefenfield—or the Heavenly Field.

It is wonderfully interesting to come across this Saxon King and his Cross here among the relics of that ancient, pagan, Roman power. Standing looking down on these open and somewhat dreary fields, it required some effort to call up the circumstances, and picture the scene which had been enacted here—that fell and bloody struggle between the Christian and Pagan forces on which so much depended. Oswald had succeeded to an uneasy crown when the Northumbrian power had fallen all to pieces after the defeat and death of the great King Edwine, he who had ruled from the Firth of Forth (where the guarding city bore his name of Edwine's Burgh) as far south as Chester, while he was owned as overlord by all the English Kingdoms save Kent. Kent, however, played a considerable part in his life, for it sent him a wife—a Christian wife—and one Paulinus as her chaplain! So Edwine and his people became Christians after the fashion of those days.

But when Ethelbert of Kent died the old faith sprang up again. Penda, King of Mercia, roused up the old Pagan spirit, and joining with Cadwallon, the Welsh King, fought a great battle, in which Edwine was defeated and slain. Then evil days fell upon Northumbria, and a chaos of fierce

fightings and cruelties and horrors of all sorts. The Welshmen penetrated into the north, and Bernicia, the northernmost of the two kingdoms into which Northumbria had been divided, was the scene of Cadwallon's misrule for a year. Oswald, however, the younger brother of Eanfrid who had been done to death by treachery, managed to get together a small army and faced the fierce Welshmen on this slope of the wide Northumbrian hills. Bede tells the story of the battle thus :—

" The place is shown to this day and held in much veneration where Oswald, being about to engage, erected the sign of the Holy Cross and on his knees prayed to God that He would assist His worshippers in their great distress. It is further reported that the Cross being made in haste, and the hole dug in which it was to be fixed, the King himself, full of faith, laid hold of it, and held it in both his hands till it was set fast by throwing in the earth : and this done, raising his voice, he cried to his army, ' Let us all kneel and jointly beseech the true and living God Almighty, in His mercy, to defend us from the haughty and fierce enemy, for He knows that we have undertaken a just war for the safety of our nation.' All did as he commanded, and, accordingly advancing towards the enemy with the first dawn of the day, they obtained the victory as their faith deserved. In that place of prayer

very many miraculous cures are known to have been performed as a token and memorial of the king's faith; for even to this day many are wont to cut off small chips from the wood of the Holy Cross, which, being put into water, men or cattle drinking thereof, or being sprinkled with that water, are immediately restored to health.

"The place in the English tongue is called Heavenfield, or the Heavenly Field, which name it formerly received as a presage of what was afterwards to happen, denoting that there the heavenly trophy would be erected, the heavenly victory begun, and heavenly miracles wrought to this day.

"The same place is near the Wall with which the Romans formerly enclosed the islands from sea to sea to restrain the fury of the barbarous nations, as has been said before. Hither also the brothers of the Church of Hagulstad (Hexham), which is not far from thence, repair yearly on the day before that on which King Oswald was afterwards slain, to watch there for the health of his soul, and having sung many Psalms, to offer for him the holy oblation. And since that good custom has spread, they have lately built and consecrated a church there, which has attached additional sanctity and honour to that place, and this with good reason, for it appears that there was no sign of the Christian faith, no church, no altar erected throughout all the nation

of the Bernicians before that new commander of the army, prompted by the devotion of his faith, set up the Cross as he was going to give battle to his barbarous enemies."

It is interesting to remember that this Cross must have lasted nearly a hundred years, if some of it should remain to be shredded and chipped in Bede's days. It suggests, too, how fragments of this miraculous wood may have been preserved in reliquaries and later on confused, without any conscious hypocrisy, with relics of another and greater Cross. We are also bound to recollect, as Mr. Green in his *History of the English People* reminds us, "It was not the Church of Paulinus which nerved Oswald in this struggle for the Cross; Oswald in youth had found refuge within the walls of Iona, and on his accession to the throne he called for missionaries among its monks." He and his father and brothers had been exiles during Edwine's reign, and he had grateful memories of the lonely monastery on its western island. It was while he reigned that Chad went to convert Mercia, and Boisil to Melrose, and Aidan to Northumbria and Yorkshire.

The Roman Wall crossed the battlefield of Hefenfield, for the Church certainly marks the spot where Oswald set his Cross. Only one or two stones of its foundations are visible, but the thought occurs, Did Oswald use its altitude to give greater advan-

tage to his Sign? Planted there, the struggling host could look up and gain fresh inspiration to continue the sore combat. Perhaps some monk or priest may have knelt there praying over the scene beneath where men slashed and hewed, and shouted, and called on Christ or on Woden, and the blood ran down in streams, staining the heather and moss to a more terrible crimson in the early morning sunlight.

There is more than King Oswald's Church to be seen at this place. There is a " written stone," and, doubting our ability to find it by ourselves, we applied at a cottage for a guide, and were promptly furnished with such in the person of an intelligent boy, the nephew of the very agreeable person who answered our appeal. This lad lived at Gateshead, he told us, but was spending his holidays with his uncle. He went to the Shipcroft School, a large establishment, for there are seven classes and ninety boys in each class. Twelve masters manage the lot, which does not sound as if it were overstaffed. Our guide also told us that he was going to be a draughtsman, " As I take a great interest in drawing ! " Oh ! to reproduce his accent ! We were also accompanied by a little lad of six, named Robbie Scot, and a pretty girl of eight whose name we did not elicit.

Our little friends led us along a rough cart-road

which went slantingly up the hill, a fir plantation on the left hand. At the summit of the slope they opened a gate and we were out on the open Fell. A cry of surprise and delight broke from us, for we stood on a great open sweep of heathery mountain-side, with the most lovely and extensive view spread out before us. The hillside sloped steeply down, and there below we could see the towers of Hexham, and beyond lay range after range of hills veiled in silvery diaphanous mist. The only drawback was the raging wind, but then there always seems a gale blowing among these wonderful Northumbrian hills.

We crossed the heathery waste ; it was only just thinking about bursting into blossom, though it was mid August ; and came first on a levelled expanse of rock which our guide told us was the site of a Roman camp. It was a fine position, for it was sheltered by the rise of the fell from the north, while it surveyed a vast tract of country. The line of a Roman road leading to Hexham was quite discernable by the different tint of the turf. Below this was the " written stone," which certainly our own unaided efforts would not have discovered, especially as the Latin inscription is almost obliterated by the initials which modern idiots have scrawled over it. It recorded that one Flavius had charge of the quarry here. There below us lay the quarry looking very like an amphitheatre ! But now it

was growing late, and we were forced to consider how many steps lay between us and Chollerford. Rather reluctantly we retraced our steps to the village and said good-bye to our young friends. We tried to find some hospitable person who would give us tea, but the only lady who furnished travellers with that refreshment was out working in the fields, so we had to trudge home without that stimulant. Nevertheless, we were very content, for the spiritual woman was greatly uplifted, and at the *George Inn* the other side of our mystic nature was well attended too.

CHAPTER V

The Builders of the Wall

THE next morning was pouring wet. The rain came down with an air of firm decision that quite put a stop to any plans for out-of-doors transactions. The river went by with a steady rush, and the weir lifted up its voice, and sang an accompaniment to the moaning wind. The only distraction was afforded by the arrival of a number of directors of some company, who were going to hold a meeting somewhere. They arrived in dripping landaus and waggonettes, and then all drove off again in a melancholy procession. It was a water-company somebody said, so the weather was not inappropriate!

Such being the state of affairs outside we turned our attention to indoor amusements, and there was a great writing of letters and diaries. One of us even perpetrated a poem which has been placed as a foreword to this little dissertation. But the rain lasted longer than the diaries or even the poem, and then we turned our attention to the Wall and

discussed it and its Builder! Who was he? Who were they? Was it Agricola, or Hadrian, or Severus, or some still later Emperor? And did the person who built the Wall construct the Vallum also, and if not, which came first, and who joined and knit the whole together?

The history of Roman Britain is usually rather lightly touched on by the Instructors of Youth, and for most of us an artistic vagueness shrouds the subject. There is a good deal of atmosphere, like some impressionist paintings, and not much else. But once the mind is fairly turned on to it, the story becomes fascinating. The brain grows somewhat obsessed with the great names which rise out of the dim past, and they become more than names: they are persons, human creatures, with like passions to ourselves. There is a stirring among the dry bones, and they come together and stand upon their feet, and then one cries to the Wind of the Spirit of Imagination to breathe life into them. Great forms rise solemnly around us. Julius Cæsar, and Hadrian, and Severus on the one side; Cassivelaunus, and Caractacus, and Boadicea on the other! The Romans found the conquest of Britain no easy task, for the more one reads, the more wonderful, the more heroic grows the resistance that these islanders offered to the trained Legions of Rome. Yet the conquest was very

complete at last. From Dover to Bath ; from the Isle of Wight, and Winchester, to London, and Lincoln, and Chester, and York, the conquerors built fort, and camp, and town, and villa, and made roads through the length and breadth of the land. Everywhere the plough still turns up the relics of a great civilization.

The conquest took the form of invading waves. Just as at flood-tide each succeeding billow sweeps over a larger area of the shore, so did each succeeding invader penetrate deeper, and overrun wider portions of the land. First came the raid of Julius Cæsar : he seems to have reached as far as where London stands now. But he was opposed by one Cassivelaunus, who must have been a person of courage and intellect, for he conceived the idea of cutting off Cæsar from his ships. It is interesting to note how each great invading Captain was met by a great resisting adversary. History is made by Two ! So our first pair face each other. Julius Cæsar, whose features are so well known, and Cassivelaunus, of whom we have no portrait, and who remains a veiled, yet noble, figure.

Julius Cæsar so far succeeded in his campaigns that he was able to impose a tribute, and then for a time there was peace. Augustus and Tiberius apparently were content with the money. If it was paid, which Mommsen seems to doubt, it reveals

the fact that there was communication between Britain and Rome. That blessed person, the Tax Collector, thus early knocked at our doors if he did not always get the cash ! Caligula is said to have wished to pay us a visit : he reached the Channel, but then the enemy which assailed his disordered brain was that great enemy, the sea. It is said that he made his Legions charge the hoarse and beating waves, and gather cockle-shells as tribute from the God with the Trident. This is said to have caused the whole Roman World to laugh, and yet there is something strangely moving in the incident. The Romans were great even in their madness, and Caligula was surely their most splendid lunatic !

The Emperor Claudius was not a great man, but it was he who sent the next army to Britain under Aulus Plautius and Vespasian ; after seven years of warfare they subdued the country south of the Thames. A very great adversary rises to pair with Aulus, even one Caractacus, of whom we have all heard. There was Trocodumus, his brother, also, but his fame is pale and misty compared with Caractacus. Very likely he was as worthy, but he was killed, and was not taken to Rome to stand in silent dignity before Cæsar. If the Claudian Arch which crossed what is now the Corso had not been destroyed, we might have had the portrait of Car-

actacus, for on it were sculptured the wars with the British King. A little interesting fact about Aulus Plautius comes to us from Lanciani's book, *Pagan and Christian Rome.* "Tacitus," says that writer, "tells how Pomponia Graecina, wife of Plautius, the conqeror of Britain, was accused of 'foreign superstition,' she was tried by her husband and acquitted. These words long since gave rise to a conjecture that Pomponia was a Christian, and recent discoveries put it beyond doubt. An inscription bearing the name of **ΠΟΜΠΟΝΙΟΣ ΓΡΗΚΕΙΝΟΣ**, has been found in the Cemetery of Callixtus, together with other records of the Pomponii Attici and Bassi. Some scholars think that this Graecina is no other than Lucina, the Christian matron, who interred her brethren in Christ in her own property at the second milestone on the Appian Way."

One cannot help wondering if Pomponia took an interest in missionary matters and tried to send the Gospel to the Britons whom her husband was conquering!

So the tide of conquest sweeps on. Emperor Claudius came to have a look round, but he did not stay long. Perhaps it was a wet summer, or perhaps he heard that Empress Messalina wanted as much looking after as Britain itself. The war goes on and at last Caractacus is entirely defeated, and

then betrayed by his stepmother, Cartismunda, and for a time things are quieter.

But only for a time: again there is unrest and disaffection, and Suetonius is sent to see what he can do with these turbulent islanders. His idea is that their religion is at the root of the trouble. Put an end to those Druids, those mysterious, not to say mischief-making priests, and get the Britons to worship decent, civilised gods such as Jove and Juno and Mars and Venus and all will be right! So he heads for Mona, the Isle of Anglesea, the headquarters of the Druid superstition. There is verily nothing new under the sun. As it was then so it is now; other people's religion is always superstition, while ours is the perfect and rounded truth. Therefore the poor priests were all massacred. Dear, mysterious Druids, with their white robes, and their mystic lore, and their golden knives and their oaks and mistletoe and wickerwork cages for their victims! How appealing and attractive they were to the childish heart!

But now a very tragic figure rises. Goaded to fury by the insolence, the brutality and oppression of the Roman rulers, the Britons rise in revolt under the leadership of a woman, Boadicea, Queen of the Iceni! Something of the agony and wrath and despair that filled that woman's heart quivers and thrills across the centuries, and seem to tinge

the very words that tell of it with red. Even now when reading of her wrongs, though she has been at peace these seventeen hundred years, something swells in the throat and steals along the nerves. It was indeed an agony which could only be appeased with fire and blood, if it could be appeased at all. If blood could wash out the anguish she had enough of it, for it is said that seventy thousand Roman colonists were massacred in a few days. One thing that even now one keenly regrets is that Catus, the Roman Procurator, who caused Boadicea to be scourged, and filled the mother's heart with a burning thirst for revenge, escaped in safety to Gaul. That one is sincerely sorry for!

Poor, poor Boadicea! But she has gained fame at the expense of happiness. Could she have had the two put before her for choice which would she have chosen? Her terrible story has been immortalised by artist and poet; perhaps Tennyson's rolling lines have voiced her anguish and passion best.

While about the shore of Mona those Neronian legionaries,
Burnt and broke the grove and altar of the Druid and Druidess,
Far in the east Boadicea, standing loftily charioted,
Mad and maddening all that heard her in her fierce volubility,
Girt by half the tribes of Britain near the colony Camulodune
Yell'd and shrieked between her daughters o'er a wild confederacy,

They that scorn the tribes and call us Britain's barbarous populaces,
Did they hear me, would they listen, did they pity me supplicating ?
Shall I heed them in their anguish ? shall I brook to be supplicated ?
Hear Icenian, Catieuchlan, hear Coritanian, Trinobant !
Must their ever-ravening eagle's beak and talon annihilate us ?
Tear the noble heart of Britain, leave it gorily quivering ?
Bark an answer, Britain's raven ! . . .

* * * * *

Lo ! their colony half defended ! lo ! their colony Camulodune !
There the horde of Roman robbers mock at a barbarous adversary,
There the hive of Roman liars worship an emperor-idiot.
Such is Rome, and this is her deity : hear it, Spirit of Cassivelaun !

* * * * *

Hear Icenian, Catieuchlan, hear Coritanian, Trinobant !
While I roved about the forest, long and bitterly meditating
There I heard them in the darkness, at the mystical ceremony,
Loosely robed in flying raiment, sang the terrible prophetesses,
" Fear not, isle of blowing woodland, isle of silvery parapets !
Tho' the Roman eagle shadow thee, tho' the gathering enemy narrow
Thou shalt wax and he shall dwindle, thou shalt be the mighty one yet ;
Thine the liberty, thine the glory, thine the deeds to be celebrated."

Hear Icenian, Catieuchlan, hear Coritanian, Trinobant !
Me the wife of rich Prasutagus, me the lover of liberty,
Me they seized and me they tortured, me they lash'd and humiliated,
Me the sport of ribald Veterans, mine of ruffian violaters

See they sit, they hide their faces, miserable in ignominy !
Wherefore in me burns an anger, not by blood to be satiated.
Lo, the palaces and the temple, lo ! the colony Camulodune !
There they ruled, and thence they wasted all the flourishing territory.

* * * * *

So the Queen Boadicea, standing loftily charioted,
Brandishing in her hand a dart and rolling glances lioness-like
Yell'd and shrieked between her daughters in her fierce volubility.
Till her people all around the royal chariot agitated,
Madly dashed the darts together, writhing barbarous lineaments,
Made the noise of frosty woodlands, when they shiver in January,
Roar'd as when the roaring breakers boom and blanch on the precipices,
Yell'd as when the winds of winter tear an oak on a promontory.
So the silent colony hearing her tumultuous adversaries
Clash the darts and on the buckler beat with rapid, unanimous hand,
Thought on all her evil tyrannies, all her pitiless avarice,
Till she felt the heart within her fall and flutter tremulously,
Then her pulses at the clamouring of her enemy fainted away.
Out of evil evil flourishes, out of tyranny tyranny buds.
Ran the land with Roman slaughter, multitudinous agonies.
Perish'd many a maid and matron, many a valorous legionary,
Fell the colony, city and citadel, London, Verulam, Camulodune.

But it was a hopeless struggle. Reinforcements came swarming over and the Britons were once more crushed; Boadicea, seeing all was lost, died

by her own hand. Alas, poor soul, what else could she do?

It was in A.D. 78 that perhaps the greatest Roman Captain, except Julius Cæsar himself, who ever came to our shores was sent to Britain. Agricola, the father-in-law of Tacitus the historian, did more than conquer, he tried to rule justly, to check extortion, to assuage discontent and to civilize that part of Britain already reduced beneath Roman rule. But he did not neglect the task of extending the Roman territory, and he pushed on northwards in campaign after campaign, and this renders his career especially interesting to us.

"During the third year of his command," says Tacitus, his son-in-law, who wrote his life, "in pursuit of his conquest he discovered new people by continuing his devastations through the several nations quite to the mouth of the Tay; so the frith is called. When such terror seized the foe that they durst not attack our army, though sorely shaken and annoyed by terrible tempests: nay, the Romans had even time to secure possession by erecting forts. It was observed of Agricola by men of experience, that never had any captain more sagely chosen his stations for commodiousness and situation: for that no place founded by him was ever taken by violence or abandoned upon articles of despair. From these their strongholds frequent

excursions were made ; for against any long siege they were supplied with provisions for a year. Thus they passed the winter there without any apprehension ; every single fort defended itself. So that in all their attempts upon them the enemies were baffled, and thence reduced to utter despair : for that they could not, as formerly they were wont, repair their losses in the summer by their success in the winter, since now whether it were winter or summer they were equally defeated. Neither did Agricola ever arrogate to himself the glory of exploits performed by others : were he Centurion or were he Commander, of a Legion, in the General he was sure to find a sincere witness of his achievements. By some he is said to have been over-sharp in his reproofs, since he was one who, as to them who were good he abounded in courtesy, appeared withal stern and unpleasant to the bad. But from his anger no spleen remained. In him you had no dark reserves, no boding silence to fear. More honourable he thought it to give open offence than to foster secret hate."

It was then almost certainly to this man, this great man, that Cilurnum and Borcovicus and Vindolana and Amboglanna owed their foundation. But he did not build the Wall : that was to come later, but possibly without this line of strong forts that Wall could scarcely have been erected.

In A.D. 85 Agricola was recalled by the Emperor Domitian who, it is said, grew jealous of the great fame his Captain had won in Britain, and a few years later he died poisoned—so the story goes—by this same Domitian. Did they send poisoned peaches about in Rome even then ? For thirty years Britain has no history, so it is supposed there was peace !

But after this time of peace, if peace it were, discontent again appeared, and such unrest that Emperor Hadrian, who now ruled the Roman world, came himself to see what he could do with this turbulent island, for "never," says Tacitus, "have the Romans any further subdued the Britons than only to obey just laws, but never to submit to be slaves ! "

In A.D. 120 Hadrian landed on our shores and travelled as far north as York. Did he not go further ? One feels sure he did ! That nose of his peered over the north wall of Borcovicus, and that togaed arm waved, while those tight pressed lips parted to exclaim in the very best Latin, " Let a wall be built ! " Besides, does not the historian Aelius Spartianus say so, "Hadrian went to Britain and put straight many things that were crooked therein, and he was the first to draw a wall, eighty thousand paces long, to divide the Romans from the Barbarians." That seems so nice and clear and settled, but unfortunately there are other

accounts which do not quite agree with this, and even this tiresome Spartianus contradicts himself later on. At this point one feels great sympathy with the Judge, who having heard the case for the Plaintiff, decided not to listen to the defendant's arguments, as they would only confuse his judgment. Hadrian, says Spartianus, built a wall! Somebody else says that Antoninus Pius, who succeeded Hadrian, also did the same thing through his deputy Lollius Urbicus. This seems superfluous if it had been so lately done!

Then came more wars in the time of Commodus. The Caledonians broke over the wall, but whether our wall or the turf wall that had been erected between the Firths of Forth and Clyde is not clear, and invaded the country to the south. Presently Commodus is murdered, and Severus becomes Emperor, and he, old and ill as he was, came to Britain, and then this same Spartianus states that Severus built a Wall. Several historians agree on this, but which wall he erected, or if Hadrian made the Vallum and Severus the stone wall, or whether the last named merely repaired Hadrian's work is not clear. Of later historians, three—Gildas, Bede, and Nennius—mention the Wall. Bede attributes it to Severus, while the other two seem to imply that the Wall was built much later, when the Romans were withdrawing from Britain.

But any one who has seen and recognized the magnitude of the work will hardly think this possible.

However, to bring this dissertation to a conclusion, the point which is most impressed on any one who has tracked the length of the Wall is that it must have been a long time in building. It was not the work of a year! The Roman Emperors had short reigns, and if one ordered, probably he did not complete. It was done surely by piecework, and the real builders of the Wall were the soldier men! Tungrian and Lingonian, Batavian and Frisian, Asturian and Dalmatian, *they* built the Wall! Instinctively one thinks of the building of another Wall where the workmen are said to have worked holding the tool in one hand and a weapon in the other, doubtless a figurative statement considering the paucity of human hands. But the circumstances were probably very similar. As some brought up the carts of stones, and masons chipped, and mortar was mixed, guards were gazing out over those waste and mist-wrapped hills, and often the bray of the trumpets must have warned the builders to throw down axe and chisel, and snatch up spear and sword. Yes, Emperors may have commanded, and Praetor and Legate looked on, but the Cohorts were the Builders of the Wall! Wherefore let us salute them!

CHAPTER VI

Chollerton Church

IT was on that same wet day that we discovered Chollerton Church. About four o'clock in the afternoon it left off raining. It would not be accurate to say that the weather cleared up, for it did not, the clouds still hung grey and ragged overhead, and the trees shivered and sighed in the wind, but the absolute downpour ceased, and we all rushed out to breathe the air. It was far too wet for the field-path (at least we thought so then, though later we developed a fine disdain for soaked boots), so we decided to explore along the road to Chollerton Church, stimulated by the information that there were Roman monoliths to be seen there.

The road lay on the east side of the river. We crossed the bridge and trudged along with wet green hills above us, and wet green slopes below us, and a chocolate-brown river lowest of all, and after about half an hour's walk we came to our destination. The outside of the Church did not present any special features of interest, but entering the porch we exclaimed simultaneously—

"Oh! there they are!"

Yes! There they were, grey and venerable, supporting the arches which divide the south aisle from the nave. The pillars on the other side are octagonal and probably fourteenth-century work; perhaps the north aisle was added then. It is thought that the Roman columns were brought from Chesters, as fragments of shafts have been found there of the same character and diameter. They may have formed part of some Temple at Cilurnum, or perhaps supported the roof of the arcade in the Forum. But whatever purpose they served, they point to the fact that the Roman inhabitants of these Camps along the line of the fortification were not too busy fighting to neglect the fine arts entirely. The many carved slabs, steles, and remains of friezes which have been disinterred from time to time all testify to a certain culture and love of beauty. The numerous altars dedicated to various divinities infer temples, or at least street shrines. It is true that every pious Roman had an altar in his house, but those were sacred to the gods of the hearth; it is also true that pagan Rome was rich in street shrines. Indeed, it is only of late years that many of those street shrines, where the forms of the Blessed Virgin and of the Saints probably had replaced the figures of the old gods, have disappeared.

It is only reasonable to suppose that the exiles would desire to make their foreign dwelling as much like home as they could. Temples would be expensive, but street altars would give a familiar look to their narrow ways, and so would probably be more numerous, while perhaps one small temple would be all they could manage for each station.

We also have to remember that the men who lived in these Camps were of many races and many faiths; probably only the officers were of Roman or even of Italian birth. The Cohorts came from Spain, and Dalmatia, from Holland, Germany and Gaul. In the *Notitia Dignitatum*, written, it is believed, about the third or fourth century, all the Stations or Camps along the Wall are enumerated, with the Cohort or Ala of troops which garrisoned them individually. Most of the Stations have been identified by the remains of inscriptions which have been dug up within their boundaries, and the names of these regiments show how many foreign races were represented.

The Fourth Cohort of the Lingones was at Segedunum, which is believed to be Wallsend. In 1783 an altar was found there which had been dedicated to Jove by one Aelius Rufus, the prefect of the Fourth Cohort of the Lingines. These Lingones came from that part of Gallia Celtica where the River Seine rises. The soldiers of

Cilurnum were Asturians from the north of Spain, and at Chesters several inscriptions have been found which identify that spot with Cilurnum, notably one commemorating the building of an aqueduct by the second Ala of the Asturians under the command of Ulpius Marcellus, pro-praetor. At Procolitia was the first Cohort of the Batavians, and it was Cosconianus in command of these Batavians who set up that tablet to the Goddess Coventina which has been spoken of before. At Borcovicus were the Tungrians, a German tribe which had migrated to Gaul, and at Amboglanne were the Dacians. At other Stations Thracians and even Moors were represented. At South Shields was found a tombstone erected by Barates, a Palmyrene, to his wife Regina. Fancy a native of Palmyra, of Tadmor in the Wilderness, stranded on these Northumbrian hills. What did he think of our sunshine!

What a babel of tongues there must have been, what a mingling of creeds, and gods and languages and manners and customs! It would probably be the Roman and Italian officers and their families who had time or money for art and religion and the amenities of life. Very probably they had a fine military contempt for all these rough Provincials, and yet it is evident they did not altogether despise local gods, as witness the altars to Cocidius

and Coventina and Mars Thingsus. Perhaps they thought it as well to be on the safe side.

It is, however, suggestive of the strenuousness of life up here that no mosaic pavements such as are common in other parts of Britain have been found. Attention seems to have been more di-

HYPOCAUSTS.

rected to the art of keeping warm, for hypocausts abound, especially in the officers' quarters. In some instances they have been carried up the walls of the rooms. Yet, again, sculpture is not infrequent. In the Museum at Chesters there is the figure of a bearded god which is supposed to represent the River of the North Tyne. Also there is a fine statue of Cybele, the Great Mother; the head is lost, but the drapery and the pose are good. Many of the altars are carved with symbols in relief, and in some cases the lettering of the inscriptions is of a good type.

Perhaps it is by dreaming over the cases in the Museum that one gains one's best idea of the life that was lived up here all those centuries ago. There in rows are the little objects that were once dear to some woman's heart. Bronze fibulae, enamelled brooches, necklaces, rings, seals, bangles, keys, jet hairpins and other ornaments, presents, perhaps, from some much-loved person; there they lie in pathetic ruin, showing the presence of a civilized and fairly wealthy population. No doubt the ladies paid attention to their dress, and wore these brooches and rings when they went out to tea with one another, or to whatever was the Roman equivalent to that form of entertainment. Did they grumble at the weather and the cold, and sigh for the delights of Rome, or Neapolis, or Massilia, or even London and Venta Belgarum, or Bath, and wish *their* husbands had had the luck to be stationed in those warmer and more fashionable places? Did they join together to send for their dress materials, and consult over fashions and embroidery and lace? Surely they did, for human nature in the past seems to have been singularly like human nature in the present.

But to return to Chollerton Church and the monoliths! There is in the church another very interesting relic of the Pagan Past, and that is a Roman altar which has been scooped out at

the top, evidently to form a font. It is apparently not used for that purpose now, which seems a pity, but it stands close to the font. The church also contains some interesting carved panelling at the east end and in the choir seats. We felt very sorry we had not come here on Sunday morning instead of going to the modern church at Humshaugh.

Just beyond Chollerton there is a ferry which takes you across the river to Haughton Castle, a fine old place outside, but we were told quite modernized within. We had walked there one morning, and made a sketch of the gateway, and then we had wanted to cross by the ferry. We went to the ferryman's cottage, but his wife came to the door and told us that the river had "come down," in the night, so that it was not possible to take the boat across; indeed, the ferryman himself had taken the opportunity to go a-fishing. When we looked at the river we saw the truth of her statement. The water was the colour of chocolate, and was tearing down over the stones in a fierce, mad current, submerging the roots of the bushes which grow along its bank. The woman told us that the river had "come down" at about eleven o'clock the night before. They had themselves been on the other side and only just got back in time. It is rain in the west which most quickly

affects it, and it makes a "terrible noise" in the hills as it descends. This makes it a dangerous river, and in the days before there was a bridge a difficult business for travellers to cross. In one of the old Border Ballads this sudden rise of the river plays an important part in the story. It is the ballad of "Jock o' the Side," a story of a rescue strongly resembling the well-known tale of Kinmont Willie. There had been a Liddesdale raid and Jock o' the Side, of the Armstrong kin, had been captured and put in Newcastle Gaol. But his friends do not desert him, and three start off to rescue him, one of them being a certain Hobbie Noble, of whom we shall hear again. They come to "Cholerford," where they cut down a tree to help them climb Newcastle wall and carry it with them, but find it all too short, so they attack the gate of the town, which is guarded by a "proud porter." Him they soon dispose of, and taking his keys enter the gaol and release their friend, Newcastle apparently sleeping quietly all the while. Jock is heavily ironed, and they cannot wait to get rid of his fetters lest somebody should wake up, so they carry him downstairs and set him side-ways on his horse and ride off merrily. But the night is wet, and when they reach "Cholerford"

Where the water ran like mountains hie!

they consult with a worthy old man, who assures them he has lived "threty and three years" by Tyne side and has never yet seen Tyne "sae big Nor running anes sae like the sea!"

Then one of the party loses heart, for sounds of pursuit are wafted to them, and he concludes they must all die. But there is a stouter character among them—

"Puir faint-hearted thief!" cried the Laird's ain Jock,
There'll nae man die but him that's fie:
I'll guide ye a' right safely thro':
Lift ye the pris'ner on ahint me.

Wi' that the water they hae ta'en,
By ane's and twa's they a' swam thro':
"Here are we a' safe," quo' the Laird's Jock,
And puir faint Wat what think ye now?"

They scarce the other brae had won,
When twenty men they saw pursue,
Frae Newcastle toun they had been sent,
A' English lads baith stout and true.

But when the land-sergeant the water saw,
"It winna ride, my lads," says he:
Then cried aloud, "The prisoner take,
But leave the fetters, I pray, to me."

"I wat weel no," quo' the Laird's ain Jock,
"I'll keep them a'; shoon to my mare they'll be;
My gude bay mare—for I am sure,
She has bought them a' right dear from thee."

Sae now they are on to Liddesdale,
E'en as fast as they could them hie;
The prisoner is brought to his ain fire-side,
And there's o's airns they mak him free.

"Now, Jock, my billie," quo' a' the three,
"The day is comed thou was to die;
But thou's as weel at thy ain ingle-side,
Now sitting, I think, 'twixt thee and me!"

The bridge has destroyed this excitement, but the guide-book still warns adventurous anglers about these sudden little gambols and pleasantries of the North Tyne, and recommends them not to be too venturesome on mid-stream boulders lest one of these sudden spates should come along.

But now the time was nearly come for us to continue our journey. We had one more walk up the Limestone Bank to sketch and photograph the Fosse and its boulders, and basalt rocks; one more walk to Chollerton to sketch and photograph the monoliths; one more visit to the Museum, and then we had to say good-bye to Chollerford and the *George Inn* and our kind friends. We had decided to spend Sunday at Hexham, but they were going on to Gilsland, where we hoped to meet again. But that hope was not to be fulfilled; it was to be one of those many hopes which

"are angels at their birth,
But die when young like things of earth!"

CHAPTER VII

Hexham

WE reached Hexham after a short but interesting journey from Chollerford and went to the hotel, which we were told was the best in the town. But it was a very indifferent best. However, as we were only going to stay till Monday it did not so much matter. But the experiments in cookery in that establishment were signally unfortunate !

Hexham is said to have been a Roman Station, and its situation is one which that astute people would surely have seized upon, although no Roman name has been found for it. It is built on a small eminence rising up from the river, and backed by an amphitheatre of loftier hills. The North and South Tyne meet a mile or two above the town, so that it must have formed a valuable point of defence at the head of the valley down which the broad and rapid stream sweeps. The situation is even now very picturesque, and must have been really beautiful before the grimy ugliness of the

railway station thrust itself in between river and town, looking like a black smirch on a fair garment.

The great interest of Hexham is its Abbey Church, dedicated to St. Andrew. It stands on the summit of the hill, and forms one side of the Market Place which, the guide-book says, was till lately one of the most picturesque squares in England. But modern domestic architecture has destroyed its beauty very effectually. The church itself is fragmentary, but its venerable tower, its splendid transepts and choir—so far as the latter still exists—are beautiful and deeply interesting. The nave is said to have been destroyed by the Scots some five or six hundred years ago; it is now being rebuilt. There are fragments of the Chapter House and some of the adjoining buildings left. What was the cloister garth was just then filled with building materials. The Priory has been rebuilt and is now the Police Station. A curious old barrel-vaulted chamber forms part of the west of the cloister, and against its wall is a very beautiful piece of Gothic arcading; the cloisters themselves have been destroyed, but the corbel stones which supported the roof are still visible against the south transept. The church is entered from the "slype," which here is enclosed, and has a vaulted roof, over which is a gallery. From this passage you step into the south transept and are struck at once by

the magnificence of the building. The transepts are 157 feet in length and very lofty, and of the most splendid Early English work. The lancet windows are particularly fine. On the west wall is the famous sculptured slab of a Roman soldier riding over a prostrate enemy, which was found some thirty years ago in pulling down some buildings close to the church.

From the transepts we entered the choir, under the original rood-screen, which is utilized to carry the organ. The choir is rather earlier in date than the transepts; the triforium is very beautiful, large semicircular arches enclosing two smaller pointed arches. The whole fills one with a sense of interior joy in the nobility and vigour of the work. All—that is, save the east end, which is modern and gives a curious shock, especially when you learn that instead of this flat wall, the original east end terminated in three Chapels, which were destroyed—not by Cromwell or the early Reformers—but in a restoration as late as the year 1863! How one regrets those chapels! They must have given what this splendid building now wants to make it perfect, that play of light and shade, that sense of mystery, of something beyond which is so valuable. But they were swept away entirely, and with them went the four sedilia, the thirty-eight stalls, and two very perfect and inter-

esting chantries, which stood in the choir, and were in quite a fair state of repair. That of Prior Leschman, who died in 1491, has been re-erected (or as much of it as could be rescued) in the south transept, but the one belonging to the Ogle family has gone entirely, save for the slab, from which the brass has been torn. This still exists as part of the pavement of the choir. The brass of the figure has disappeared, but the beautiful little enamel and metal fillings of the small shields of arms at the corners are still intact, but as they are not protected at all, the trampling of feet will soon complete the destruction. It seems strange to think that such vandalism could be wrought so late as 1863. However, there is one very interesting object which they did not destroy, and that is the Frith-stool, which still stands near the altar, and is in all probability the Bishop's seat or Cathedra of St. Wilfrid. It is made out of one stone, set on a more modern base.

We were most wofully disappointed to learn that we could not see the crypt, which is the only remaining part of St. Wilfrid's Church, but it was entirely closed on account of the rebuilding of the nave. This was specially annoying, as our chief reason in coming to Hexham had been to see this crypt, which Dr. Bruce says is built entirely of Roman stones, two of them bearing inscriptions. We grumbled very much to the verger who was

going round with us, and who was very sympathetic, but unable to be anything else. However, he took us into the clergy vestry to show us a book of beautiful drawings of the church made by the architect who is superintending the erection of the nave, and while we were there that gentleman came in, and we had a little interesting talk with him about the arms of the Ogles, as in the fourteenth century one of the ancestors whose tombs we had gone to visit at Rothbury had intermarried with that family.

In the transepts there is a collection of sculptured gravestones and effigies, and also a fine altar-tomb, on which is carved a cross of vine-leaves, a most beautiful design. The tomb, our friendly verger told us, is supposed to contain the remains of one of the Kings of Northumbria, but I forget his name. In the south transept, within the fragments of his chantry, is the recumbent form of Prior Leschman, a curious stumpy figure, with the hood hanging deeply over the face. Against the south wall leading up to the gallery over the slype is a very noble staircase. This was the entrance from the dormitory by which the Canons came to the midnight service in the church.

The present church stands on the site of the much earlier one erected by St. Wilfrid who was the founder of the Monastery here. In this Wilfrid we meet one of the earliest of those militant Church-

men who stand out boldly, notable, if not very attractive figures, on the tapestry of English history. Mr. Green the historian considers that it was good for England that she should decide to attach her church to the Roman side in the great controversy about the date of keeping Easter, but in that scene at Whitby Abbey, of which Bede has preserved for us so vivid a picture, our sympathies involuntarily go with St. Colman and his monks when they sorrowfully turn away and, leaving the scene of their successful mission, disappear into the grey mists of the North.

Wilfrid himself was quite obsessed by Rome; reading his life one does not wonder it should be so. Love of order, love of discipline, of beauty of ritual, and beauty of form were in his blood. The clever lad when he had acquired all that the monks of Lindisfarne could teach him, instinctively felt there were greater things yet, and longed for them. He knew these were only to be found at Rome, so he went to his patroness, Queen Eanfled, and begged her assistance. She sent him to her brother, King Earconbert of Kent, and asked his help. For a time Wilfrid remained at Canterbury, learning all he could there, and then another young man anxious for Rome came thither, Benedict Biscop, a wealthy young Saxon nobleman, and King Earconbert asked him to take Wilfrid with him. The two

youths travelled together, probably along Roman roads, through Gaul to Lyons, where the Bishop Dalfin received them kindly, and seems to have quite fallen in love with Wilfrid, detaining him there while Benedict went on to Rome. Dalfin offered to adopt Wilfrid as his son, and to give him his niece in marriage ; in a word, to make his fortune, but Wilfrid was not to be tempted from his purpose, and after a time went on to Rome. It would be interesting to know by which pass he crossed the Alps, and what he thought of those mighty peaks, but ancient biographers do not trouble about such trifles.

But Rome ! How overpowering it must have been to the North-country lad ! For though in ruins, Rome must still have been splendid. With what amazement he must have gazed at those great Temples, deserted, but still magnificent, rearing their marble columns in the clear blue air of Rome. The great baths, the gorgeous palaces, the splendid arches, the statues and sculptures still visible must have seemed to him like the work of giants or magicians. He may have seen the fallen altars dedicated to Jove lying on his Northumbrian hills, but now he saw the mighty columns of Jove's greatest Temple, flushing in the dawn and sunset on the Capitoline Hill. More moving still must have been the sight of the great Basilicas raised above the tombs of the Apostles Peter and Paul, and

the other churches then rising, or not long built, over the graves and the houses of the martyrs. He would have met his friend, Benedict Biscop, keen as himself to learn all that Rome had to teach, and to see all she had to show.

How crowded with emotion and delight those months must have been. No doubt they stood together by the grave of Pope Gregory, who had sent the good news of the Gospel to their country. The great Bishop lay then in the Atrium of old St. Peter's, where his body had been interred only some sixty years before. It is no wonder that the young man went home filled with the belief that all that was Roman was right! Benedict became the founder of the Monasteries of Jarrow and Wearmouth, and Wilfrid to be later on both Bishop of York, and Bishop of Hexham, which for a time was formed into a separate see. He led a life of agitation and conflict, striving for authority in the Church, quarrelling with Kings and flying back and forwards to Rome to get the Pope's authority on the disputed points, spending many years in exile from his northern home, but very decidedly carving for himself a personal niche in his country's story!

After we had inspected all we were allowed to see of the church, we explored the town. The Market Place must have been beautiful, indeed,

when beside the Abbey Church, the Church of St. Mary extended along its southern side, and the rest was surrounded by the gabled buildings of the Middle Ages. St. Mary's is swept away, save for a few fragments of arches, and its area covered with houses of no interest. There is a sort of covered market place, its roof supported on "classic" pillars, and a very ugly town pump. But the site of the square is fine, and if a good market cross was built in it, and better buildings around, it might regain much of its earlier picturesqueness. A fine grim-looking old tower occupies its eastern side called the Moot Hall, but we could not gain entrance. Another fine tower is reached by passing under the old archway of the Moot Hall, but that is used for municipal offices. From the square, streets descend steeply down the hill towards the flat ground bordering the river, where there is a pleasant walk. Behind the Abbey is an open, tree-planted space called the Seal, once part of the Prior's park, now open to the citizens.

We went on Sunday morning to the early service, which was very poorly attended, but at eleven o'clock the church was very full, and we had a vigorous and interesting sermon from the rector. There was a large choir and the singing was hearty. After a very sketchy sort of meal at our hotel, we went off for a walk towards the scene of the Battle of

Hexham, another moving historical event connected with this ancient town. The battle was fought in 1464 between the Lancastrians under John, Duke of Somerset, and the Yorkists. It ended in disaster for the Red Rose ; King Henry galloped away leaving his wife and son to their fate and it was while wandering about in the woods which still partly cover the district that the Queen met the chivalrous robber, and threw herself and her son on his mercy. The cave where he hid them is still shown, but we did not get as far as that. We had climbed up an enormously long hill, and then come to a very pretty ravine crossed by an old stone bridge on which is a tablet stating the name of the builder, but which is almost illegible. Here we were so tired that after sitting a few minutes to rest we decided to retrace our steps and leave the battlefield till some other time. Besides, we wanted to go again to the Abbey for the evening service ! But we could see that this ravine, along which the Devilstone brook flows, was the disastrous spot for the Lancastrians, down whose steep sides they were driven. The poor Duke was taken prisoner, and next morning was brought out on to the Market Square and beheaded, which must have been a tragic sight for those who then lived in the houses round. Perhaps he was buried in the Abbey, but we did not see any tomb or memorial of his fate.

One thought of the splendid shrine where his kinsman, the great Cardinal, lies in Winchester Cathedral, but the one no doubt sleeps as peacefully as the other now.

CHAPTER VIII

Corstopitum

WE had decided to leave Hexham on the Monday and to go on to Bardon mill, but it was suggested that we might visit Corbridge and see the excavations now being carried on there, on our way. We took the 9.25 train, therefore, for Corbridge, which is only one station back towards Newcastle, and arriving there, put our baggage into the cloak-room, and went off to explore the town.

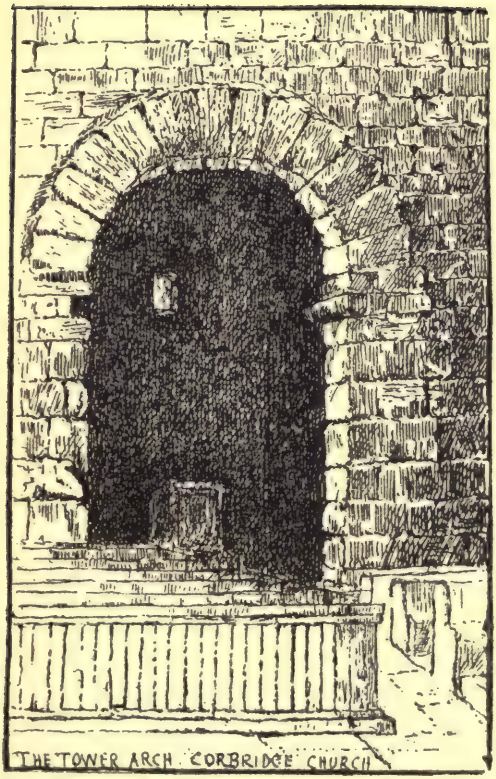
To reach Corbridge from the Station you have to cross the river by its fine bridge. In 1771 there was a great storm and flood which destroyed and swept away every bridge over the Tyne save this, which therefore deserves a word of commendation. We looked with respect at its massive arches and buttresses. Buttresses is probably not the right architectural term for those angular projections between the arches which seem intended to break the force of a rush of water.

Corbridge itself is one of the greyest and quietest of little towns.

A little grey town on its windy hill,

was the line that ran in one's mind, for the wind blew with a vigour, not to say ferocity, which made struggling against it rather hard work. There is a central square from which two or three narrow streets branch off. In the square is a nondescript kind of erection, which would not have been mentioned were it not crowned with an image of the Northumbrian Lion. To one of us this brought back a dim childish memory of having pointed out to her the figure of a similar lion adorning the gateway of old Northumberland House in the Strand. A vision of a long, low grey house, and the noble beast standing with stiff outstretched tail, remains one of those curious pictures, without date, without beginning or end, which form the gallery of a very small child's memory. It must have occurred just before the old mansion was pulled down to give place to Northumberland Avenue and all the modern improvements.

The church at Corbridge is a large and ancient structure and it stands on one side of the square. The tower is pre-Norman: it has the "long and short work" which is said to be a sign of Saxon architecture. It is a large church, and was probably rebuilt or enlarged in the fourteenth century. In the churchyard is an old Pele Tower which is said to have formed the residence of the rector till within



THE TOWER ARCH. CORBRIDGE CHURCH

quite recent times : it does not look a very commodious residence and one imagines that the incumbents must have been mostly bachelors. The interior tower arch has a look of great antiquity. After inspecting the church we inquired our way to the excavations, and we were directed to go down the hill and along by the river, which we did, following a narrow, straight, sunk road on its margin. This road we were afterwards told was the mediævel road to Carlisle. On one side a bank of rough grass and low growth of willows lay between us and the fast flowing stream, with a sloping, hilly field on our right. Presently, the road leading through a copse, we saw on the right hand a steep bank, up which there was a rough attempt at steps, while a notice-board informed all whom it might concern that non-subscribers could see the excavations on payment of sixpence.

We mounted the steps and found ourselves in a cornfield, which rose somewhat steeply and where men were at work digging trenches recklessly amid the yellowing grain. The ground was further ornamented with little flags of different colours on short sticks stuck about the field. We began to peer about and make our way from one little digging to another, when we observed a young man issue from a little wooden hut at the top of the field and go across to inspect some of the men's work. " That is the Boss," we exclaimed. " Let us go and talk to

him ! " We made our way towards the gentleman, and he turned to us, seeing, no doubt, expectation in our eye. Almost the first word he said was, " Have you seen the Tower ? "

We gasped a little and gazed round.

We certainly did not see any building of that description, and answered meekly that we had seen nothing except a reference to sixpences, which we there and then proffered. Communications having been thus opened he took us to see the Tower. As its walls did not arise above the surface of the ground we felt with some relief that we had not been so unobservant as his words seemed to imply.

We found our cicerone a most interesting guide. The lowest part of the excavation, he said, had revealed a large house. He first explained that Corstopitum was not a military Station but a Roman civilian town. It was situated on Watling Street, which just below had crossed the Tyne : some of his men were then at work digging where he believed they would find the foundations of the Bridge. The tower of which he had spoken, and of which he had found the foundations, was connected with a large house which was not of the Pompeian form, but of what he called the corridor type, which was almost peculiar to England. He had come on this house almost by chance while digging a deep trench to find the different levels. He had easily found the Roman

level, and had dug through that to the neolithic level, where he had discovered flint instruments. He wanted to see if there had not been a British camp or settlement here before the Romans came.

He further explained that the town had been built in terraces rising one above another, but that the land had been so deeply ploughed that the edges of the terraces were sloped away. The lowest part he had explored was the large house before mentioned consisting of several large rooms. He had unearthed some interesting hypocausts, tall and slender ones, which he said was an early type. Above this he had come on two terraced walls, along one of which were a number of stones with square sockets cut in them. He thought they had been used for wooden posts to support a penthouse roof along the terrace wall. In the big house they had found a large ornamental cistern, and then he took us up to his wooden hut to show us a piece of sculpture which they had come upon only the week before. It was a lion crouching on the back of a stag, at whose throat he was tearing. There was a hole for water to pass through, and it had been part of the adornment of the cistern.

They had found no altars, but about thirty coins ; a silver one of Domitian he showed us ; it was black, and he said the silver turned black, the copper green. He had got a good many pieces of the beautiful red

Samian ware, one fine bowl he was joining together. It had the potters mark on it, by which they knew where it was made. The beautiful glaze of the Samian pottery is a lost art; analysis, he said, gave no result. He also showed us a beautiful flint arrow-head which he had found, and a stylus, and best of all, the first object he had dug up was a ring bearing the word Success!

We did envy that young man his post and his work. Then we parted, wishing him good luck with his digging. The ring seemed a good omen. After this we went back to the town intent on getting luncheon. First of all we went to the *Wheatsheaf Hotel*. On the entrance door was written the word "Push!" We obeyed and pushed, but nothing happened: the door refused to budge! We rang the bell—no answer. We rang again—still no answer! We went to another door and knocked, but there was only silence. Evidently everybody was out or asleep, and determined not to supply any strangers with food.

We therefore decided to go to the *Angel*, an ancient looking hostelry we had noticed on our way from the station, and as we passed its windows our spirits rose. There, in a coffee-room, was a cloth spread with knives and forks and plates and glasses: evidently there were human beings here. But alas! on entering we met a crueller blow still.

No ! they could not attend to us. They had some people coming to dinner at one o'clock (it was now 12.30) and they could not possibly give us any luncheon. So we went meekly away, wondering rather at the ways of Corbridge, and tried a third house—The *Tynedale*. Even there was hesitation —oh ! what a tension for our fainting spirits ; but at last they agreed that, if we would be content with some cold mutton, they would—though it was washing-day and very inconvenient—give us some lunch. We were shown into a small apartment and there supplied with the said cold mutton, bread and butter and cheese, and a bottle of Bass' Ale, and we were grateful, yes truly grateful, though perhaps visions of little inns among the high Alps did hover round, with the soup and the omelet, which always seem forthcoming at those altitudes.

After that cold mutton we went back to the church for a sketch, and then suddenly recollecting the time found we must hurry off for our train. At the Station we were nearly blown off the platform, the gale was so violent, but we got our train and arrived at Bardon Mill about half-past four. We found a very decent little inn, the *Bowes Hotel*, and after a good, solid tea we started off for a walk. The wind had dropped a good deal and we made our way across the river—the South Tyne, which is here rather wide and shallow—by a narrow wooden foot-bridge, and strolling on

came to a very pretty little village named Bellingham. There is a church, apparently Perpendicular, but we could not get in—five o'clock being the hour of closing, so a notice outside told us. There were some splendid old yew trees in the churchyard. We walked on to Ridley Hall, the road winding below the park, and overshadowed with beautiful trees, with a sweet view over the valley and the moors beyond. We just had a glimpse of Ridley Hall, which some say was the birthplace of the famous Bishop Ridley. We also saw the " Allan Water," where the miller's daughter lived who was so ill advised as to die of love. No doubt she might have lived and married a respectable young farmer, if she had not been so sentimental. Only then she would never have been famous !

The raging wind died quite away, and the night was brilliant with the moon. Our sitting-room was over the bar of the hotel, where an unceasing torrent of talk had been going on for two mortal hours. One voice was very predominant; they mostly all talked together, only the one voice, an old and beery voice rose higher and higher till the others were obliged sometimes to listen. Yes, perhaps she was right: it was better to die of love than to live and be disillusionised by such a voice as that.

CHAPTER IX

Vindolana

NEXT morning we started to find Vindolana and the Roman Milestone. Vindolana is a Station about a mile to the south of the Wall, and is probably one of Agricola's Camps on the Stanegate—the old Roman military road before the Wall was built. By its side there is a Roman milestone still in position.

We inquired our way of our landlady, and for a time all went well, but presently we became entangled in a labyrinth of lanes, where now and then a sign-post appeared always bearing the somewhat mystic inscription—" Twice Brewed " ! Now, though Twice Brewed might be a sort of place one would gladly meet with about lunchtime, it was too early for such considerations, and we became rather irritated by its somewhat ostentatious and persistent invitation. Luckily when our tempers were getting a little acrid, we came upon two comrades taking an *al fresco* meal under a hedge, and from them we gained enough direction to carry us on till we saw a field dotted with

THE ROMAN MILESTONE

human beings making hay. One of them coming away from its gate, guided us down the lane, which must be on the line of the old Stanegate, and soon we saw Vindolana (or Chesterholm, as it is now called) rising on our right hand. We needed no pointing finger there : it was manifest to our eyes, now gaining experience. Then on the left our guide opened a gate and there was the Milestone, the Roman Milestone, the only one left *in situ* by the Roman Road.

It is a cylindrical stone, a monolith between five and six feet high. It stands on a grassy bank, with a small copse behind it. There is no inscription. The road by which it stands ran from Chesters to Magna, a Station further west, though probably it extended to a greater distance in both directions.

After we had inspected the Milestone and taken its portrait, we went down into a little glen which lies to the east of the Station to a cottage which some antiquary built there of Roman stones, and where, in a covered passage, certain sculptures are to be seen. The lady of the house was not at home, but a very pleasant Swiss maid showed us what we wanted to see. Near here an altar was discovered with an inscription, which has been translated thus : "Sacred to the Genius of the Praetorium, Pituanius Secundus the Prefect of the fourth Cohort of the Gauls (erected this)." On the sides of the altar are sculptured the sacrificial instruments, the axe and

knife, the victim, an ox, and the patera or dish for laying the sacrifice on the altar, and a jug for wine. According to the *Notitia*, Vindolana was garrisoned by Gauls.

We then made our way up the steep grassy slope to the Station itself. Whoever selected it chose a beautiful spot. The Camp crowns the summit of a green hill rising from the glen, down which the burn, which flows out of Crag Lough, runs, and after uniting with another little brook, joins eventually the South Tyne at Bardon Mill. On the other side of the glen is Borcombe Hill, a lofty heather-clad eminence, which shelters the Station from the east winds. To the North sweep up the long shoulders of the ridge crowned by the Wall. To the south spreads a pleasant, fertile land, undulating and diversified with copse and wood, while to the west opens out a lovely view of the Cumbrian mountains, Skiddaw, Scafell and their comrades. The day was stormily grand ; great masses of inky cloud kept rising over the northern hills and floating grandly past, threatening tremendous showers which, luckily, never came ; instead there were bursts of sunshine lighting up the purples and browns and greens of the moorland vividly against this black, boding back ground.

Below the Camp near the Milestone is a farmhouse, Coadley Gate, and we inquired if they ever took in paying guests, for Vindolana is a place where one

longs to stay and gain permission to dig! The farmeress, however, said they had only been there a year, and she did not know if she could manage with strangers: she would think about it, and perhaps she might some day. She also kindly directed us as well as she was able—for she had never been there—how to get to Housesteads, for we were bent on seeing Borcovicus once more and walking along the Wall to Hotbank. Following her directions we went up a long, sloping field past the Milestone in the direction of a farmhouse which we were told was called High Shields. Certain dark patches, moving patches, in the field aroused a little anxiety, but when we came nearer we saw they were *young* cattle, without any horns! Beautiful creatures they were, dressed in coats of lovely black and brown plush—but mostly coal black, which took soft lights and shades as they browsed along. Then after crossing a terrible stretch of mud, a small slough of despond, we arrived at Highshields gate. A tall and handsome lady came out to feed her chickens: she had on a sunbonnet which became her admirably, and we applied to her for information as to our way. "There," she said, "is the North Road: go along it to the right till you come to a cottage, and the second farm gate on your left is Housesteads!"

We thanked her, and again asked if it was possible to be put up and "done for" at this farm? But

the lady shook her head : there was too much to do on the farm : they had not time to attend to guests. We now trudged steadily along that North Road : its switchback character seemed more pronounced than ever, and we began to wonder if we should ever reach that gate ; but all things come to an end, and at last we were there. A party in a carriage arrived just as we reached the gate, and went toiling up the slope with their basket, but we turned off to search for the Cave of Mithras ! We are not sure if we found it, but we found something which we thought must be it : if it was not the Rose it was near it, and we contentedly sat down and ate the modest lunch we had brought with us, and surveyed the scene attentively. A second visit to the place reveals so much that is new, while it clears and deepens the first somewhat blurred impressions. If one were a millionaire it would be most interesting to buy the whole site of Borcovicus and excavate all, camp, town, temples, cave of Mithras, roads and everything ! It must have been a busy place once, and the people who dwelt there and chattered and chaffered and squabbled thought as little that it would ever be a silent and solitary waste, as we think now that London will become—to use Scriptural language—a Heap ! Yet doubtless it will some day !

After we had rested and refreshed ourselves and moralised after the fashion of Marius among the

ruins of Carthage, we climbed up to the Camp and went round it, and then started on our walk along the Wall. Where it leaves the Camp on the west it runs through a copse growing along the summit of the cliff, but you soon come out on to the open hill, and the Wall marches up and down the heights in the same cheerful manner as between Sewingshields and Housesteads, only more so ! The footpath is *on* the Wall, which is from three to four feet high and about five or six wide. It is all very well going *up*, but when you come *down* the steep slope with the fall of the scarp below, it felt curious, and was sometimes too much like tight-rope dancing to suit all tastes. When it became very curious, one of us dismounted and walked along by the side, but the other clung on to the bitter end.

We passed a mile castle shortly after leaving Housesteads and stopped to consider it. But there is a sameness about these mile castles : they all consist of four low ruinous walls with a gate north and south, and to an ignorant person they all look much alike. We took a photograph, but did not linger long. Indeed it was growing late, and we were ever so many miles from the *Bowes Hotel*, and with only our own rather tired feet to carry us thither before nightfall.

Prosecuting our way along the Wall, one on it and one off, the latter who was foremost, came to a stop.

What was that queer white object on the grass with four thin sticks raised in the air? Going a little nearer, the object was seen to be a sheep flat on its back, with its legs raised to the skies! Was it dead? No, the legs feebly waved! A misty memory came back of having heard somebody say that a sheep once on its back cannot get up again, and if left unassisted it will die. But how to assist it? It seemed on the edge of the steep grassy cliff, and if it began to struggle probably helper and helped would roll down the slope together. So that prudent person waited for her comrade. The poor sheep meanwhile did not make the slightest sound, only its pitiful eyes rolled round appealingly. Conference soon produced a plan of campaign. One seized the fore legs to keep it quiet, while the other went round below and pushed at its broad and solid back. It was heavy and fat beyond belief, but at last it was on the turn, and calling out "Let go its legs!" a last heave got it over and up, and it staggered away with a bewildered but joyful Baa-aa! We went on, glowing with the consciousness of having performed a charitable action. We had saved one sheep's life! Would that weigh in the balance against all those legs of mutton—but ah! there are some things which do not bear thinking about: they are too subtle, too complex. Enough! we had saved *that* sheep's life, for a farming lady to whom later on we recounted our

exploit, said that if we had not helped it it would certainly have been dead by morning. Of course it might have been killed to save its life—in a sense. A farmer's daughter was once heard to confess that if a cow did not seem very well her father always sent for the butcher!

We were having beautiful views all the way and now Crag Lough came in sight. It is a pretty little lake lying under the craggy hill whose cliffs are reflected in its waters. On the north side there are wide beds of reeds much frequented by waterhens, and wild ducks too at times. But nearer still and for the moment more interesting, was a farmhouse which we saw in a gap of the hills below us. Was this Milking Gap? and was that house Hot Bank? The question which most possessed our minds was not of an antiquarian nature. It was "Can we get some tea there?" We determined to try, and amid the barking of various dogs we went up to the door and knocked. An elderly lady came and we preferred our request, and, as we thought a little reluctantly, we were admitted and shown into a parlour, where the first thing that struck our eye was a picture of an attack on Borcovicus by Mr. Robert Spence—an artist of Newcastle. It was a spirited work, and it was especially interesting to note Mr. Spence's ideas of the upper buildings and roofing of the Camp.

That tea was delicious. Rested and refreshed we rose up to start on our long walk back, but first we took a photo of Crag Lough. The afternoon was growing something grey and dim, and I fear the photo partook of its character. But it was the best we could do. Then we trudged off, choosing this time the high road above Vindolana, and skirting the dark heathery slope of Borcombe, where we could see the Long Stone standing up against the evening sky. But the view was beautiful, especially towards the west, for there the clouds had parted, and the sinking sun was making a golden glory, against which Skiddaw and his fellows stood out purple and mysterious. It was growing quite dusk when we at last got down to Bardon Mill and the friendly little *Bowes Hotel*.

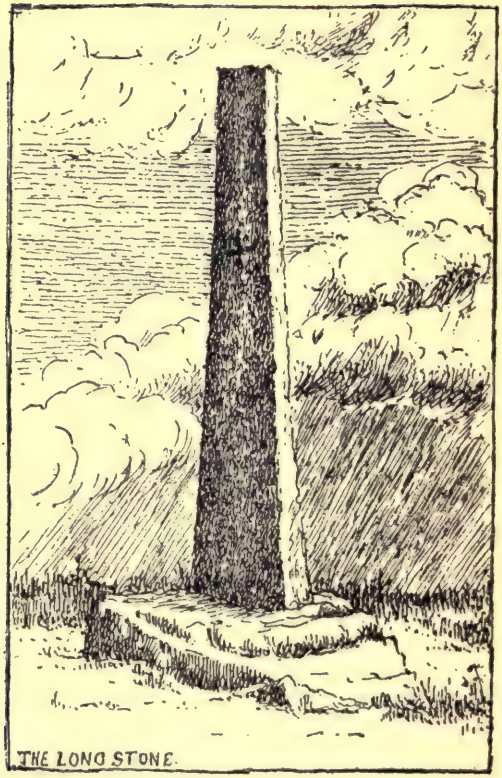
CHAPTER X

The Long Stone

THE next day we were to leave Bardon Mill, but before doing so we were moved by a great desire to climb Borcombe Hill and visit the Long Stone. So we hurried off early along the road till we were above Vindolana and under the abrupt heather-clad flank of Borcombe. We had looked out for a path all the way, but failed to find one, so in desperation, knowing our time was short, we climbed over the stone dyke and went straight up the heathery ascent. We began to repent our rashness as it grew steeper and steeper, till at last it seemed impossible to go up or go down! But as it was equally impossible to remain suspended there, we struggled on, using our four limbs—as we had heard a Frenchman once describe his method of climbing a mountain in Dauphiné—and dragging ourselves up by clinging to the tough stalks of the heather. Then, to add to our embarrassment, it began to rain, but still up we went, till at last we did reach the top in a wild storm of wind and rain.

We were close to the Long Stone, and though it seemed about as useful for shelter as a walking-stick, we crouched down on the leeside of the base, and creeping under one umbrella, weathered the storm. Fortunately it was short and sharp, and at last we were able to stand up and look at the view, which was wondrously beautiful, with the black cloud sweeping away to the north, and a burst of sunshine glorifying all the country to the west and dressing every trembling twig and blade of grass with glittering gems. We could see Vindolana far below us, green and smiling, by its wooded glen, and away to the north the broken line of the Wall cresting the heights.

We had not been able to gain any information about the Long Stone save that it was prehistoric! It is a tall, narrow stone 12 or 13 feet high with a roughly circular base. It must have required some skill to hew it out of the rock and erect it here in this lofty position. There is no inscription to give any clue to its meaning; there it stands, silently pointing its grey finger to the skies. Did the same race erect it who piled up Stonehenge, and covered Dartmoor with mystic circles and stone avenues? Has it anything to do with marking any cycle of time by the stars? Was it there when the Romans built their Wall, and did the Cohort at Vindolana gaze at it as questioningly as we do,



THE LONG STONE.

and gain as little information? Perhaps, though, they did know more, for they worked the quarries on Borcombe Hill to get stone for their building. It was in one of these quarries that in 1837 a workman found a Roman purse made of bronze, with a handle so that it could be carried on the wrist. There is nothing new under the sun! In it, wrapped in a piece of leather, were sixty-three coins, three gold and sixty of silver. The finding of this hoard proved but a case of fairy gold to the poor man who discovered it. Taking an extravagant view of the value of the coins, he could not sell them, and at last an action of trovor was brought against him—his name was Thomas Pattison—and the damages were assessed against him at £18, which he was unable to pay. Poor Thomas handed the coins to his brother and fled to Wales, where the law followed him, and at last he was declared insolvent. He came back and died at his brother's house near Haltwhistle in 1844, no doubt cursing the day when he had found the unlucky treasures. Finally his brother sold them to Mr. Clayton, and they are now at Chesters. Altogether it is a pathetic story, for no doubt in the first case the loss was a heavy one to some poor soul who dropped his or her purse by mischance, or perhaps hid it, or perhaps had it stolen from him. However these old, old things, like fallen idols and other gruesome mysterious objects,

are probably best in Museums, where they can hardly bring bad luck or multiply ancient curses upon any one!

We had not long to stay up on Borcombe. We walked along the scarp to find the British Camp, with which perchance the Long Stone has some connection, and then we made our way down its long shoulder across the fields of two or three farms till we reached a lane, which finally, after many meanderings, brought us down to Bardon Mill and so to our inn. There we partook of a somewhat hasty lunch and hurried to the train, for if you lose a train in these regions it is a serious matter; there is not another in a hurry!

The railway runs, till you reach Haltwhistle, close by the Tyne. About there the river turns south, and later you begin to make acquaintance with the Irthing. Besides the interest of the rivers, the ruined castles, which appear first on one side and then on the other, remind you that this is Border Land, full of the murmur—

> Of old unhappy far-off things
> And battles long ago!

We reached Gilsland in about two hours, and just before we entered the Station we crossed over the Poltross Burn and so came into Cumberland. When we reached our hotel we were very disappointed to hear that our friends, whom we had hoped to

meet, had grown tired of the rain—it had apparently rained every day—and had gone on to Moffat. The Roman Wall had not proved sufficient attraction to make up for the weather! We had some tea, and then rather low-spiritedly set out to find Birdoswald, or the Camp of Amboglanna, a large Station which we knew to be close to Gilsland. It was a fairly fine evening, and the way led along above the river Irthing, which here runs in a deep fold of the green hills. We crossed it and soon came to a large farmhouse where, on each paying sixpence, we were admitted to the Camp, which lies behind, and to the side of the building. One does not doubt that the house is built out of the Camp and Wall. One or two of the gates have been excavated, and the south wall is also in a good state of preservation. We could not trace much of the central Forum. The great Wall formed its northern boundary, but is mostly now destroyed, though on beyond the farm it skirts the lane in a more or less state of dilapidation. There are also traces of the Vallum. We followed it for some distance, but the shades of evening were beginning to gather, and we were forced to return with rather a sketchy notion of Amboglanna.

It is the largest Station on the line, and inscriptions which have been dug up here all go to confirm the statement in the *Notitiae* that it

was garrisoned by the first Cohort of the Dacians. "One of these inscriptions," Dr. Bruce says, "may be translated 'The first Cohort of the Dacians (styled the Aelian) commanded by Marcus Claudius Menander the Tribune (erected this) by direction of Modius Julius, Imperial legate and pro-praetor.' On one side of the slab is a palm-branch, the emblem of victory: on the other is a sword of peculiar form. A reference to the Trajan column at Rome shows us that the Dacians used a curved sword. Hence it would almost appear that the Roman, in adopting the services of the nations whom they subdued, encouraged them to use the accoutrements and arms with which they were most familiar."

A statue was found here also, very well preserved. It is said to represent one of the Deae Matres, and is one of those usually represented in triplets. It is now at Newcastle. Several altars were also found, one to Fortune: another to Jupiter, best and greatest, dedicated by the first cohort of the Dacians. Another altar dedicated to Jupiter has above the I. O. M. several crosses, one of the fylfot form. Some of these stones used to be kept here, but all have now been taken away, a ring is the only object now they can show you at the farmhouse.

We were the more disappointed at missing our friends here that none of the company at the hotel

cared a snap of the finger about the Roman Wall. Indeed some of them scarcely knew there was such a thing! One lady said she had paid sixpence to go in to Birdoswald, but that she keenly regretted the coin: she would far rather have had sixpenny-worth of chocolate. They were all North Country people and very silent. Whether it was the weather —it seems to rain a good deal at Gilsland—or whether it is the grave, northern character, we did not know, but they hardly spoke a word; even the younger members of the community scarcely opened their lips.

There is a Spa at Gilsland and a Convalescents' Home. The village is modern, and chiefly consists of little villas where they let apartments, and post-card shops. These villas do their level best to remind you that Gilsland is mentioned in *Guy Mannering*, by calling themselves Dinmont Villa and Merrilees Cottage and so on. For here was Mumps Ha', where Brown met Meg Merrilees. The house has been entirely modernised, and except for some old stone window mouldings, cannot be in the least like the hovel described by Sir Walter. Nor could we see the pond where the old hostess is said to have disposed of the bodies of the guests whom she robbed and murdered.

Gilsland is a very pretty place and it is wonderfully green: perhaps the weather has some connexion with that. The river Irthing flows in the

valley, and the Poltross Burn crosses the village street to join the larger stream. The hills swell up in green rounded ridges, and there are beautiful trees. We went that next morning into the village to do our duty by buying postcards and despatching them to distant friends, and then made our way to the Vicarage to ask permission the see the piece of the Roman Wall which runs through the Vicarage garden. The vicar was engaged, but Mrs. Bird very kindly came out and showed us where it was. It is a fine bit of wall, and has a paved footway at its base, which is said to be a very unusual feature, and the antiquaries cannot explain its existence. Beside the Wall there are in the garden two Roman altars, which for long formed the altar steps of Over Denton Church—a small Saxon Church about two miles from Gilsland, and of which Mr. Bird is vicar as well as of Gilsland. One of these altars had been put to baser uses first, for there are unmistakable marks of knife sharpening on it. There are also some centurial stones and a conical stone, probably one used in the ballista or catapult.

Mrs. Bird also kindly pointed out the direction the wall took when it left the garden, but told us there was not much of the '*murus*' left though the fosse is well marked. Following her instructions we went along the lane a little way, and nearly opposite the school turned in at a farm gate on the

right. Here in the field we could see the foundation of the wall, which we followed (although it had begun to rain again), and so came upon a splendid bit of the fosse. Here we were in a very pretty spot. To our right the green hill fell steeply to the river, and then rose again on the other side in a wooded ascent. We tracked our fosse down a steep dip and then seeing fragments of stones in among the roots of the hedgerow, and believing them to be remains of the Wall, we followed it through a very wet hayfield, and creeping through copse and hedge we got right down to the level of the river, which at this spot flows through a pretty little glen. It was evident that the Wall crossed the stream, though in what fashion it traversed it is not known, for there high up on the steep crumbling cliff opposite, to us, we could see it begin again and could easily grasp its position with regard to Amboglanna.

By this time we were extremely wet. Each boot seemed to contain a small lake in itself, so we agreed that we had better go back, especially as we could not see any means of crossing the river,which flowed fairly fast, and was unprovided with stepping stones. So we turned back. Unluckily we tried a short cut, which lengthened our way by about a mile and a half, and led us into cruel mazes of stone dyke and barbed wire. But at last we managed to surmount all these obstacles and reached the

Orchard House, but so wet and tired, that we did not go out again, but sat by the fire in the drawing-room, and read our books like well-behaved spinsters. There was a fire all day long in that drawing-room, and very welcome it was, though the month might be *called* August.

That night a Pilgrim came ; a young man Pilgrim, who was as delighted to talk Wall as we were. He had come from the West and had been longer on the way here from Carlisle than he had expected to be, going all the way to Newcastle. He had his bicycle, and was anxious to know how much of the Wall he could see from its back, so we explained the position of the Barrier to the great North Road. He could cycle along that well enough, but he would see little of what he wished to study.

We, too, were loth to leave so much of the Wall untracked between Bardon Mill and Gilsland. We had walked along the Barrier from Chollerford to Hot Bank. But there was a long and beautiful piece from Crag Lough to Shield-on-the-Wall, and then came the Nine Nicks of Thirlwall—the very name had an enticing sound. A plan suggested itself ! It was to take the train back to Bardon Mill, walk up to Hot Bank, and go along at least to Shield-on-the-Wall, and then get down to Haltwhistle and take the rail back to Gilsland. We sat up talking Wall with our new friend till past eleven o'clock,

when every one else had gone to bed, and our pretty little landlady peeped in with a pensive, half-reproachful look in her soft eyes, and that sent us off at last. Also the lamps began to go out, which may have hastened our retreat.

CHAPTER XI

Haltwhistle

WE took an early train to Bardon Mill. Just as we arrived it began to rain, but we ignored that as a trivial thing, and started off up the road, which now we knew well. Soon we were in sight of Vindolana, which struck us afresh as a charming spot. If Agricola selected it, he certainly had an eye for natural beauty. Above us we saw the scene of our previous scramble and the Long Stone solemnly pointing to the clouds. Clouds, yes, clouds, soft, grey, edgeless, a terrible all-overish greyness which enveloped sky and hills, blotting out all sharpness of outline, and so different from the grand masses of torn vapour which had given such majesty to the view a day or two before. And the rain fell persistently, steadily, as steadily as we tramped onward, and after startling a pair of grouse off the farm track, knocked at the door of Hot Bank farmhouse and meekly besought lunch.

The old lady, our former friend, half hesitated, and then to our relief said :

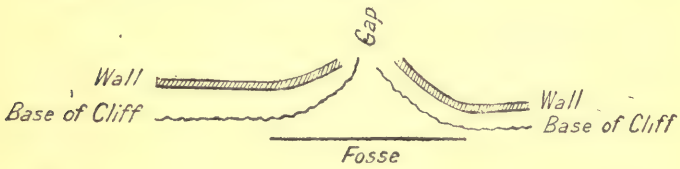
"Well, I'll see; perhaps you can. You can come in," and so showed us to the parlour with the picture of the Attack on Borcovicus. Then she disappeared, but presently returned and spread a white cloth on the table, and produced a pleasant little meal of eggs, and bread-and-butter, and hot cakes, and biscuits. We gratefully partook, and after paying the small sum of eighteen pence took our leave with many thanks.

Now we had quite made up our minds that the weather was making the Wall impossible and had decided to return to General Wade's road and perhaps visit Magna, or Aesica, two stations farther on, if the rain held up, and so make our way down to Haltwhistle. But now, as we turned down the farmtrack, we found that the rain had ceased, and we saw a track which we believed to be the Roman Military road leading across the shoulder of the hill. If it was so, we knew from Dr. Bruce's book that the line of field gates would be upon it, and one of us remarked that the grass was short! So we started along it. We found that the Wall above Crag Lough was destroyed, so we kept along our new track for a little way contentedly. But presently it led us through a wet little valley, and above us on our right we saw the Wall reappear. It was too tempting: we ignored long grass and rushes, and went straight for the old grey stones.

From here the view was charming, for the day was really clearing. Far down below the craggy side of the hill was a great stretch of marsh, then lonely, grey-green hills, till beyond, farthest of all, the blue line of the Cheviots appeared, while to south and west the clouds were breaking, and the Cumberland hills came out lovely in silver grey as though dressed for a Quaker wedding. Our spirits jumped up several degrees. The Wall was with us again, and on its summit grew yellow Ladies' Bedstraw, and delicate blue harebells trembled in the breeze. Soon we descended into a gap and found ourselves at Castle Nick, one of the best preserved mile castles along this part of the Wall. You get a good view near here of Crag Lough, and Hot Bank and the line of the Barrier to the east. It was here, Dr. Bruce says, that an important slab bearing an inscription with the names of Hadrian and Trajan was found. It is now in the Museum at Newcastle.

The next gap is the Cat's Stairs. Dr. Bruce advises the pilgrim to descend it and walk along the base of the cliff to Peel Crag so as to see the fine basaltic crags. We peered over the edge of the cliff, and discerning gleaming lines of water crossing like a network among the grass and rushes, decided to stay on the top, and so continued our way till we were forced to go down at Peel Crag, where there is a wide gap.

It took some time to get down. The Wall turns inward and becomes extremely ruinous, and great crags jut out in extremely inconvenient places. But it is very interesting to note the strong military defences at this point. The Wall on either side turns inward, so that the foe attacking from the north would be exposed to a flanking fire on either side. Then across the level in front of the gap a fosse was drawn. A ground plan would be something like the accompanying outline.



Here we got the view of the basaltic crags, which are very fine. We could still see a gleam of Crag Lough and the line of the Wall, and Hot Bank, a white dot in the distance.

There is a farmhouse on the Western side of the gap. The gate into the field where the Wall continues was barred up with heavy stones, but the farmer kindly removed enough of them to let us through, and we found a good piece of Wall leading up the hill. But just at the summit comes an awkward corner traversed with dykes, which for a while retarded our progress, but at last we surmounted our difficulties, and began mounting up

again to the line of the Wall, frightening a great flock of plovers, who went lamenting away. These plovers remind one so of the wailing souls in Dante, whirling round and round, fluttering and hovering, and returning and then sweeping away again with their melancholy cry! Just here is Winshields, the highest point which the Wall attains. It was at this spot that we saw a human being approaching, and lo! it was our friend of the night before. It was quite a dramatic moment! He, it seemed, had sent on his bicycle by rail, and had walked all the way from Gilsland along the Nine Nicks of Thirlwall, which, he said, had made very bad going, and the state of his garments proved his words true. He was wet to the knees, and torn with barbed wire, and he had had nothing to eat save two buns, which had got soaked with the rain. It was now three o'clock in the afternoon, but he bore his troubles cheerfully, and we told him he would get a meal at Hot Bank. So we parted on that lofty spot, from whence indeed we gained a glimpse of the Solway Firth, wishing each other good luck, and he went off eastwards and we westwards, not probably to meet again!

A little further on we came on two men who were building up a piece of the Wall which had fallen down. Up and down the hills the Wall went, and we trudged by its side enjoying the beautiful view, but

rather wondering how much farther it would lead us. At last we came to a very decided gap, in fact, a sort of end of the hills. We saw a road below us going north and south and then a sweep of level country, into which the crags sank, to rise again beyond in what we knew must be the Nine Nicks of Thirlwall.

But we dared not neglect that road, for we had a train to catch. We were wet and tired, and still several miles from Haltwhistle, so with a regretful glance at the Nine Nicks, we turned south down that road, and after crossing a fine bit of the Vallum, found ourselves in company with General Wade again, and after a while came to a road going south, where a signpost informed us, to our great joy, that Haltwhistle was only a mile and a half from where we stood!

The afternoon had cleared wonderfully, and faint touches of blue began to show through the clouds. Skiddaw was beautiful in falling rays of silvery light, and after noting the site of a camp, a temporary camp, or one of Agricola's, where the Stanegate is said to end, we started for Haltwhistle. We went down and down and down, till at last we found ourselves at the entrance of a dismal, grimy, colliery village. Here a man told us we were still a good mile from the station. We went on through the long, unlovely street with squalid houses on either

side, with "works" here and there and chimneys emitting clouds of foul black smoke. One cottage we noticed particularly, an old, white, country cottage which had once been a habitation fit for human beings to live in. But now just below it on the hillside was a chimney pouring out a heavy spiral of filthy, black vapour. All the cottage windows were shut, and well they might be, for even as they were the rooms must have been full of that inky foulness. Haltwhistle is an unlucky place. In the old days it was always being raided or burnt by the Border thieves, and now it has been seized upon by modern raiders and made into a black blot on the fair face of nature.

The further end of the town is more cheerful looking, and we got some tea at a shop close by the station, and were in plenty of time for our train.

CHAPTER XII

Bewcastle

WE were now in Cumberland, and had come to a point touched on by Sir Water Scott in *Guy Mannering*. Also we were in the Border Country, the district famous for raids and fights and general thieving, and musical with ballad and song. And there was one place which we were very eager to see, not for its Roman remains—though it is said a Roman Camp once occupied the site of its ruined castle—but because of the wonderful Runic cross that stands in its churchyard.

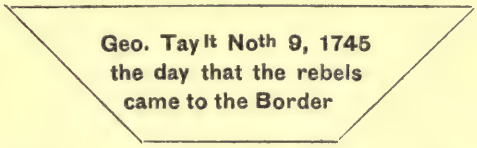
Bewcastle is a long way from anywhere. It lies in the heart of what used to be called the Waste of Bewcastle, a stretch of wild and desolate country given up of old to Rievers and raiders, and to fights between Armstrongs and Elliots and Ridleys and all the turbulent population of the Borders. We were told it was seven miles to walk across the moor, and we were rather tempted to try it, for part of the way runs on the old Roman causeway—the Maiden way—but we were doubtful as to the

possibility of finding the road alone. So we decided to drive—it is eleven miles by road—and one morning we started early in a small waggonette with a very civil driver. Unfortunately he was not a native of these parts, but came from Solway, so he could tell us nothing about Bewcastle. In fact, he had never been there before.

The road we traversed led near Birdoswald, but not immediately past it, turning more to the north. At first we had fine views of the Cumbrian mountains, and then we drove along a cultivated valley with low hills on either side. About three miles from Gilsland we passed the ruins of Triermain Castle, made famous by Sir Walter's poem. Triermain was a fief of the Barony of Gilsland : it had belonged at the time of the Conquest to a Saxon family, but later passed to the De Vaux, and was held by a series of Sir Rolands till the time of Edward the Fourth. It was, we must suppose, one of these Rolands who married the mysterious maiden, daughter of King Arthur, who had lain asleep for five hundred years or so. Is the Lady Geraldine in *Christabel* supposed to be the offspring of this marriage ? If so, it might account for her peculiarities.

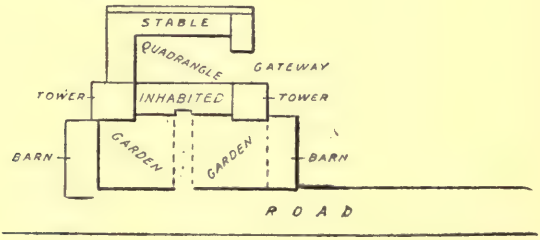
There is very little of the ruin left, so we drove on, beginning now to get grand views again. Then suddenly we came upon another castle, of which

we had not been aware: an inhabited castle, with sound roofs and two square towers, and strong walls. Our driver told us it was Askerton Castle. It looked so attractive that we called to him to stop, and we got out, and going up to the entrance, sent in our cards and asked permission to see the older part. A lady came and spoke to us, and then most kindly took us over the older unused part of the castle. The rooms between the towers have been modernised, and there the family live, but we were taken into the old towers and up winding stone staircases and into gloomy chambers with tremendous oak beams and so on to the roof of one of the towers, from whence we had a grand view. The lady pointed out where Gretna lay—it seemed quite near, and then more interesting still, she showed us the following inscription scratched on the lead of the roof



From here too we looked down into the inner court, or quadrangle of the castle, and afterwards our kind guide took us round to the old entrance into the quadrangle and showed us the stables where they think a secret passage runs. Over the range

of stables there is a loft where the soldiers could hide in the old troublous days. We were also told of a room to which they can find no entrance; a narrow slit in the wall gives it light, else they would not know of its existence. There is a legend of some lady having been shut up there, but I do not remember quite what were the circumstances that led to her imprisonment. Indeed, there seem several parts of the old building not thoroughly explored. The plan is roughly as below.



Over the front of the castle, where the modern entrance is, grows a wonderful cotoneaster, the finest we had ever seen. Our kind friend also took us to look at her hunters, beautiful creatures with pedigrees! Askerton is mentioned in one, if not more, of the Border Ballads, and once was the residence of the Land Serjeant, an officer who seems to have been a subordinate of the Warden of the Marches to assist in keeping order. The name occurs in the Ballad of Hobbie Noble, who was

one of the three who rode to Newcastle and rescued Jock o' the Side.

Now Hobbie was an Englishman
Born in Bewcastle dale,
And his misdeeds they were so great,
They banish'd him to Liddesdale,

But one Sim o' the Mains betrayed him, tempted him over the Border on a foray to steal horses, and then—

Word is gone to the Land Serjeant,
At Askerton where he lay;
"The deer that ye hae hunted sae lang
Is seen in the Waste to-day!"

Poor Hobbie, thus betrayed by his false friends, is seized, bound and carried off to Carlisle.

They hae ta'en him on for West Carlisle,
They asked him if he kend the way;
Though much he thought yet little he said,
He knew the gate as weel as they.

They hae ta'en him up the Ricker-gate,
The wives they cast their windows wide;
And every wife to another can sae
"That's the man loosed Jock o' the Side."

So the end comes and he dies pluckily with three verses of farewell.

"Now fare thee weel, sweet Mangerton,
For I think again I'll ne'er thee see;
I wad hae betrayed nae lad alive
For a' the gowd o' Christentie!

"And fare thee weel, sweet Liddesdale,
Baith the hie land and the low:
Keep ye weel frae the traitor Mains,
For gowd and gear he'll sell ye a'.

"Yet wad I rather be ca'ed Hobbie Noble,
In Carlisle where he suffers for his faut,
Than I'd be ca'ed the traitor Mains
That eats and drinks of the meal and the maut!"

After a very pleasant half hour spent at Askerton we drove on over a wild, half-wooded, half-boggy country, and at last descended a steep lane to the tiny village of Bewcastle, which is set in a wide, open valley surrounded by gently rising, green hills with a little stream meandering through. You pass a couple of cottages, and then you see the vicarage on a rising ground to the right, then a quaint-looking little church, and beyond a farmhouse and the ruins of the castle. We drove up to the churchyard and alighted. As our vehicle stopped, two men came up and said something to our driver: it was to warn us that there was a dangerous bull in the field by the castle. We took out our traps, and the driver went off to seek rest and refreshment for horse and man, and we, putting our luncheon basket under the churchyard wall, went first of all to study the famous cross.

That cross is a most beautiful and wonderful object. It is a monolith or obelisk more than a cross. The top has been broken off, but it still stands

RUNIC CROSS, BEWCASTLE CHURCHYARD.

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14½ feet high and it is covered with carving from top to bottom. On the west side there are three sculptured figures one above the other, the panels bearing them, separated by lines of Runic writing. The uppermost is by some said to represent the Virgin and Child, by others the figure of St. John with the Lamb in his arms. Then comes a figure of Christ, the right hand raised in blessing, while the left holds a scroll or some such object. Below this follow seven or eight lines of runes, and lowest of all is the figure of a man with a raven or other large bird at his side.

On the east side it is sculptured with a design of vineleaves, with squirrels and birds perched amid the leafage, while the north and south are decorated with various Celtic patterns.

We studied that cross carefully, and the more one studied the more one admired it. The carving shows a considerable amount of skill, and there is a classic touch in the folds of the drapery especially, and the thought arises that some of the sculpture of the Roman Wall may have served as models to the Northumbrian sculptor who wrought this work. The design of vine branches and birds is singularly beautiful and graceful, and the state of preservation it is in, is remarkable. The broken summit provokes questionings. Was it ever a cross with arms, or did it end in a cross in a circle? It is altogether a

most extraordinary object to find in this lonely, silent place.

After we had sketched and photographed the cross we went into the church. If it is old, it has been restored to death ; it is bare of any memorials, and uninteresting. The churchyard, on the contrary, is full of extremely large and important-looking gravestones, solemn rows of them standing shoulder to shoulder like a regiment of the dead.

While we were sitting sketching two young men, cyclists, came to inspect the cross, which they did in a cursory fashion. Then to our horror we saw them jump the wall into the field where was the bull ! At once a terrible, wicked bellow, a bellow so full of malice, of sullen wrath and cruelty that it filled our souls with terror, rent the stillness of the place. One of us rushed to warn the rash youths, but they were warned. As quickly as they sprang into the field, they must have skipped out again, for they had vanished in an instant.

Having completed our study of the cross we selected a green knoll near the farm and there ate our lunch listening to the silence of the place. The bull had calmed down, and only the clucking of a few fowls and the bleat of some distant sheep emphasised the stillness. Luncheon ended, we reconnoitered the entrance to the castle, and finding the fearful beast was enclosed in a field to the

south of the castle, we went in and inspected the ruins from the north.

Bewcastle was one of the castles scattered about the Border to guard the English from the forays of their Scottish neighbours. They were tenanted apparently by land serjeants and captains, maintained by the English Government, but the proceedings of these gentlemen do not always tally with order and good government. The castle is now a complete ruin. One turret and four ruinous walls are all that is left standing, and it is impossible to trace what the interior arrangements of the building were when its captain went off to steal his neighbour's cows as blythely as now a squire may go fox-hunting. One of these exploits, which ended badly for the captain, is related in the ballad of "Jamie Telfer of the Fair Dodhead."

It fell about the Martinmas tyde,
When our Border steeds get corn and hay;
The Captain of Bewcastle hath bound him to ride,
And he's over to Tividale to drive a prey.

So off they ride over the Border and steal poor Jamie's cows and ransack his house.

Now Jamie Telfer's heart was sair,
The tear aye rowing in his ee:
He pled with the Captain to hae his gear,
Or else revenged he would be.

The Captain turned him round and leugh,
Said, "Man, there's naething in thy house;
But ae auld sword without a sheath,
That hardly now would fell a mouse."

But Jamie was a man of determination. He runs and rides from one neighbour to another to ask for help and so comes to Branksome Ha', the ancient residence of the Lairds of Buccleuch. There the "gude auld Lord" bids them raise the clan, which they do so quickly and effectually that the captain is met at the ford of the Liddel, and after a big fight, is defeated and taken prisoner. JamieTelfer goes home rejoicing, for he gets not only his own ten cows back again, but another twenty-three which had been picked up somewhere, while there is mourning at Bewcastle, where the captain's bride had remained.

Then word is gane to the Captain's bride
E'en in the bower where she lay,
That her lord is prisoner in the enemy's hand
Since into Tividale he had led the way.

The lady was evidently a woman of spirit, for these are her words, or so they are reported:

"I wad lourd have had a winding sheet
And helped to put it ower his head:
Ere he had been disgraced by the Border Scot
When he ower Liddel his men did lead!"

The name of Musgrave had been connected with

Bewcastle. A document printed in the notes to *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* states how Thomas Musgrave of Bewcastle was accused of treachery and disloyalty by Lancelot Carleton, through letting the Scots pass unopposed on their raids into England Carleton challenged the same Thomas Musgrave to single combat to prove the truth of the charge.

It was difficult to associate all this rough life and turbulence with the silence of this lonely spot, the spreading of these peaceful green hills, and the quiet tinkling of the clear running little brook. How the clatter and jingle of armed men, the rough shouts, the bellowing of frightened, overdriven cattle, and last, though not least, the sobs and wails of bereaved women who had learnt that their Jock or Sim had not returned from the fray must have woke the echoes among the hills. Roman soldier and Saxon warrior and moss-trooper have all passed this way and disappeared, and only the cross with its mystic runes, over which antiquaries puzzle, and the crumbling ruins of the castle, tell of a more strenuous life. One scholar has deciphered those runes to mean that the cross was erected in memory of Alcfrith, son of Oswi, King of Northumbria somewhere about A.D. 670, and that it solicits our prayers " for his soul's great sin " ! Let us hope that his troubled spirit, as well as those of the captains and men-at-arms are at peace and their bones

quietly resting under those solemn gravestones. The sole guardian of the castle now was the white bull, who looked gloomily over the stone dyke at us as we passed, wrath and distrust in his red eyes. In return we looked at him—and took his portrait!

Reluctantly we left Bewcastle. The place has a strange attraction. It touches in quite an inexplicable way some deep-set chord of emotion, almost of memory. Had we been there in some previous existence? Will that explain the solemn and mysterious attraction of the soul to its lonely valley? We drove back somewhat silently through the faint evening sunshine. At the highest part of the road between Bewcastle and Askerton we saw the distant sheen of water, and our driver told us that it was the Solway Firth, and that a mountain, rising in pale violet tones against the sky, was Criffel.

THE KEEPER OF BEWCASTLE.

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CHAPTER XIII

Naworth and Lanercost

WE left Gilsland on the Monday. Sunday had been a very disappointing day. In the morning it was wet—not very wet for Gilsland perhaps, but still distinctly damp! We went to the new church and had a very good sermon from the vicar, and we had made up our minds to go to Over Denton, a wonderful little Saxon Church, in the afternoon when there would be service. It was about two miles to walk.

We watched the weather somewhat anxiously, for it did not improve, but we were quite determined to go, so after dinner we started out mackintoshed and umbrellaed, but alas! by this time a perfect gale had arisen with torrents of rain, and when we had struggled against it for about half-a-mile, the hurricane became so dreadful that we were forced to turn back and to creep ignominously homewards under any wall or bank which would give us any shelter. Next morning when we went to the vicarage to see the Roman Wall again we asked the

vicar how he had fared, and he said that, spite of mackintosh and leggings, he was wet through before he reached the church. We wondered what sort of a congregation he had had, but did not like to ask.

We had decided to stay on our way to Carlisle to see Naworth Castle and Lanercost Priory, so we deposited our luggage in charge of a friendly porter at the quiet little station at Naworth and started off on our exploration. It was quite a fine day.

As soon as you leave that station you plunge into romance. The road leads between spaces of green turf and woodland, and before you the towers of a castle rise against the blue distance from amid embosoming trees. It is like the beginning of a novel by Walter Scott. So mediæval, so romantic is the scene that you would not be surprised—especially in these days of pageants—to see a knight in armour come pricking by with his squire and, perhaps, a fair lady on a palfrey at his side. Going down through the park to Lanercost—which we had decided to visit first—one looked for the dappled deer and listened for the musical clatter of the hunt.

'Tis merry, 'tis merry in good greenwood,
When the mavis and merle are singing;
And the deer sweep by and the hounds are in cry,
And the hunter's horn is ringing!

That was the note the scene struck. Rome and its Wall faded back into a grey antiquity, and all

was vivid with the brilliance of the age of chivalry and romance.

The road led down by green glades and hanging woods to the Irthing, and we stood on the old grey bridge and looked down into the clear rippling water, amber and brown and green, to see if we could discern the foundations of the Roman bridge which crossed the river somewhere here. We could not discern them, but we observed on the bank a small Temperance Hotel, so took the opportunity of getting some lunch. Then we went on along the level road to Lanercost.

Lanercost Priory lies a little to the south of the Wall and Vallum. The church and monastic buildings are, Dr. Bruce says, almost entirely composed of Roman stones, perhaps taken from the Wall, but he believes there may have been a Station here to guard the bridge. The Priory was founded by Robert de Vallibus, Lord of Gilsland in 1169, for Canons Regular of the Order of St. Augustine. Edward I came here three times, once with Queen Eleanor; Robert Bruce was here in 1311. So it has seen great folk and stirring times in its day! At the dissolution of the monasteries it was given to Sir Thomas Dacre, who for some reason did not inherit Naworth Castle, which had belonged to the Dacre family, but passed to Lord William Howard, the "Belted Will" of the "Lay of the Last Min-

strel " through his wife, the daughter of Lord Dacre. Lanercost is beautiful. It is built of red sandstone, and the soft warm tints show charmingly through the fine trees which sprinkle the green meadows where it stands. The nave of the monastic church has been restored and roofed, and now serves as the Parish Church, a world too wide, we imagined, for the congregation of that quiet spot. The choir and transepts are roofless, but in good condition; their flooring is the finest velvet turf. There are some grand tombs of the Dacres, and one which is thought to be that of Lord William covered with heraldic shields and devices, but perishing from exposure to the weather. The architecture is Early English with shafted windows. You can still get up to the triforium, and all is so beautiful, so perfect as far as it goes, that one longs to see it just roofed over adequately to preserve it from entire destruction.

From the nave of the church the verger led us into some remains of the Priory buildings. There is a crypt under what was the refectory, with a groined roof, and here have been placed several Roman altars and a piece of sculpture representing Jove and Hercules. There is a fine old banqueting hall in the adjoining buildings, which once was the monks' dormitory. There is also a room anciently the scriptorium. The monastic buildings were converted

into a dwelling house for the Dacres : now the Rectory. It is a most fascinating and interesting place, and one longed to stay to prowl and sketch and explore, but there was the castle to be seen and a train to catch, and Carlisle looming at the end, so we were forced to tear ourselves away and retrace our steps through the park.

Naworth Castle has a very fine position. It stands on a sort of promontory above two small streams which have cut deep and charming glens in their descent to the Irthing. In the days before artillery it must have been very strong, for its only vulnerable side was to the south, where it was defended by a double moat and drawbridge.

The castle is built round a quadrangle, and you enter the fine banqueting hall by a handsome stone stair from the courtyard. It is a splendid apartment, with a beautiful open roof, whose beams are supported on corbels bearing heraldic shields. The whole place indeed is full of heraldic devices, huge representations of the Greystock Dolphin, and Sheep of the Multons, the Bull of the Dacres, and the Griffin of the De Vaux standing sentinels at door and hearth, to carry the banners of the family. Along the hall are ranged chairs, on whose backs are worked in cross-stitch by the ladies of the family shields bearing the arms of the many noble and ancient families connected by relationship or

marriage with the Howards. It is in a mixed mood, a mood between smiling and sighing, that one contemplates those chairs, and realizes the many quiet, not to say tedious hours, to which they testify. How they must have sat and worked, these noble ladies in their castle halls, and yawned and looked out of the casement and wished that somebody would come or something would happen. It must have been much more exciting in the old Border days when the Scots might come jinking any time over the Border, and there would have been mounting in haste and watch kept from the turrets and towers, or when some young Lochinvar might be seen spurring beneath the walls, or perhaps the prior came to call. But after the '45 till the days of motor-cars and bicycles. Oh, dear! But still that hall is a veritable Book of Heraldry, *or* and *gules* and *argent*, saltire and bend and chevron, mullet and star and cross and crescent—all there for the learned in that lore to study!

There are very interesting pictures too, perhaps the most interesting being the portraits of Lord William Howard and his wife, Lady Elisabeth Dacre; he red haired and red bearded in a black doublet, and she in a black dress with an enormous black hood and a very grim expression. In those troublous times people did perhaps take life more seriously than we do in our more frivolous days.

But still the good lady looks rather depressing, and one cannot prevent the thought arising that her possession may have cast an extra glamour over her other charms.

This Lord William is the "Belted Will" of the "Lay," though Sir Walter took some little liberty with chronology in putting him into that stirring poem. He was a younger son of Thomas, Duke of Norfolk, and he became the possessor of Naworth, as has been said, by his marriage with Elisabeth Dacre, sister of George, Lord Dacre, who died without heirs-male early in Elizabeth's reign. Lady Elisabeth Dacre became thus one of the co-heiresses of the baronies of Gilsland and Greystock after they had been the property of the Dacres for 250 years. Naworth had been built by one of the Dacres in the reign of Edward III. There seem to have been two branches of this family which took its name from the exploits of some ancestor at the siege of Acre under Richard Cœur de Lion. Thus there were Dacres of the south and Dacres of the north, and these latter were Barons of Gilsland and Greystock.

Lord William Howard was appointed Lord Warden of the West Marches, and did his duty so well that he became the terror of the moss-troopers, so that some little law and peace seem to have been introduced into that troublous region.

Besides the hall, visitors are shown the apartments specially affected by this valiant gentleman. They consist of a library, bedroom and oratory. He was a learned man and an accomplished scholar, his books still remain on the shelves of his bookcase, and have a sober and ponderous air. Sir Walter thus speaks of these rooms.

"In the Castle of Naworth his (Lord William's) apartments are still shown. They impress us with an unpleasing idea of the life of a Lord Warden of the Marches. Three or four strong doors separating these rooms from the rest of the castle indicate the apprehensions of treachery from his garrison: and the secret winding passages through which he could privately descend into the guard-room, or even into the dungeons, imply the necessity of no small degree of secret superintendence on the part of the governor. As the ancient books and furniture have remained undisturbed, the venerable appearance of these apartments,and the armour scattered around the chamber, almost lead us to expect the arrival of the Warden in person!"

The strong doors spoken of did one more good deed some years ago by stopping a fire which devastated the castle, and thus preserved Belted Will's library from destruction. That room has a beautiful oak panelled ceiling carved with heraldic bosses; this has been lately restored, which detracts from the

venerable appearance spoken of by Sir Walter. The oratory is furnished with some very quaint carvings, brought, I think our guide said, from Lanercost.

This was all we were permitted to see of the Castle : it would be a delightful place to explore, but now it was gently intimated to us that we had better depart, so we took our leave and wandered round the outside as far as we dared go.

Naworth belongs to the Earl of Carlisle, a descendant of Belted Will ; we left it with regret, and slowly made our way back to the station, extracted our baggage from the waiting-room in which our porter had carefully locked it, and steamed away from romance and chivalry in the train for Carlisle.

CHAPTER XIV

Carlisle

They watch 'gainst Southern force and guile,
Lest Scroop, or Howard, or Percy's powers,
Threaten Branksome's lordly towers,
From Warkworth or Naworth or merry Carlisle!

MERRY Carlisle! How did the Border City gain such a title? Certainly it does not seem a suitable epithet now, for at present it is a manufacturing town, and one cannot associate merriment with huge chimneys and foul smoke and mean streets, the three unfailing accompaniments of factories. But even in the past it must have been a grim place, dwelling in the midst of alarms, always ready for war, responding to Border foray with Border foray. Here the Lord Warden of the West Marches had his uneasy home: here files of soldiers must constantly have gone clanking up the street guarding the wild moss-troopers to their prison; here there was mostly business going on at Haribee or Gallows Hill, and here on the Ricker Gate ghastly heads often gloomed down at the passer-by. Perhaps it was all this excitement which brought

out the contrasting emotion. Once, though, it was merry, for a time, when Prince Charlie rode into the city on a milk-white steed preceded by a hundred pipers! Let us hope that they did not all play at once, else the droning and skirling must surely have rendered the inhabitants permanently deaf! The merriment did not last long, for soon "Butcher" Cumberland came, and then there was dancing to another tune.

We reached Carlisle in the evening as the sun was sinking low in the West. The beautiful scenery of Naworth and its neighbourhood fades away as you draw near the city, and a wide plain rolls out, across which you see a dim mass of houses, punctuated with tall chimneys like exclamation marks! Our first business was to find an hotel, and thanks to a conversation with a lady in the train, we settled ourselves at the *Mitre and Crown*, where we were very comfortable. It was too late for explorations that night, so we betook ourselves to bed betimes. But we were up early next morning; we had never been at Carlisle before and a new place is always exciting.

Carlisle is built on a hill which slopes up from the level country and then falls in a sharp little scarp to the plain again. At the highest point stands the Castle, with the Cathedral behind it, and the Market Place and principal streets lower still. Below the castle winds the river Eden crossed by a long bridge,

and then rises another low hill where was the Roman Military Station, Axeldunum, now Stanwix. Carlisle, though a Roman town, was not in itself military. The Wall ran a little to the north and the Station at Stanwix was enough protection. Its name appears to have been Luguvallum, i.e. the Castle by the Wall. This became abbreviated by Saxon tongues into Luel, then they put on the prefix Caer, and so Caer-Luel=Carlisle! Many remains of the Roman age have been disinterred. William Rufus came here and he it was who fortified the city. Its situation as a Border town till England came under the rule of a Scottish King—and even after that event—always made it important. It has in its day been besieged, sacked, plundered, all in due form. Edward I held a parliament here, and it sustained a long siege from Cromwell's troops. It only surrendered at last from famine after eight months' investment, and when every cat and dog and rat and mouse had been consumed. Charles the First did not come this way after he had been sold by the Scotch, that canny little transaction taking place at Newcastle. Yet through all it was merry Carlisle.

We bent our steps first to the Cathedral, which we found was close to our hostelry. It is quite small, smaller than it ought to be, for there is only a fragment of the nave left; it, together with the cloisters and the chapter house, having been pulled down by

those industrious people, the early Reformers! What is left of the nave is fine Norman work. There was an abbey here in very early times, and it was rebuilt by Rufus. It is rather unexpected to meet the Red King as a builder up of the Church. He always seemed to take more interest in the contents of the ecclesiastical money-boxes, but I dare say he has been maligned. Henry I completed the building, and founded the Bishopric. The choir and transepts were rebuilt in the fourteenth century. The east window is magnificent, filling almost the whole eastern end of the choir.

We were just in time for service, which, as far as the music went, was not a very finished performance. There was only one canon present, wearing a surplice without a cassock! After service we explored about the building, and returning to the nave found a Consistory Court being held in the north transept. The canon we had seen, who it seems was an archdeacon, was presiding, while a gentleman in a wig and gown was explaining the case, which had to do with the claim of some family to a certain pew in the chancel of some church in the diocese. There were several gentlemen sitting round the table, looking very solemn. After the bewigged gentleman had stated the case, the archdeacon politely intimated that the family did not seem to have a legal leg to stand on in their claim, the wig, with a sigh, almost admitted

the soft impeachment, whereupon the archdeacon made a decree that that was so, that some farther claim would be dealt with at the next sitting of the court, that that was all to-day, and the court at an end, and that they might all go home. It was an interesting little scene, and what struck one was that the archdeacon seemed to have complete power to adjudicate in the matter.

The deanery and the canons' houses lie to the south of the Cathedral, close to where the city wall once crowned the low cliff. Unfortunately the Caledonian Railway has set up its tents just below, so that the luckless ecclesiastics are, so to say, suspended over a labyrinth of lines just outside the stations where shunting, loading, whistling, smoking trains must make life hideous day and night. Smoke, dust, noise, vibration, dirt, and ugliness, year in and year out, just below the Cathedral and its precincts. Merrie Carlisle forsooth!

Later we went on to the castle, crossing an expanse of green sward surrounded by low houses to reach its gate. It is now the depôt of the Border regiment. A great deal of the more ancient portion has been destroyed, and the most interesting part left is the old and massive keep. Here a solemn but loquacious guide shows you the dungeons. They are as drear and dismal places as any we had seen, wherein men have imprisoned their fellow-creatures. Walls ten

feet thick, and in some no aperture for light, and still on the walls the marks where the unfortunates were chained and so left in murky obscurity. In one of these Walter Scott pictured Fergus MacIvor, but the sensation with which you read the romance and the sensation when you realize that living men have really been incarcerated in these cruel places, are very different in intensity. The very thought makes one sick!

It was, we supposed, here too that Kinmont Willie, the hero of the famous ballad, was imprisoned, and from which he was released in so extraordinary a manner by the bold Buccleuch.

O have ye na heard of the fause Sakelde?
O have ye na heard of the keen Lord Scroope?
How they hae ta'en bauld Kinmont Willie,
On Haribee to hang him up.

Perhaps one ought to spell that last word "oop," to give southern tongues the right pronunciation!

Kinmont Willie was a Scotch freebooter, and he had been taken at a border meeting convened by the Warden. Now by Border law such meetings were held as a truce, and no one ought to have touched him, but the temptation proved too strong, and poor Willie was snapped up and haled off to Carlisle, where he was heavily ironed and thrown into prison, to be hanged at the first opportunity.

But the bold Buccleuch at Branksome Hall heard of

his friend's dire state, and he swore that Willie should not die, but that sooner he would break into Carlisle Castle and rescue him. So he called his men and relations to him and off they started, some armed and some carrying ladders.

Then on we held for Carlisle Toun,
And at Staneshaw-bank the Eden we crossed,
The water was great and muckle of spait,
But the nevir a horse or man we lost.

And when we reached the Staneshaw-bank,
The wind was rising loud and hie;
And there the Laird garr'd leave our steeds,
For fear that they should stamp and nie.

And when we left the Staneshaw-bank,
The wind began full loud to blaw,
But 'twas wind and weet and fire and sleet,
When we came beneath the Castle wa'.

We crept on knee and held our breath,
Till we placed the ladder against the wa'
And sae ready was Buccleuch himself
To mount the first before us a'.

He has ta'en the watchman by the throat,
He flung him down upon the lead—
Had there not been peace between our lands,
Upon the other side thou had'st gaed!—

"Now sound out trumpets!" quo' Buccleuch:
"Let's waken Lord Scroope right merrilie!"
Then loud the warden's trumpet blew—
"O wha dare meddle mi' me?"

Then speedilie to wark we gaed,
And raised the slogan ane and a',
And cut a hole through a sheet of lead,
And so we wan to the Castle ha'.

They thought King James and all his men
Had won the house with bow and spear;
It was but twenty Scots and ten
That put a thousand in sic a stear!

So they batter their way, apparently without interruption, to the lower prison, where Kinmont Willie lies so heavily ironed that he cannot walk. There seems to have been no time or means to rid him of these incumbrances, so Red Rowan "the starkest man in Teviotdale" lifts him up on to his back and carries him down the ladder.

Then shoulder high with shout and cry,
We bore him down the ladder lang;
At every stride Red Rowan made
I wot the Kinmont's airns play'd clang!

"O mony a time," quo' Kinmont Willie,
"I have ridden horse baith wild and wood;
But a rougher beast than Red Rowan
I ween my legs have ne'er bestrode."

"And mony a time," quo' Kinmont Willie,
"I've picked a horse out oure the furs;
But since the day I backed a steed,
I never wore sic cumbrous spurs!"

We scarce had won the Staneshaw-bank,
When a' the Carlisle bells were rung,
And a thousand men on horse and foot,
Cam wi' the keen Lord Scroope along.

Buccleuch has turn'd him to Eden-water,
E'en where it flowed frae bank to brim
And he has plunged in with all his band
And safely swam them through the stream.

He turn'd him on the other side,
And at Lord Scroope his glove flung he
"If ye like na' my visit in merry England,
In fair Scotland come visit me!"

All sore astonish'd stood Lord Scroope,
He stood as still as a rock of stane;
He scarcely dared to trew his eyes,
When through the water they had gane.

He is either himsell a devil frae hell,
Or else his mother a witch maun be;
I wadna have ridden that wan water
For a' the gowd in Christentie!

After seeing the castle we had to go on to Stanwix. The road leads over the fine arched bridge across the river Eden, the same we presumed which comes in so well in Turner's drawing of Carlisle, and then goes up the hill to the church whose pinnacled tower is quite a landmark. The church is said to stand on the site of the Roman Station (Axeldunum), it is modern, but replaced an older building, in pulling down which a very fine statue of Victory was discovered. The Roman Wall—which we felt we had been rather neglecting—must have crossed the river near here, and then seems to have curved to the north and west to finish its course at Bowness-on-Solway. Dr. Bruce speaks of there being some remains of it and the fosse, but our eyes were not expert enough to detect any tokens. Only we knew that it had been there, and imagination was called upon to produce it. But our brains were ringing

with border ballads and confused with memories of Waverley and Red Gauntlet, of Prince Charlie and the '45, and the Roman Wall took on a grey and misty look and grew ghostly thin and dreamlike. Perhaps, too, we were too weary even to do justice to the beautiful view as we turned and slowly plodded back to the *Mitre and Crown* and sat down to a modern dinner with a modern German waiter to attend to our wants!

CHAPTER XV

Bowness-on-Solway

WE had determined to see the end of the Wall, or at any rate the spot where it is believed to have ended, namely Bowness-on-Solway. But when we began to consult railway time tables for information about getting there, we found ourselves much confused, so we went off to the railway station and interviewed a friendly porter, who told us that a train left at such a time, and by changing at such a station (whose name I have forgotten) we could reach Bowness with certainty. We wanted also to see the old church at Burgh-on-Sands, and we said to ourselves that we would get out of the train at the station there (which we believed we should pass) and walk the rest of the way!

We started by that train, but to our surprise we did not come to Burgh-on-Sands! We passed one or two stations whose names were unfamiliar to us, and at last we saw written up "Gretna"! Simultaneously we cried "Why, we are over the Border." It was strange yet true. Quite unin-

tentionally we were making a Border Foray, a raid into Scotland! It was certainly puzzling how we were to arrive back into England and Bowness, and we watched our route with quickened interest. We circled about among low hills, crossing a river, which we reckoned to be the Esk, and then turned to the left and proceeded to cross the Solway back to our native land, on a long, long bridge, the low banks of the Firth narrowing on our left hand, and on the right widening out till they were lost in a grey waste of water and cloud. It was low tide and the banks of sand and mud exposed by the ebb were dotted with white gulls busily seeking a meal. At Bowness was the last station of the Wall which it is believed ended here. Antiquarians do not seem very sure about the name and no inscription throwing light on the subject has been unearthed. Dr. Bruce says the station at Bowness is well situated: he adds however that it is not made out without difficulty. Let us confess at once the ignominious fact that we could not find it at all! We made our way to the church, which the same authority says is to the south of the station and not included in it, though appearances rather favour that view. Houses and gardens come close to the north wall of the churchyard, private dwellings on which we could not intrude. To the west, a lane passes, and in an open space on the farther side of this, just

opposite the tower of the church, there are remains of foundations of buildings cropping up among the rough grass. But by no manner of sophistry could the situation be brought to square with Dr. Bruce's compass, and though one of us was inclined to believe this to be the site of the station, the other was sternly practical and pointed out concisely that what was west cannot be north! Finally we agreed to go and consult the Rector, whose pleasant house stands to the south of the churchyard. Going in at the gate, we met the clergyman coming back from the church with the key in his hand. He assured us that the site of the station was covered with houses and gardens, and no one could make it out. He also said there were no remains of the Wall. Then he proffered us the key of the church, telling us there was a fine Norman font.

So there was—a beauty of a most unusual form of which the accompanying photograph will give a better idea than any words.

We prowled round the church inside, and out, but found nothing of particular interest save the font, and then leaving the key on the window-sill as we had been instructed to do, we went back to the village street in quest of food.

Bowness is a quiet little place. It has a stranded look as if it had been washed ashore and left to dry on its little hill. But it has evident charms for some,

FONT, BOWNESS-ON-SOLWAY.

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for there were summer visitors staying in the place. We went to a little inn and to our joy and surprise found the people willing to give us a meal. Generally we have found small country inns regard travellers in search of refreshment with great disfavour. The landlords or landladies look at you with curious annoyance, and do their best to send you away empty. It really requires not only hunger but some firmness of character to induce them to allow you to enter and have a meal! And it is so often washing day, which they consider a perfectly legitimate reason for shunting you. One sometimes wonders why they keep inns at all!

Over the door of some outbuildings belonging to the inn is a small altar built into the wall. It is dedicated to Jove, Best and Greatest for the benefit of the Emperor Gallus, by one Sulpicius Secundianus. Imperial Caesar dead and turned to clay may, we know, stop a hole to keep the wind away, and so the altars of the old gods ornament stable doors in the whirligig of time.

What theme for sorrow or for scorn!
  What chronicle of Fate's surprises.
Of adverse fortune nobly borne,
  Of chances, changes, ruins, rises!

Of thrones upset and sceptres broke,
  How strange a record here is written!
Of honours dealt as if in joke;
  Of brave desert unkindly smitten.

How low men were and how they rise !
How high they were and how they tumble !
O vanity of vanities,
O laughable pathetic jumble !

Bowness must have been a busy place once, for Solway is fordable just below it at low tide, and it was an important station and needed a watchful garrison. Its inhabitants must have been numerous with the soldiers' wives and families and those of the Civil officials living outside the fort. Yes, they ate and drank, they married and gave in marriage, they fought and quarrelled and made it up again—till the Barbarians came and swept them all away !

We had inquired about the possibility of getting to Burgh-on-Sands and we were told that if we walked to Port Carlisle, which was distant about a mile and a half, we should find a small horse railway which would take us to Drumburgh where we could get the train for Carlisle, which stopped at Burgh. There was a train at four something, which we should have plenty of time to catch.

So we started off by a pleasant road which led along the verge of Solway. A bank of rough grass or a little spread of turf divided it from the sands along which tiny wavelets were breaking in lines of frothing spray. On our right were fields divided by hedges, and on these we kept a heedful eye for somewhere through there had run the Wall, and

we understood that though that was gone, the line of the Fosse might be recognized. We made several incursions into those fields and meditated over certain lines which might be the remains of the Fosse or might be nothing but a common or garden ditch!

It was a pleasant day for walking: there was no sunshine, but the soft clouds parted now and then and showed a glimmer of blue sky peeping through. The Solway was all silver and grey and the tide was racing in fast. Beyond the spread of silvery water, the mountains were mostly hid in mist, but now and then some summit would clear itself for a minute and peer across at us. Big sea gulls came flying close inshore uttering their lamenting cry. After about an hour's walk we came to Port Carlisle.

If Bowness is a quiet place Port Carlisle seems more quiet still. It apparently consists of one row of houses—and the station. The railway was once a canal which was to connect Carlisle with the ocean and so turn it into a seafaring place. But it did not effect what was expected and it was drained and turned into a railway, on which a "Dandy" or horse-carriage plies to Drumburgh where it joins the steam railway. A short breakwater was built at the time of the canal scheme to form a harbour, in which two or three small sailing boats lay at anchor.

We found we had sometime to wait, so explored the surroundings, walked over the broken green turf to the sandy shore, inspected the point where the canal had debouched into the harbour, and then went into the station, and sitting down on the bench awaited the starting of the Dandy which was standing there. It was a kind of railway carriage with seats inside and also surrounding the outside of the vehicle. In a field near some men and a boy were playing at bowls—one we thought was the station-master. Two or three other human beings looked on and it all seemed very calm and peaceful. Nobody seemed to have anything to do or to be in a hurry to do it if they had. It would be an ideal spot for a rest-cure! We could not even get a cup of tea, so we sat contemplating the silvery tide of Solway, and the mist-laden mountains, and the deliberate proceedings of the bowl-players.

Presently a porter came leisurely along. He watched the bowlers for a while and then condescended to sell us some tickets. He too seemed rather annoyed with us for wanting them. He went away again and then returned with a tall and venerable looking horse with a very philosophical expression of countenance: it had a decidedly Roman nose, which seemed appropriate, and this fine creature he hitched on to the Dandy. Then to our surprise three or four people collected:

there were really to be passengers beside ourselves. We mounted the Dandy and took the outside seats behind, our backs to the carriage and our feet on so narrow a ledge that we implored each other to hold on tight. The bowls were now getting rather exciting and we were quite sorry when the driver intimated to the horse that it was time to start. However, the horse agreeing we went off, craning our necks to see the result of the last throw. We bowled as smoothly as possible along the bed of the old canal whose sloping sides were overgrown with tall flowering grasses, and cowparsnip and lilac scabious, and golden ragwort and many another plant. Now and then there was a lowering of the bank and we saw the waters of Solway again at an increasing distance. At one point we stopped and some of the passengers dismounted and were going to walk back : they were evidently summer visitors.

We were quite sorry when we arrived at Drumburgh, for we found this method of travelling so pleasant that we wondered it was not more largely adopted. The ordinary train seemed vulgar and commonplace after the Dandy, but as a sharp shower came on our sorrow was changed into satisfaction at having better shelter.

But we were not able to stop and see Burgh-on-Sands, for if we had alighted there was not another train for several hours, and we could not have

reached Carlisle till ten o'clock at night. If it had been midsummer we might have ventured, but the evenings were drawing in—it was almost dark by seven, and we felt all those hours of obscurity would be too much for our philosophy, so we went on and reached our hotel well in time for dinner.

There were some motorists there that evening. They had come from Windermere that day. They seemed quite intelligent beings, but they supposed there was nothing to see in Carlisle. We mentioned the cathedral, but that did not seem to arouse any interest, and they went off next morning for Alnwick. Such are the ways of motorists. Their only care is to get themselves carried about like parcels as quickly as possible from one place to another, and to suppose there is nothing to see anywhere unless it is quite commonplace and well known.

Next day we said good-bye to Merrie Carlisle, not without a sigh, for our holiday was over. It had been one of the most interesting trips we had ever made and we promised ourselves, if the Fates permitted, to go again to this north country and see many things which we had been forced by want of time to pass by. It had been a sort of revelation to us—an entry into another Chamber of the House Beautiful in which we live and of which we know so little. We should have been rather melancholy during that journey had it not been for a hope that

some day we might return. We recollected how one morning very early we had been climbing up the steep road from Aosta and how we had looked back at that exquisite valley with its guarding mountains all veiled in the tenderest blue and violet haze, and had said: "Isn't it sad that we shall never see it again!" But we did see it again only two years later, and so now hope which springs eternal cheered us up!

THE END

Butler & Tanner, The Selwood Printing Works, Frome, and London.