

ANCIENT STONE CROSS ST CUTHBERT'S CHURCH OVER KELLET



Location: The base and broken undecorated shaft of a cross lie in the north of the churchyard near the boundary wall. The cross was fashioned from local limestone grit which can be found within two miles of the church. The cross always stood beside the churchyard wall so that it could be observed by travellers along the road which originally ran past the church on the north and west sides with the entrance to the church through the west tower.

Date: The date of the cross is uncertain but its style suggests that it may be medieval (1066 to 1485) or even early medieval (c900 to 1000), and thus could possibly be of the same date as the Saxon font in the church.



Charters: The cross seen today may be part of the cross mentioned in a Charter of Cockersand Abbey around 1240 to 1268 when a grant was made by 'Adam de Kellet, with the consent of Mald (or Maud) his mother to the canons of Cockersand, of his share of the land in Over Kellet. This is land which is between the crosses which stand upon the land of hospital of St John of Jerusalem, which Gamel Prat held, and the road which leads towards the underwood of Cawood.' This land was given 'in frankalmoign' meaning that the canons would say masses for the soul of the donor. The Knights of St John of Jerusalem held an estate in Over Kellet known as Withwaites and Birklandbarrow was held by Cockersand Abbey. Other land in Over Kellet was owned by Furness Abbey and St Bees Priory.

Wills: In the 15th and 16th centuries John Fawcett (1537) Robert Backhouse (1586) Robert Robinson of Capenwray (1602) and Janet Ireland (1615) all asked in their wills to be 'buried near the cross' in the churchyard at over Kellet and this could be the cross seen in the churchyard today.

References

Chartulary of Cockersand Abbey, *Chetham Soc NS 56*, volume III, part 1, 1905, 905-6

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