

VI.

NOTICES OF SOME UNDESCRIBED SCULPTURED STONES AND FRAGMENTS IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF SCOTLAND. BY JOSEPH ANDERSON, LL.D., ASSISTANT-SECRETARY AND KEEPER OF THE MUSEUM.

The object of this paper is to place on record a number of notices of sculptured stones that have been accumulating in my hands for some time.

No. 1 is a symbol-stone at Sandside, Reay, in Caithness, which presents a new symbol. This is a most unexpected addition to our knowledge of the symbol-bearing group of stones, no new symbol having been recorded, so far as I am aware, since the publication of the second volume of Stuart's *Sculptured Stones of Scotland* in 1867.

This stone has a most curious history, for which I am indebted to Thomas Pilkington, Esq., who was also good enough to favour me with a photograph of the stone, taken by his daughter, from which the accompanying woodcut has been made. The stone is stated to have been found among the sand links down by the shore, and near to a place known as Cnoc Stanger, which is supposed to have been the site of an ancient settlement of some kind, on account of the bones and other relics which have been found there. The time when it was originally found is variously stated as from thirty or forty to fifty or sixty years ago. It was afterwards taken up to Sandside Farm and laid down to mend a hole in the covering of the mill-lade where the road crosses it, and there it remained until the month of September last, when some repairs were being made upon the mill-lade, and it was discovered that the stone was broken across, and the attention of Mr Pilkington was attracted to the sculpturings on one face of the slab. These consist (as shown in fig. 1) of incised figures of a comb, a mirror, a mirror-case, and a curious figure formed by three ovals, each of which has a semicircular hollow at either side in the centre. This is the first example of such a figure or symbol known. The stone is a tough, hard slab of the sandstone of the district, 4 feet $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length, $23\frac{1}{2}$ inches in width at the one end, $16\frac{1}{2}$

inches wide at other end, and $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches in thickness. It is now preserved at Sandside House.

For the details of No. 2, which is also a symbol-stone, I am indebted to Mr John Horne of the Geological Survey. When at field work in

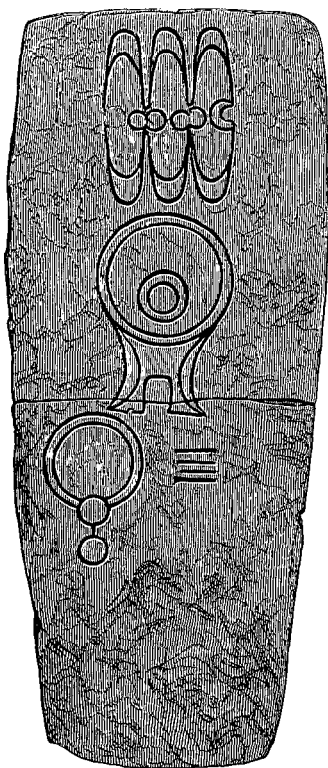


Fig. 1. Symbol-Stone at Sandside, Reay.

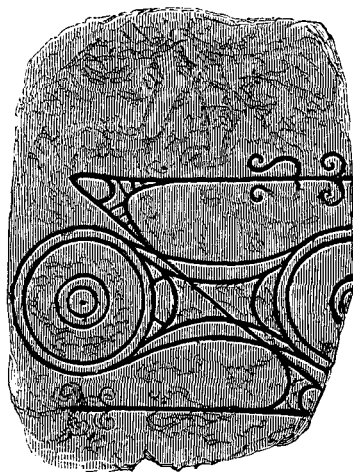


Fig. 2. Portion of Symbol-Stone at Huntly.

1882, Mr Horne observed this stone (fig. 2) lying at the corner of the stack-yard of Leys of Dummuies, about 2 miles east of Huntly, Aberdeenshire. It is a block of diorite (?), bearing the incised symbol of the double disc with the bent rod, and adding one example more to the two dozen or thereby previously known. There are faint traces of what

may be the figure of an animal above the symbol-figure. "The farmer told me," says Mr Horne, "that he had taken it out of the adjoining field, because it interfered with the ploughing. He could not remove the whole block, so he blasted it with gunpowder, thereby breaking it in two pieces, one of which still lies buried in the field. The farmer was

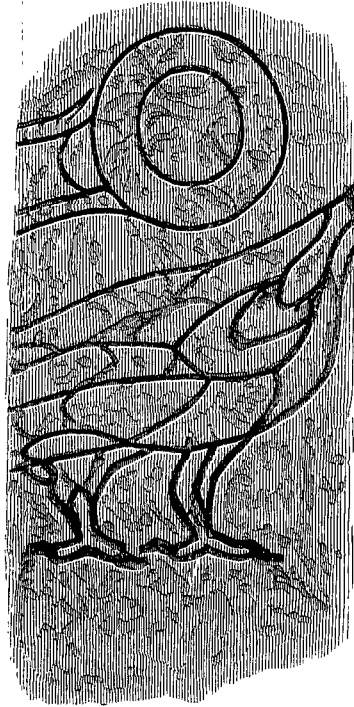


Fig. 3. Symbol-Stone at Fyvie.

on the eve of leaving his farm to go abroad, but the incoming tenant was quite willing to allow the remainder to be dug out, if the spot could be found. But neither the outgoing tenant nor his servant who assisted him in blasting the stone could point out the exact spot where the buried fragment lay, and though I and Mr Gurnell, the secretary of the

Huntly Field Club, spent some time in trying to hit on it by probing the ground with rods, all our efforts proved unsuccessful. On leaving Huntly, I handed over to the Huntly Field Club the part of the stone which I had received from the farmer, on condition that an outlook was to be kept when this field was being ploughed, but up to this date the missing portion has not been discovered."



Fig. 4. Incised Stone from Clune, Dores, Inverness-shire.

No. 3 is a rubbing sent to me by the Rev. A. J. Milne, LL.D., of a stone (fig. 3) built into the wall of the church at Fyvie. It bears a portion of the double disc symbol, and under it a part of the figure of a bird, highly conventionalised, but apparently an eagle. Both figures are incised. Birds occur but rarely in connection with the symbols. Examples at Birnie, Mortlach, Tyrie, Dingwall, and Inveravon are given in Dr Stuart's *Sculptured Stones of Scotland*, but none of these are so carefully executed as the one at Fyvie, and in no other case is the bird associated with the symbol of the double disc. The stone measures 28 inches by 14 inches.

No. 4 is a stone (fig. 4) which I got taken out of the chimney-head of a cottage on Clune Farm, in the parish of Dores, Inverness-shire, where it had been discovered by the Rev. J. E. Fraser. It measures 22 inches in length by $16\frac{1}{2}$ inches in breadth and 7 inches in thickness, and has incised on its flat face the figure of a boar (?), now unfortunately much mutilated by the squaring of the stone to fit it for its position in the chimney-head. It was originally discovered about thirty years previously, when reclaiming waste land not far distant from the site of the cottage. When first found it was much larger than it is now, but it was broken in the excavation, and subsequently dressed to the shape it now bears. It is a hard grit with a somewhat weathered surface, but the incised lines are cleanly and carefully cut.



Fig. 5. Incised Stone from Burghead.

Incised figures of bulls, carved on small flattish water-worn boulders of sandstone, have been discovered from time to time at Burghead.¹ No. 5 is one of those recently discovered (fig. 5), and now in Elgin Museum, for the rubbing of which I am indebted to my friend the Rev. Dr Gordon of Birnie. The fragment measures about 14 inches by 10 inches, and bears boldly incised the front part of the figure of a bull (?).

No. 6 is another stone incised with the figure of a bull (?), which I saw in the garden of Mr Alexander Ross, architect, Inverness, some years ago,

¹ See the *Proceedings*, vol. iv. p. 355, and vol. x. p. 663.

and which I am now enabled to figure (fig. 6) from a paper cast sent by Mr Ross to Dr J. Macdonald, F.S.A. Scot., the original describer of the antiquities of Burghead in the Society's *Proceedings*. It measures 13 inches by 12, and bears on a water-worn surface the figure of a bull, incised in the same conventional style as the Burghead bulls, but it is not certainly known where it was originally found.



Fig. 6. Incised Stone at Inverness.

No. 7 is apparently part of a cross at Newton Woods, near Paisley, for a photograph of which I am indebted to Mr Mure of the Paisley Art Institute, through Mr Cochran-Patrick. It is stated that the two fragments here represented (fig. 7) were found in a well near the site of the old mansion of Newton some fifty years ago. The sculptures bear a general resemblance to those on the slab at Inchinnan, where we also see an example of the beast with the human foot and leg coming out of its



Fig. 7. Two fragments of Sculptured Cross from Newton Woods, Paisley.



Fig. 8. Portion of Cross Shaft from Borthwick.

mouth, and the two beasts facing each other with a human head between their mouths.

No. 8 is part of the shaft of a cross, of very rude workmanship, which is remarkable for the unusual character of the animals sculptured upon it, one having a long curved proboscis, suggestive of an intention to represent the elephant. The stone (fig. 8) is 3 feet long by 10 inches broad and 8 inches in thickness, tapering slightly upwards. It was found at Borthwick, and was first made known to me by Mr Robb, Haddington. It is now in the Museum.

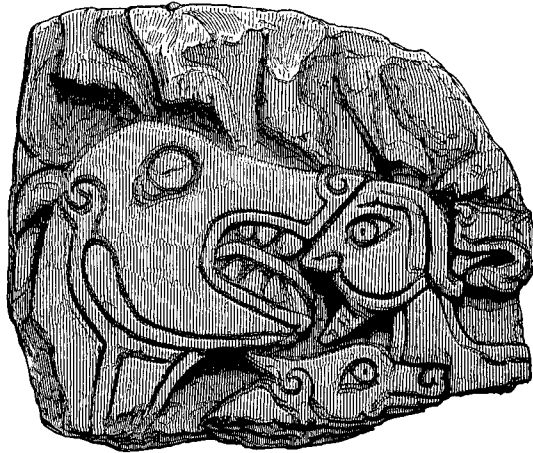


Fig. 9. Fragment of Sculptured Stone from Rosemarkie.

No. 9 is a fragment, showing a very spirited version of a somewhat similar subject (fig. 9), a human head surrounded by fierce-looking beasts. This fragment, which was dug up in the churchyard of Rosemarkie, was presented to the Museum in 1885 by the Rev. Charles Macdowall, through Major Colin M'Kenzie, F.S.A. Scot.

No. 10 is a beautiful fragment of the shaft of a sculptured cross, which reminds one of the style of the manuscripts of the early Northumbrian Church. It stands in the manse garden at Aberlady, and is here figured (fig. 10) from a photograph presented by Mr Robert Hutchison, F.S.A. Scot.



Fig. 10. Sculptured Cross-Shaft at Aberlady.

No. 11 is a rubbing of a slab (fig. 11) in the ruined church of Strowan, about half-way between Crieff and Comrie. It is the smallest sepulchral slab I have seen, measuring only 3 feet 3 inches in length by 2 feet in breadth. It is, however, remarkably well executed and in fine preservation, though, unfortunately, a portion has been broken off one corner. Besides the armorial bearings of John Murray and his wife, Margaret Hepburn, it bears the following inscription:—*HIC JACET HONORABILIS VIR JOHANES MORAY DE STRUANE QUI OBIIT PRIMO DIE MENSIS AUGUSTI ANNO DOMINI MDXLI.* On 24th May 1510, King James IV. set in conjunct feu to John Murray of Strowane and his wife Margaret Hepburn, half of Invergeldy, the lands of Strowane, and others in that district.¹ This arrangement was probably made at the date of their marriage.

Nos. 12 and 13 are from rubbings of recumbent slabs of rude execution, with archaic features, though late in date. The slab (fig. 12) is in the old burying-ground of Tullichettill, near Comrie. It measures 5 feet 6 inches in length and 18 inches in breadth, tapering slightly towards the lower end. It bears a sword with straight guard in the centre of the stone, and the name *JAMES. RIDOCH* on the blade. In the spaces on either side are a number of trade emblems, a square, an axe, an adze, a mallet and chisel, a mill-rind, an axe-pick of the kind used by millers for dressing the mill-stone, a coulter of a plough, a hammer and anvil (?), and an auger, indicating probably the various mechanical aptitudes of the deceased. The connection of the family of Reidheuchs or Ridochs with Strathearn began in 1502, when King James IV. granted a charter of confirmation of the lands of Tulychedhile, Culturagane, &c., to his familiar servitor and steward, James Redeheuche, burgess of Stirling. In 1573 these and other lands acquired by him were erected into the barony of Tullichiddil. In 1542, James Reidheuch of Tullichiddil is mentioned as dead, and it is not till 1610 that another James appears in the line of the Reidheuches of Tullichiddil. The probability is, that the stone here figured belongs to the seventeenth century, as it was only then that the name Reidheuche began to be spelt Ridoche. Of course it is impossible to say whether this is the tombstone of the James Ridoche of

¹ *Register of the Great Seal, 1424-1513, p. 743.*

1610 or of a successor, but there seems to be nothing against the idea of the stone being as old at least as the date thus indicated.

The slab (fig. 13) is in the churchyard of Lochgoilhead. It measures 6 feet 2 inches in length and about 18 inches in breadth. It is more archaic in character than the stone at Tullichettle, and presents a singular mixture of interlaced ornamentation, trade emblems, and symbols, which may possibly be heraldic. It seems to have been used to com-

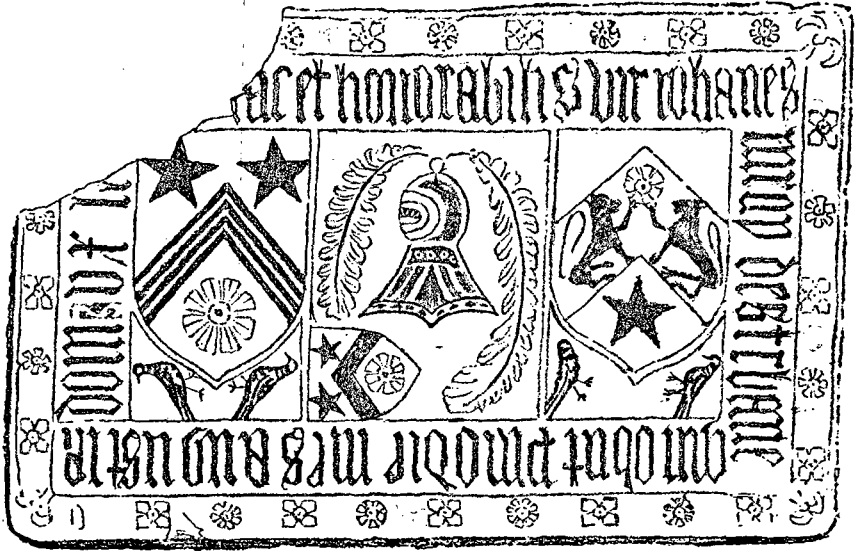


Fig. 11. Recumbent Slab in the old Chapel at Strowan, in Strathearn.

memorate two (or more) individuals, at dates about a century apart. On the lower part of the stone, between a rude figure of a tree and an arm and hand, is the date 1591. At the head of the stone is an inscription, which seems to read "JOHN M^cNAIR;" and on the blade of the axe beside it, in letters of later date, "ROBART M^cEAR;" while on the shaft of the axe is the date 1697. It is curious that the axe, the pick for the mill-stone, and the mill-rind should again appear on this stone. The animal on the lower part of the stone is somewhat mutilated, and there are several other figures which I cannot quite make out.

These two stones are interesting on account of their late date and the mixture of trade emblems that are familiar to us on modern head-stones,

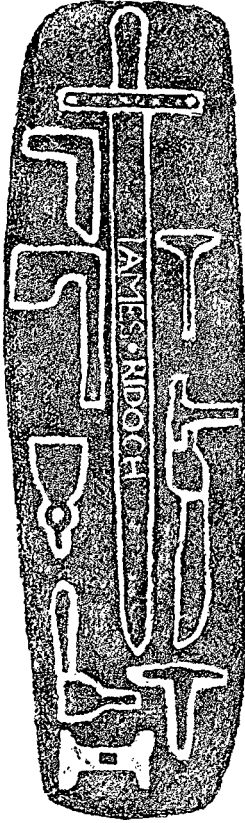


Fig. 12. Slab at Tullichettle.

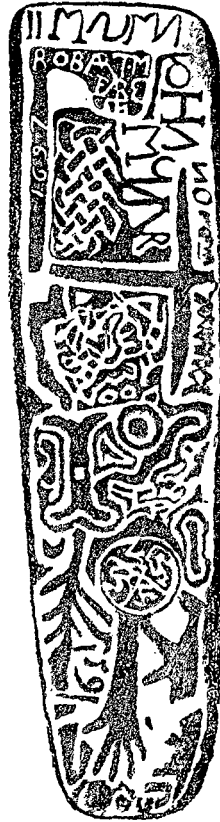


Fig. 13. Slab at Lochgoilhead.

with such survivals of the older symbolism and ornamentation as the sword, animal figures, and interlaced work.