

I.

NOTICE OF AN EARLY INSCRIBED MURAL MONUMENT AND OF AN UNDESCRIBED SCULPTURED STONE PRESERVED IN THE PARISH CHURCH OF TEALING, FORFARSHIRE. BY ALEXANDER HUTCHESON, F.S.A. SCOT., BROUGHTY FERRY.

In the tenth volume of the *Proceedings* of the Society, page 290, in a paper on certain antiquities in the parish of Tealing, Forfarshire, by the late Mr Andrew Jervise, F.S.A.Scot, mention is made of the two ancient stones which are the subject of the present notice; but as the transcription given by Mr Jervise from the inscribed monument differs slightly from that which I venture to submit, and as he fails to trace the person commemorated, and does not describe the other stone, but merely refers to an intended notice, which, so far as I have been able to discover, does not seem to have been carried into effect, the following description and notice seem desirable.

Before proceeding to notice the stones, I may be permitted to refer to the older church of Tealing. Mr Jervise mentions, among other particulars, that the present structure was erected in 1806, to take the place of an older building on the same site, but that a still earlier church occupied a site about one mile to the eastward.

I may dismiss the reference to the earlier church by remarking that it seems to have occupied the rising ground now covered by the buildings and offices of the home farm of Tealing; and that several stones which may have formed part of the church have been utilised in the farm buildings, in particular several stones bearing the geometrical figure known as the mark or cross of consecration, as well as several pieces of geometrical window-tracery and mouldings, built in or lying about in the neighbourhood.

There can, I think, be little doubt that the stones about to be described had been conveyed as building materials to their present site from this early church.

First, then, as to the inscribed slab, that monument, couched, as the legend is, in the vernacular, and forming probably the earliest existing example on stone of the spoken language of Scotland, must be regarded

as of exceptional interest and value to philologists, who are beginning to realise the importance of having accurate renderings of ancient examples of the vernacular, because early writings are commonly approximately phonetic. Hence the earliest MSS. are now being scrutinised and edited for the various Societies with a faithfulness and care never before accorded to them. One result of these researches goes to show that the spoken language of the peasant classes of Scotland of the present day approaches more nearly to the language of the book of Piers Plowman, of Chaucer, of Wyntoun, Henryson and Dunbar, than that of what are called the educated classes. Impressed with this view, and recognising in the Tealing monument an example of much interest, both on account of the language and the art of the lettering, it seemed to me desirable that a cast should be secured for the National Museum. Accordingly, a cast was very successfully taken by Mr David Macbeth, Dundee, to whom my thanks are due for giving his personal superintendence to an operation requiring some delicacy and care, the slab being fixed in a perpendicular position in the interior of the church, and I had lately the pleasure of handing to Dr Anderson, for the Museum, a replica of it in portland cement.

The monument, as I have said, is now built into a recess in the north wall of the church. I have heard a tradition that the stone was discovered in the walls when the old church was taken down. It may have been intended for a mural tablet, to be placed in the wall above the place of interment,—which, doubtless, judging from the excellent preservation of the monument was intramural,—or it may have been inserted in the side of a free standing monument. The slab (fig. 1) measures 2 feet 7 inches long by 1 foot 5 inches high.

The inscription is in Old English or Gothic lettering, in graceful forms, familiar to us on the brasses of England, but rare on Scottish monuments. It reads as follows:—

“✠ : heyr : l̄is : Ingram : of : kethenys : prist
 maystr : ī : arit : ersdene : of : dūkeldū : made : ī : his
 xxxii : yhere : p̄his : for : hym : yat : dent : hafa
 nd : lx : yherys : of : epld : in : the : yher
 of : cryst : M̄ : ccc : lxxx.”

And may be rendered as follows :—

✠ Here lies Ingram of Kethenys, Priest, Master in Arts, Archdeacon of Dunkeldyn, made in his thirty-second year. Pray for him that died, having (reached) sixty (blank) years of age, in the year of Christ 1380.

The inscription is surrounded by a moulded border, enriched by a series of quatrefoils and corner-pieces of characteristic early decorated type.

As to the person commemorated, the recently published Registers of the Procurators of the English Nation in the University of Paris¹ supply interesting information regarding him.



Fig. 1. Mural Monument in Tealing Church.

Three brothers—John, Robert, and Ingram of Kettins—were all students in the University of Paris at the same time, and they were, of course, all members of the English Nation there. John determined as a Bachelor of Arts in 1344, and was licensed as a Master of Arts in 1345. A little later in the same year Robert was also licensed. Still

¹ I am indebted to the obliging kindness of Mr J. Maitland Anderson, Librarian, St Mary's College, St Andrews, for directing my attention to these Records.—A. H.

later, in 1345, Ingram's name occurs, but in somewhat peculiar circumstances. He, or his brother John, had become security for the fees of another Scotch student named John de Rossie. The money was due at Michaelmas, under a penalty of 25 shillings; but the brothers were themselves out of funds, and Ingram appeared and asked for an extension of time. Payment was accordingly deferred until Christmas. But as Christmas drew near they were in no better plight, and so on 16th December all three brothers made an appeal for a further extension of time until Easter. The application was granted on condition that if at or before Easter they paid the whole sum due—viz., 50 Parisian shillings—the penalty of 25 shillings would be remitted; but if within the time specified they failed to make payment, then they would be held indebted to the Nation to the extent of 100 shillings, being 50 shillings of principal and 50 shillings of double penalty. To these terms the three brothers consented, and declared themselves to be quite satisfied with them. But when Easter came round the debt was still unpaid; and on 17th April 1346 Ingram once more put in an appearance and supplicated for a few months' grace, which he obtained. The same thing, however, happened on 9th June, but the patience of the Nation was by this time exhausted, and the brothers were peremptorily informed that further delay could not be tolerated, and that they must pay the debt fairly and squarely within the time next fixed upon. On hearing this one of the brothers made a solemn vow that the money would be forthcoming not later than the 25th of August. And sure enough he kept his word, for on the 21st of that month it is recorded that the three Scotch brothers from Kettins had paid their debt to Theodoric de Foro, receiver of the English Nation. Early in the following year, 1347, Ingram was licensed as a Master of Arts, and on 20th June he was exempted from undergoing certain graduation formalities, on paying the customary fees, on the ground that he was about to return to his native country. He had probably just received some ecclesiastical appointment, as his name appears as "Ingerannus de Ketenis, of the Diocese of St Andrews, Licentiate in Arts," in the Register of Supplications for the fifth year of Pope Clement VI. (1346-47). All three brothers were pupils of Master Walter de

Wardlaw, another Scotsman, who had graduated at Paris in 1340, and who was frequently elected Procurator of the English Nation. He was also for a time Rector of the University.¹

I have not as yet been able to find any further trace of the brothers. Their connection with Kettins was doubtless a proprietorial one. Kettins is a parish and village in Forfarshire, situated about a mile and a half south from the town of Coupar-Angus.

The church of Kettins was consecrated by Bishop David de Bernham on 18th April 1249, and described as "Ecclesia de Ketenes,"—a mode of spelling all but identical with that on the monument.²

It may, perhaps, be now impossible to ascertain whether the supposed appointment which took Ingram back to Scotland was indeed the Archdeaconship of Dunkeld, or, which is more probable, some minor appointment, which speedily led up to that; and it may be quite as impossible to trace by what means or in what capacity Ingram came to end his days at Tealing. The church of Tealing is about four miles north of Dundee, and was in the Diocese of Dunkeld, but it is unlikely that any official appointment would have been found for an archdeacon in such an isolated rural district, and there was probably some territorial reason for his transference to Tealing.

A consideration of the inscription gives rise to several inquiries as to its meaning.

First, it may be a question whether the words "made in his thirty-second year" mean that he attained to the dignity of archdeacon in the thirty-second year of his age, or that he made this monument in the thirty-second year after he had attained that office.

There seems good reason to presume that in accordance with a

¹ Wardlaw belonged to the Diocese of Glasgow, and was a Canon of Glasgow Cathedral. In 1348 he joined the other masters at Paris in a supplication to Pope Clement VI. for ecclesiastical preferment, and obtained a Prebend in Aberdeen and the church of Dunino in Fife. He afterwards took the degree of Master of Theology, and on 14th April 1367 was appointed Bishop of Glasgow. Under Clement VII. he became a Cardinal. It was his nephew, Henry Wardlaw, who was Bishop of St Andrews, and founder of the University here.

² For further particulars regarding the parish of Kettins, see the writer's paper in vol. xxviii. of the *Proceedings*, p. 90.

practice then common, and even now not unusual, that Ingram caused the monument to be erected during his lifetime, and purposely left a blank after the letters expressing the age to which he had already reached, to be filled up with the full age after his death. Leaving the further elucidation of this difficulty in the meantime, I go on to notice other doubtful points.

Second, it will be observed that the words "Prayis for hym yat deyt" are susceptible of two interpretations. The most obvious, and as I think the most natural, meaning is, that these words contain a request for the prayers of the reader for the soul of the person commemorated. The expression of the word "pray" in the plural was only following a grammatical construction of the time.¹ The other suggestion, which however I think may be dismissed, is that the phrase might have been introduced as a thankful ascription of praise to Him (the Saviour) who died, for the commemorated having been raised to an honourable office in His church.

Third, the blank space after the letters expressing the age of "lx" calls for a little consideration. I have already suggested that this space may have been purposely left to receive the full age after death. Why, then, was the blank not filled up? Two explanations are possible. It might be due to the inability of the survivors to supply the true age; or to carelessness. But it may be possible to go further than this in considering the age of the deceased when he died. A consideration of the information supplied by the Paris Registers, along with that in the inscription, suggests a possibility of determining Ingram's age; but the further elucidation of the question is hardly worth the trouble.²

¹ The plural imperative of the Scots verb was formed by adding *is* or *ys*, but instances of the use of these forms occur also in the singular,—see Small's edition of Gavin Douglas, vol. iii. p. 299, line 3,—"*assistis*," for "assist thou"; see also p. 109, line 22, "*harkins*," for "hearken ye." For a statement concerning the usage, see Laing's edition of Wyntoun's Cronykil, vol. iii. p. 344. My obliging friend, Mr W. Craigie, thinks that the form was dying out in Wyntoun's time, and that in the days of Gavin Douglas it survived as a mere archaism.

² The form of spelling in which "zhere" and "zherys" appears in the inscription, corresponds with that used in Wyntoun's Cronykil, see Book i. prologue, line 118, p. 33, lines 707-710.

The language of the inscription deserves some consideration before passing from the subject. The phonetic value of the inscription lies principally in the words "maystr" "arit" "deyt" "eyld"—all perfect phonetic renderings of the present vulgar sound of the words in Central Scotland. The word "eyld" is not now in common use, although its meaning is still well known amongst the older members of the population. In Chaucer's time it seems to have always implied old age, but it may be taken that it did not have always such a restricted use in Scotland.¹

Sculptured Stone.—The sculptured stone (fig. 2) is a fragment of an erect cross-bearing slab. It is built into the external face of the south wall of the church, at a height of about 18 feet from the ground,—too high to be easily examined. I, however, got a ladder, and by this means procured a fairly good rubbing. The fragment measures 2 feet 7 inches long by 10½ inches broad. A space of 8 inches at one end is blank, and doubtless represents the lower

¹ See *Blind Harry's Wallace*. Scottish Text Socy. edit., ix. 667. Also Laing's edit. of Wyntoun's *Cronykil*, Book ix. prologue, line 37.

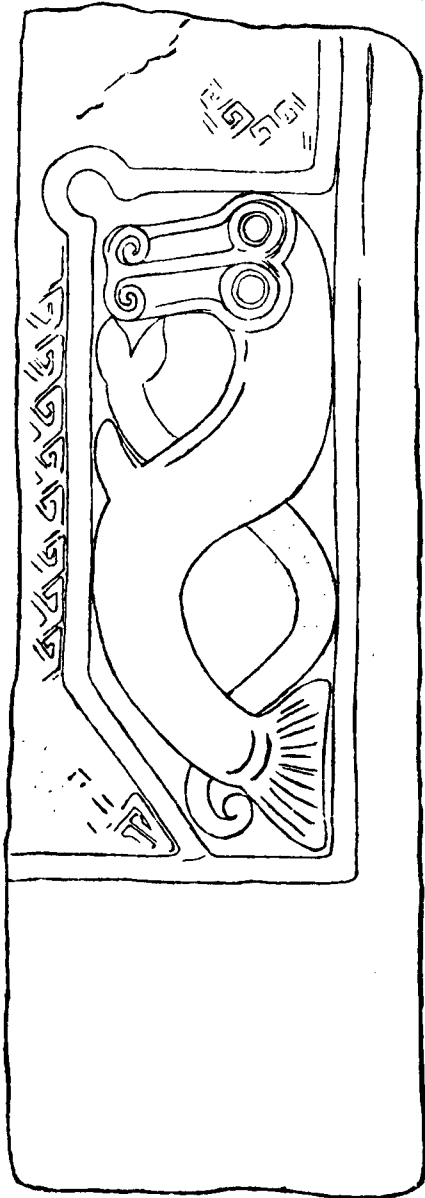


Fig. 2. Portion of Cross-bearing Slab at Tealing. $\frac{1}{2}$.

portion of the stem, which was inserted in the ground or in a base. The remainder of the stem is covered with sculpture. It bears a portion of the stem and of the left arm of a cross, which has been richly sculptured on the face with forms of the "key" pattern. The space below the arm of the cross, and occupying almost the whole interval between the edge of the stone and the shaft of the cross, is sculptured with the figures of two of those nondescript creatures which are peculiar to this class of monuments. The larger animal is of the fish type, having a carved sinuous body. The head, presented in front view, has large saucer-like eyes and nostrils indicated by scrolls depending from and terminating a band which encircles the head, and passing down the centre towards the nostrils, divides what may be called the face into two, giving the idea of a ridge or nose,—a very unusual feature in these sculptures. Otherwise the head suggests that on the Murthly Stone in the Museum,¹—a type peculiar to these two stones. A ventral fin and a salmon-like tail complete the appearance. The other creature, which is also sinuous in shape, lies beneath the body of the first, and is plainly a serpent. Its tail is curled into a scroll, and its jaws are expanded as in the act of biting the nose of the other creature. The cross is of the true Celtic type, having circles at the intersection of the arms, and is remarkable as having a Calvary at base of the stem, of the early type. Calvaries—(so named from Mount Calvary, on which the true cross stood)—consisted in the later examples of several steps, usually three, but not infrequently four or more; but in all the earliest examples the Calvary was of the form of a true mound, with rounded bulging sides. Here the Calvary is a straight slope, like the sides of a pyramid, the key ornament being carried down over its surface, showing that, while still clinging to the form of a mound, the sculptors were unaware of its significance, and so covered it over with ornament.

It is much to be desired that such an interesting fragment of an early sculpture should be rescued from the walls of the church and placed in some museum, as it is rapidly wasting from exposure to the weather.

¹ See *Proc. S.A. Scot.*, vol. xx. p. 252.