

II.

CHURCHYARD MEMORIALS OF CRANSTON, CRICHTON, BLAIRGOWRIE,
AND RATTRAY; A RECORD AND COMPARISON. BY ALAN REID,
F.S.A. SCOT. (WITH PHOTOGRAPHS BY MR JAMES MOFFAT, MR WILLIAM
FINDLAY, AND OTHERS.)

CRANSTON.

Cranston, or Cranestoun, is intersected by the Tyne, even now an attraction for the birds whose name was given to the parish in the twelfth

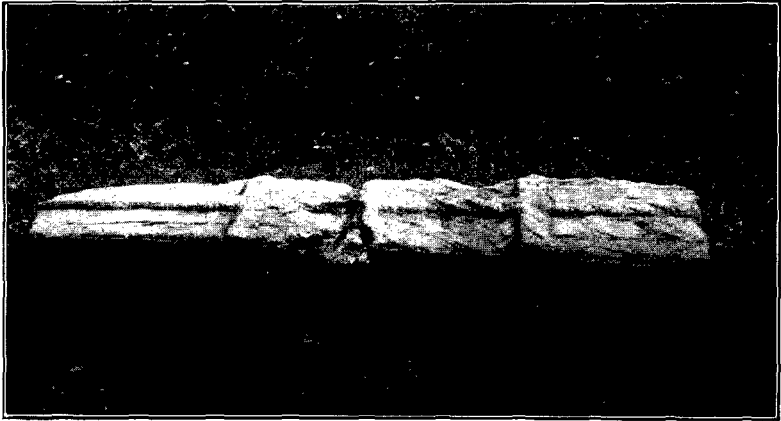


Fig. 1. A Twelfth Century Grave-Cover.

century. Certain old documents refer to its pre-Reformation chapel, as to the chapel and manor of Cousland, which were joined to Cranston at the Reformation. The scanty remains of Cousland chapel and burial-ground are still traceable, but the old church of Cranston may be said to have disappeared. The modern church is a fairly good Gothic structure, built by General Sir John Dalrymple in 1825. This church, with its surrounding modern cemetery, is a quarter of a mile distant from

the ancient burial-place, which lies close to Oxenfoord Castle and gardens, and is, practically, a carefully tended portion of the beautiful grounds. It contains a number of very interesting memorials, most important among them being the cross-slab shown in fig. 1.

This remarkable relic of mediæval times, represented from a photograph by Mr W. U. Reid, is 5 feet 5 inches long, 18 inches broad at the



Fig. 2. The Upper Portion of the Slab.

widest end, tapering to $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches at the foot, and is 9 inches in thickness. It shows a cross with *two traverses*,¹ resembling thus the double transepts of some cathedral styles. The long angles are beaded in a simple cable design, the cross-shaft and arms, which are slightly raised and relieved, repeating the pattern of the edges. When first seen and described, the larger portion was in the position of an erect headstone, appearing as in fig. 2, from Mr Moffat's photograph. This front view also shows, in the

¹ Sometimes called a Patriarchal Cross.

uninjured upper panel, a crude figure in profile. One arm is faintly shown, while the lower limbs are determined by slightly chiselled lines at the foot of the long garment.

As the result of an examination made by the Hon. Hew Dalrymple, it was discovered that the fragment rested on another stone sunk about



Fig. 3. A Hooded Skull. (40'' x 30'' x 8''.)

12 inches in the ground. This proved to be the complement of the standing stone, fitting its fractured section perfectly, and forming when joined to it a mortuary relic imposing and unique. Doubtless it commemorates some ecclesiastic of the ancient church of Cranston, and that it has long lain buried is evinced by the numerous pick-marks that furrow and disfigure its venerable surface.

One of several seventeenth century headstones bears deeply incised designs, which are interesting chiefly on account of the mortuary symbols

being so carefully modelled that they appear almost as in relief. This example supplies a link between the incised and excised varieties, but it bears no visible date or inscription. *Memento Mori* appears under the hour-glass; the cross-bones and skull, in a rather unusual position, being



Fig. 4. Seventeenth Century Ornament. (23" x 22" x 7".)

strikingly obvious through the depth of their outlines. The skull and cross-bones figure prominently also on the quaintly shaped memorial of "Androu Windram Who Depairted the 11 of Juli 1687." Evidently the deceased had been a gardener, as is indicated by the spade and rake depicted on the face of the stone. The inscription is continued between these implements, and reads—"Heres A Worthy Husband A Loveing Father Unto His Four Children," etc.

A most interesting variant on the common death-head emblem is shown in fig. 3. Here the skull is *hooded*, and rests upon a single bone, a winged hour-glass completing the elaboration of a very striking pediment. The sides of this stone are panelled, an arrow and scythe



Fig. 5. Joiner's Insignia.

appearing on that shown in the illustration, a spade and a shovel being relieved on the other. This monument commemorates a family named Hope, who were tenants of Melvin-Hall farm, and dates from 1724. A weak copy of it, also showing the hooded skull, stands near by. The hour-glass, however, has stars instead of wings, a compass and square denoting the calling of "William Montgomery, Wright in Cranston, who died in 1745."

The quaint ornamentation of the small memorial, shown in fig. 4 ;

the mixture of incised and raised designs ; the occurrence of the fluted Ionic pilasters on both faces of the stone ; and the passing of the inscription panel, without break, into the pediment, are all noteworthy. An elaborate incised scroll bears the *Memento Mori* legend ; an hour-glass, boldly relieved, with a curious flower-like support, filling the centre of the scroll-bound pediment. The inscription reads--HEER LYETH JAIMS



Fig. 6. An artistic arrangement. (36'' × 29'' × 7½''.)

MUER WRIGHT IN COUCELAND HE LIVED 46 YEARS HE DEPARTIT THIS LIFE
THE 11 OF JANUAY 1690.

The back of the Muir memorial is shown in fig. 5. Here the pediment scrolls are Jacobean in feeling ; an arch-like ornament is suggestive of the builders' craft ; the Ionic pilasters of the front are here repeated ; there is the usual break between the upper and lower portions of the surface, but there is no inscription except the initials J M. The under panel shows a square and an axe, the symbols of the calling of this

seventeenth century wright of Cousland, whose small but very effective memorial is further decorated with single bones graven along its sides.

The headstone of "Andrew Bell Merchant in Cranstoun Who Departed This Life The 9 of December 1706 His Age 52 Years" is



Fig. 7. Font at Cranston.

shown in fig. 6. The Merchants' Mark appears in the pediment of this very artistic memorial, which is finely designed, and so boldly relieved that its disposition of light and shade is most picturesque. Cross-bones appear under the 4 symbol, a very correct and finely placed skull adding a touch of distinction to the design. Graceful volutes define the pediment, a fine winged cherub-head acting as a keystone, which on the back of the stone takes the form of a skull.

Several other stones show various repetitions of the usual emblems, and a few plain table-stones remain in good condition. One small, unlettered fragment may safely be regarded as the only vestige of the old church of Cranston remaining above the ground. It is clearly the



Fig. 8. Font at Cranston.

relic of an arch moulding, the front portion of a respond, and may have served to support the chancel arch of the vanished sanctuary. In section it shows the full round, the shallow hollows, and the thin plinths of the half-pier responds often seen in churches erected or repaired close on Reformation times.

The search instituted by the Hon. Hew Dalrymple was further rewarded by the discovery of another ancient relic—the square, sculptured

stone object shown in Mr Reid's photographs, reproduced in figs. 7 and 8. That this is the pre-Reformation font of Cranston church cannot be doubted; that it had fallen on evil days, and had to be rescued from a midden, is certainly much more difficult of belief. Its form, its beaded angles, and the archaic nature of its heraldic adornments argue its great age; the curvature of the basin and the construction of the drain are equally eloquent of its purpose. Fig. 7 shows on one panel a chevron and a spherical roundle; on the other, what seems to be a diminutive human figure, and an arrangement of plumes, surmounted by a mutilated *fleur-de-lis*. A much worn head and shoulders is seen on the left side in fig. 8; an animal among trees on the other panel, which is the finest of the enrichments. The height of the font is 1 foot 2½ inches, the width 1 foot 4 inches, the diameter of the basin 10½ inches, and its depth 10 inches.

CRICHTON.

The beautiful collegiate church of Crichton has been happily restored, and with solicitous regard to its fifteenth century characteristics. In the surrounding graveyard there are several fine erect and tabular memorials; but it is clear that many others must have been destroyed, the majority of the tombstones being of a type and appearance essentially modern. In addition to the symbolic details of the older stones, a few quaint rhyming epitaphs of eighteenth century date are deserving of record. First among these may be placed the short and sententious quatrain:—

Their ears are cold
And o'er their grave
The grass may wave
Their tales are told.

Churchyard rhymes rise to the sublime or fall to the ridiculous with a sort of inherent celerity, as witness:—

Kind stranger stop and shed a tear
For her whose ashes moulder here
A fever brought her to her grave
Whom all her virtues could not save
From cruel Death's tremendous power
Whose shafts fly round us every hour.



Fig. 9. Tailor and Blacksmith.

Nor do they disdain that bathos which, to some, is their chief and peculiar charm :—

O may I to the end of time
A Christian life pursue
Happy to live prepared to die
And bid my babes adieu
For I have often troubled been
But I'll pray to be forgiven
And men have much tormented me
But I hope to rest in Heaven
If any person wish to hear
Just come to me yoursel'
And I shall speak to you in fear
And I thee truth will tell.

The upper stone shown in fig. 9 bears a good representation of the usual emblems of the tailors' calling—scissors and “goose,” a very crude winged cherub-head filling the entire pediment. The inscription reads—
 “Heir Lys Richard Peaston In Crichton Husband to Margret Robson

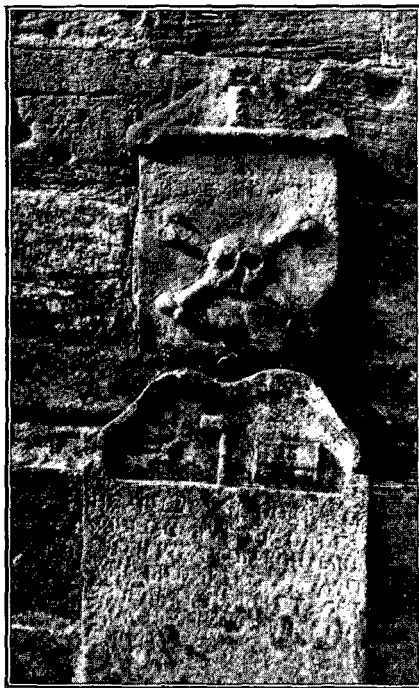


Fig. 10. (25"×19".)

Wha Departed 10 of October Anno 1678." The under stone shown in the same illustration is inscribed: "Heir Lys the Corps of William Affleck Late Smith In Whitelaw Mains," etc., the date, as far as it can be deciphered, being 1668. The nippers and hammer symbolise the life of the blacksmith, and the hour-glass is eloquent of his decease.

The reverse side of the tailor's memorial (fig. 9) is shown in fig. 10. An hour-glass appears in the centre of the sloping pediment; *Memento Mori* is incised across the upper portion of the panel; an effective skull and cross-bones, superimposed, filling the remaining space.

An unusual type of headstone is shown in fig. 11. The boldly projecting round pillars, with the direct support they give to the



Fig. 11. The Fairgrieve Stone.

volute of the pediment; the central rosette; the well-developed base, and the excellent winged cherub-head, are all in their way meritorious. The date 1754 appears on the back of this monument, in an inscription commemorating John Fairgrieve. The inscription on the front reads—"Also Jean Dods Wife to John Fairgrieve Grandson to John Fairgrieve Who Died March 29th 1778 Aged 23 Years."

The prototype of the Fairgrieve stone may easily be found in the

quaint example of seventeenth century design and execution shown in fig. 12. But this memorial has individual merits, the incised cross-bones and skull, the latter with a distinctly articulated lower jaw and double row of teeth, being unusually well-defined. No date or in-



Fig. 12. Quaint Seventeenth Century work. ($30'' \times 21\frac{1}{2}''$.)

scription is legible, though traces of lettering appear on the back of the stone and on the bands of the pediment. The fragment of a rounded font-like object found in the churchyard, appears also in the illustration.

The richly sculptured upper portion of an early eighteenth century

monument is shown in fig. 13. The elaborate design is based on the vine, the branches and fruit being skilfully disposed over a scrolled pediment, whose keystone is a grotesque head. A trumpeting cherub, in a sadly dilapidated condition, appears to the left of the pediment, his neighbour on the right having apparently made very free use of his wings. At the back of the stone the cherubs have merged into death-



Fig. 13. An elaborate design.

heads, as in a fine example at Colinton, which otherwise has much in common with this fragment. The remaining ornamentation is a scroll with a Latin inscription, the words "Girgite Mortuo . . . In Justiciu" alone being legible.

The most remarkable device in this churchyard, or in any other, it may be said, is shown in fig. 14. A cherub-head, with wonderful wings attached to the upper part of the skull, is blowing a twisted trumpet right into the ear of a skull, whose aspect of placid resignation to an unavoidable evil approaches the ludicrous. The inscription is quite

illegible, but it is possible to determine from the general style of the design, the heavy mouldings, and the execution, that this is an outstanding example of late seventeenth century work.

A finely sculptured armorial panel, built over the main entrance to



Fig. 14. Death and the Angel. (25" x 27".)

Crichton church, is shown in fig. 15. The Lyon King-at-Arms has kindly examined this photograph, and says that the arms "are probably those of Agnes Nicolson, the fourth wife of Sir Patrick Murray, first Lord Elibank. She was the daughter of Thomas and sister of Sir James Nicolson of Cockburnspath. Lord Elibank's father, Sir Gideon Murray, was the last provost of Crichton, and obtained a licence to

convert the church lands into a temporal estate. Agnes Nicolson died 16th November 1637."



Fig. 15. Arms of Agnes Nicolson.

BLAIRGOWRIE.

Regarding the churchyard memorials of Cranston and Crichton as fairly typical of the Lowlands, and placing those of two neighbouring Highland parishes in contrast with them, the *pictorial* superiority of the Highland memorials is quite impressive. Here, fancy seems more fertile, and effect more obvious; but the South shows an elegance of design and a delicacy of detail which its Northern compeers rarely emulate. The churchyards of Blairgowrie and Rattray may be regarded,

fairly, as representative of the Central Highlands, but both possess individual features of exceptional interest.

A considerable number of old tombstones remain in the ground



Fig. 16. A crowd of Symbols. (33" x 22".)

attached to the parish church on the Hill of Blair, a square building with a pagoda style of tower, built on an ancient site in 1824. The curious example shown in fig. 16 displays within a beaded panel an assortment of symbols, remarkable for their crowded arrangement and

very crude delineation. The disposition of the cherub-wings is unique. They follow the lines of the pediment, and are feathered in a very unusual herring-bone pattern. The initials I E . M H occupy the angles, the emblems of death, eternal life, and of the secular calling



Fig. 17. Tailors' Insignia.

filling the entire lower portion of the slab. The crown is of a distinctly original type,—the nippers and knife of the worker in leather, and the mortal emblems, following the lines common to the ground. The upper sides of the pediment are inscribed D·E·M·D·IN·BLAIR; the back of the stone—possibly its true front—bearing the inscription proper:—

I · E · HEIR · LAYS · THE · BONES · OF · IOHN · ELDER · SON · TO · IOHN · ELDER ·
 IN · MURTOUN · OF · ARDBLAIR · WHO · DYED · 28 · OF · IANEVARY · 1722 ·
 AND · OF · AGE · 24 · YEARS.

The "goose" or flat-iron and the scissors, emblems of the tailors' calling, are well represented on another small stone shown in fig. 17.



Fig. 18. A Joiner's Memorial. (6' x 3'.)

It also has a winged cherub-head in the pediment, the mortal emblems—hour-glass, skull, and coffin—appearing underneath those that are secular. The inscription, on the reverse, is of the type commencing with "Heir Lys The Bones of," and dates from 1745.

One of the finest of several prone table-stones is shown in fig. 18. Its lower panel gives an excellent rendering of the hour-glass, cross-bones,

death-head, bell, and coffin—the latter shown as if resting on the carrying spokes—the *Memento Mori* ribband with tassels framing the group. The central panel shows an elaborately foliated shield, with crest and mantling, a couple of bands at the sides bearing the initials T H · E C. A winged cherub-head crowns the design of this early eighteenth century memorial, which bears to have been—“Erected By Patrick Horn In Memory Of His Father A Virtuous And Honest Man.” That the deceased had been a joiner is clear from the devices carefully graven over the entire surface of the shield, and comprising saw, square, compasses, chisels, hammer, axe, etc. It is interesting to note that the scroll bearing the inscription is winged, and that the thistle forms part of the ornamentation of the shield.

Another fallen “throughstane” shows incised cross-bones and skull, with crossed shovel and spade, and three sections of inscriptions, quaint in form, and worthy of transcription. That at the top reads—HEIR · LAYS · MARGRAT · WOLSON · SPOYS · TO · JAMES · JACK · IN · BLAIR · SHE DAYED · THE · 17 · OF · OCTOB^R · AND · OF · AGE · 24 YEARS · 98. The latter figures obviously indicate the year, which, from appearances, as from the later date beneath, must be 1698. The large initials I I M W are followed by the rhyme—

OF · IVDGES · MOST · IMPARTIAL
IS · DATH · WITH · SENTENS · FOVNERAL

The lower and more recently cut legend runs—HEIR · LAYS · JAMES · IACK · ISOBEL · IACK · THEY · DIED · MARCH · 4 · 1706 · HIS · AGE · 2 · HER · AGE · 1 · MEMENTO · MORI.

Still another slab of the same style, dating from 1701, shows, in addition to the usual mortal emblems, the fine representation of a pair of scales depending from a beam, the circular scale having a weight in the centre, and, with the other, appearing at the point of just balance. The coulter of a plough, the ploughshare, the yoke, and other figures indicate that the deceased “IOHN · SOVTAR · MERCHANT · BVRGES” must have been a farmer as well as a grocer. From their position, it was

found impracticable to obtain good photographs of these interesting but much worn memorials.

An extremely quaint representation of a passive Resurrection group



Fig. 19. A Resurrection group. (36" x 30".)

appears in fig. 19. Two wingless cherubs hold trumpets perpendicularly over a skull, which rests on a single bone, and is flanked by volutes on which the figures stand. Half-round pillars, with ball capitals, give scant support to a moulded and arched canopy, crude death-figures

appearing on the top edges of the sloping pediment. The reverse side shows, within an oval panel in the pediment, an ineffective female head, flanked by the initials I C · I L, the inscription appearing beneath, and as



Fig. 20. Resurrection Angels.

follows:—"Here Lyes The Bones And Ashes of Jean Low Spowse To James Carver In Banchrie Who Departed This Life November The 4th 1739 And of Age 25."

Very similar in size, style, and execution is another small erect stone

shown in fig. 20. Here the cherubs are shown with wings, and are actively blowing their trumpets, holding palms (?) aloft the while. Beaded pilasters with Corinthian capitals take the place of the crude



Fig. 21. A Family record. (5' x 33½".)

round pillars, and support a shapely pediment on whose edges hour-glasses and single bones are seen. *Memento Mori* appears just over the palms, the skull and single bone occupying the lower position as before. The same portrait head appears with initials and inscription on the

reverse side of this head-stone, which is of exceptional interest, and of considerable merit among these examples of untrained local craft.

Among so many memorials bearing a wealth of sacred and secular symbolism, a welcome variety is offered by a slab of dignified appearance (fig. 21), whose inscribed surface of boldly excised lettering arrests attention strongly. The names of Rattray, Baxter, and Chalmers have for many generations been honourably associated with the district, and this old Baxter record is thus of much importance. It is well shown by the accompanying illustration from a photograph by D. Milne & Son.

From the *size* of this slab, it is clear that it was not originally a table-stone, though it is now supported by four square pillars; and from its *shape* it is equally clear that originally it had been an ordinary erect head-stone. Regarded as an upright stone, with a top roughly circular in form, the inscription reads the wrong way, the conclusion being that it is graven on a slab that at some previous time had borne a still older obituary, which had read the reverse way from that now before us. Be that as it may, however, the legend and symbolism of this fine memorial are of much merit, both of diction and of execution.¹

Nor does the foregoing monument exhaust the interest of the Baxter memorials, for over the remains of the late Rev. Dr Baxter of Blairgowrie and his sons² lies another ancient slab, which, in its graven representation of Abraham's Sacrifice, takes a notable place among the churchyard sculptures of Scotland. This slab (fig. 22), now lying prone before the modern granite tombstone of Dr Baxter, has been an upright monument, as is testified by its shape, size, general appearance, and 9-inch ground-hold. No date is traceable, but from the use of the egg-and-dart

¹ "The letters cover the stone (see illustration). They are about 3 inches long, and raised. The limb of one is sometimes used as a part of the next. V means U. The middle limb of N is always cut thus *N*. An M has been omitted in Drumlochie and has been inserted by the cutter at the top of V. The words at the ends of lines 3, 5, and 8 are divided.

The family appear to have lived for a time on the lands—"eard" of Drumlochie.—*Note by Major P. Chalmers, Blairgowrie.*

² The late John Baxter of Brechin, and the Rev. George Chalmers Baxter, F.S.A. Scot., of Cargill U.F. Church.

moulding, as from the style of work, it may safely be relegated to the early eighteenth century, or at furthest to the close of that preceding. The initials W · B · A · K indicate its connection with the Baxters,—the swathed body of a dead person at the foot and a winged cherub-head at

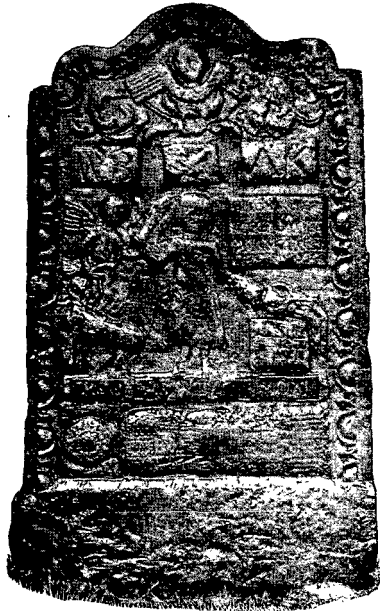


Fig. 22. Abraham's Sacrifice. (52" × 30".)

the top associating the memorial with the demise of some important member of the family.

The delineation of the biblical incident is very quaint and graphic. The largest and central figure,¹ Abraham, holds Isaac by his hair, the sacrificial knife being uplifted in his right hand. The angel is represented as staying the hand of the patriarch, and appears in the air behind the shoulders of the ram, whose horns are, unmistakably, caught in a clump of foliage. Over the altar and the bound figure of Isaac

¹ The figure of Abraham is 16½ inches high.

appears an open book, with the titular inscription, "Abrams Offerring Of Isaac Stayed By An Angel," and a reference to Genesis xxii. The figures rest upon a straight band, on which the *Memento Mori* legend



Fig. 23. The Chalmers stone.

is incised. The square panel over Abraham's head shows a coulter driven through a ploughshare, a common farming device; and an air of much distinction is given to the memorial by the finely worked classical moulding that serves as a frame to the design.¹

Another old family, the Chalmers' of Drumlochic and Cloqubat, are

¹ See a notice of this and of other two Perthshire examples by Dr Christison in the *Proceedings*, vol. xxxvi. p. 349.

also represented by older and newer monuments. An interesting table-stone, the oldest memorial remaining of this family, undated now, and very much worn, is shown in fig. 23 from a photograph by Mr D. Milne. Its upper ornamentation includes two winged cherub-heads, a defaced shield with profuse foliation of thistles, and an oblong moulded panel, on which initials seem to have been incised. The word "Chalmers" is still traceable on the under scroll of the foliation on the left, a feature, this, of more than passing interest, so unusual is the position of the family name. Otherwise the inscription is completely gone; and the symbolism at the foot of the stone—skull, cross-bones, hour-glass, cross-spades, coffins, and *Memento Mori*—is of the type common to the churchyard and district.

RATTRAY.

In the year 1713 a collection was made in the kirk for the boatman of Blairgowrie, and another in 1716 for the renewal of his boat. To this important public servant the lands of Coblehouse were allotted; and when he died he was their last fee-holder, the building of the bridge over the Ericht about 1774 seeing the last of the historic Boat of Blair. The steep road leading from the bridge into Rattray is still termed the Boat Brae, and the last of the boatmen is commemorated by a most apposite and interesting memorial in Rattray churchyard.

The west face of this stone (fig. 24) shows the figure of a boat or coble, with a seat for the rower, and projecting oars. A couple of strong posts flank the boat, a well-twisted cable being stretched taut between them, to which the bow of the boat is apparently attached. Here we have an indication both of the motive power and of the precaution necessary in negotiating the ireful Ericht in days gone by. Over the main symbol appear an hour-glass, a coffin, a skull, a spade, a shovel, and cross-bones, all crudely depicted, and made as large as the surface available would allow. The upper edges of the stone bear the initials R.B. M.M. and a heart, with the rhyme—

To Honer The Dead We May Be Bold
Abraham Our Father Did It Of Old.

The boatman's death is not recorded, unfortunately; but the main inscription is a touching reference to the death of his wife, who pre-



Fig. 24. The Boat of Blair. (33" x 26" x 5½".)

deceased him, leaving no one to honour him, boldly or otherwise, by adding his name to hers :—

HEIR · LAYS · MARJORY · MORSON · & 4 · OF · HER ·
 CHILDREN · SHE · LIVED · IN MARAIG · WITH ROBERT ·
 BENNET · AT · THE · BOAT · OF · BLAIR · 14 YEARS · AND ·
 DIED · 17 · MARCH · 1710 · AGED · 45.

A large number of table-stones retain their original elevation and supports, their seventeenth century dates, and varied symbolism. No fewer than seven of these old memorials rest on their pillars or end-stones, a dozen others lying level with the turf. The tombstone of the Cargills of Haltoun of Rattray is especially worthy of note through its association with a historic name. Captain Hill-Whitson of Parkhill, a descendant of the Cargills, in perpetuation of the persistent local belief that Donald Cargill, the Covenanting martyr, lies buried here, has caused his name to be graven on the ancient memorial of the family to which he belonged. Its dilapidated surface is crumbling to pieces on a base of modern brickwork, but enough remains to show that this had been an ornate, if not an elegant, monument. The section of a shield, with crest and elaborate ornamentation, occupies the upper portion of the slab, whose corners had been embellished by floral bands. The inscription is quite gone from the moulded scroll panel in the centre, which shows only the modern lettering "Donald Cargill of Haltoun of Rattray." In the lower portion of the stone appear the *Memento Mori* band, a skull, an open book, a coffin, another skull, cross-bones, and an hour-glass. It is close to the Parkhill burial-aisle, for which the old church of Rattray seems to have furnished the building material.

The symbols already noted are common to the ground, but a few stones bear striking inscriptions, cut in admirable raised lettering. One of these is worthy of transcription:—"Heir Lyes Ane Honest Man John Blair In Blacklaw Who Depared The 7 Of June 1681 And Of His Age 53." That obituary runs round the margin, the central upper portion of the stone bearing the common rhyme, "Remember Man As Thou Goes By," etc. A group of initials, *Memento Mori*, hour-glass, skull, cross-spades, and cross-bones complete the interest of a very effective memorial. Another and very massive table-stone bears a much worn inscription, also in raised letters, but readable thus:—HEIR LYIS · · · · · HONEST · MAN · DAVID · ZEAM · · · · · EISTER VALK · MIL · OF RATTRAY · VHO · DEPARTED · IN APRIL · 13 · 1661 · OF · · · · · 6. Under the inscription are the incised initials D Z and I N, the bottom portion of the slab bearing

the relieved hour-glass, skull, single bone, and crossed-spades, common everywhere. There is one original and striking feature, however: an enormous pair of wool-shears, admirably hewn, and on an ample scale, not often seen.

Another fine example displays the ordinary emblems of mortality, but with pleasing variety of design, while the secular emblems on the upper portion of the stone are fresh, if not unique. The date 1756 appears among them, and a scroll bears the legend "Mindfull of Eternity." A central shield shows the initials L. A. Y., all that can be discovered of an obituary record, for the main inscription is completely gone. A shuttle-shaped device accompanies the initials; a mallet, ready for beating the yarn disposed on a bench, is seen to the right of the shield, while a very good representation of the sluice of a mill-dam appears over the date panel on the left. Evidently another waulk-miller is commemorated by this stone, which is admirably worked, and very richly moulded round its edges.

The west face of the head-stone inscribed "Patrick Fyfe and Jean Blair" (fig. 25), erected in 1734, is decorated with an hour-glass, cross-spades, cross-bones, and skull, the *Memento Mori* legend appearing at the bottom of the panel. The inscription is followed by the rhyme:—

Remember man impartial fate
Knocks at the cottage and the palace gate
Life's span forbids thee to extend thy cares
And stretch thy hopes beyond thy years, etc.

The east face of the same memorial (fig. 26) is more striking. It shows a large winged cherub-head, two stars, and a floriated and crested shield, displaying the coulter and share of a plough. Pilasters formed of a couple of crude pillars, joined by one capital and base, support the scrolled pediment. The carving on both sides is shallow, but is very clearly cut; the effect approaching nearly to elegance. This illustration is from a photograph kindly supplied by Mr John B. MacLachlan of Blairgowrie.

Leaning against the south wall of the churchyard is a sculptured slab

(fig. 27) of striking appearance and of much graphic power. It shows a female figure seated at a loom, throwing the shuttle with the right hand and grasping the lay with the left. Reed and heddles are distinctly



Fig. 25. A Rhyming memorial.

shown, the representation of the loom, as of the act of weaving, being exceedingly good. The lay seems to be attached to a tablature on which appear the date 1757 and the initials J B and J T. The *Memento Mori* scroll is placed in the centre of the design; the usual symbolic devices

appearing underneath it; flat, beaded pilasters, with quaint capitals, enclosing the whole.



Fig. 26. The Farmers' Arms.

The reverse of this fine memorial (fig. 28) shows a winged cherub-head filling the pediment, over it running the legend, "Mind Time For Time Is Precious." The inscription is very clearly incised and reads:—

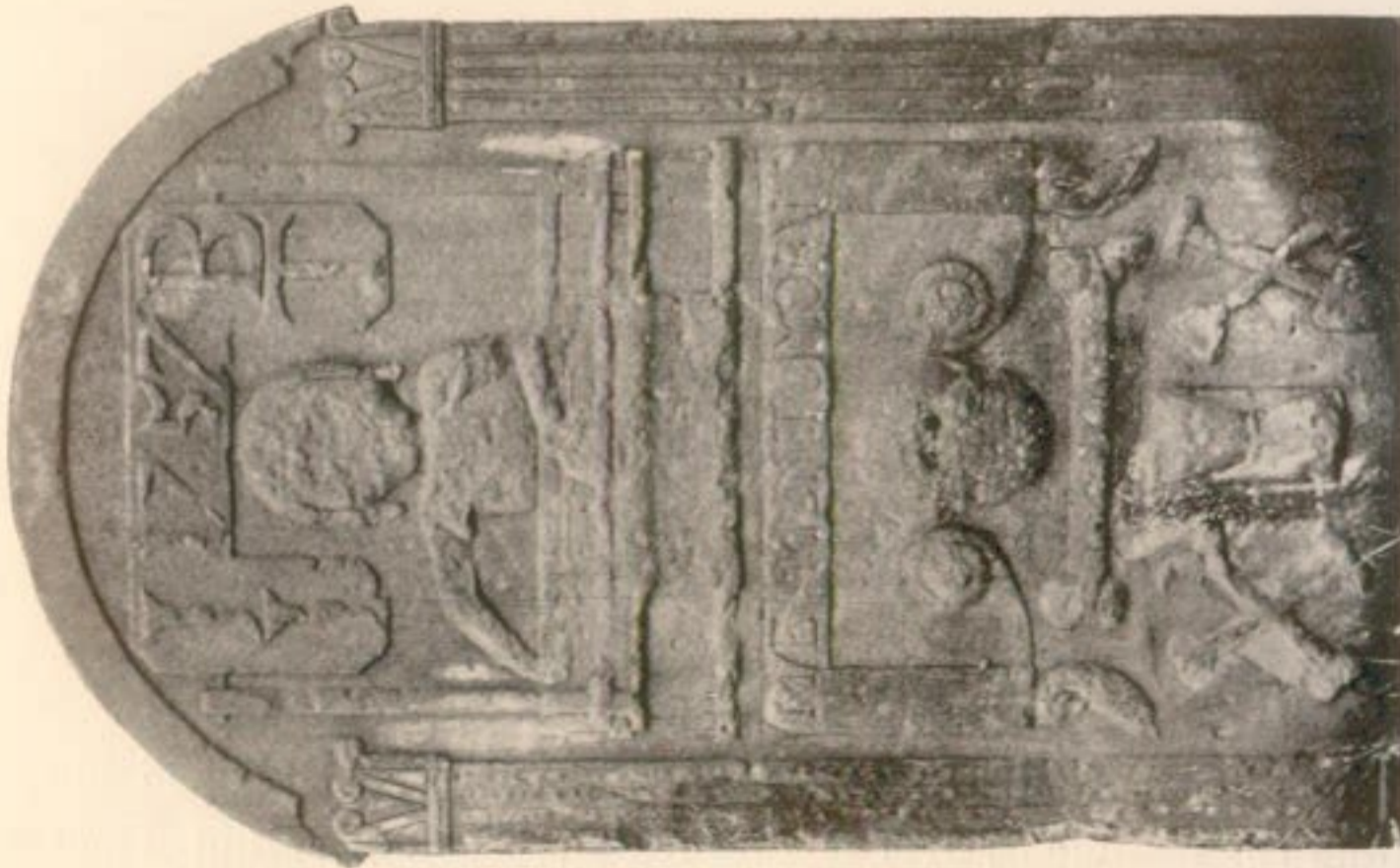


Fig. 27. A Handloom Weaver. (44" x 24½".)

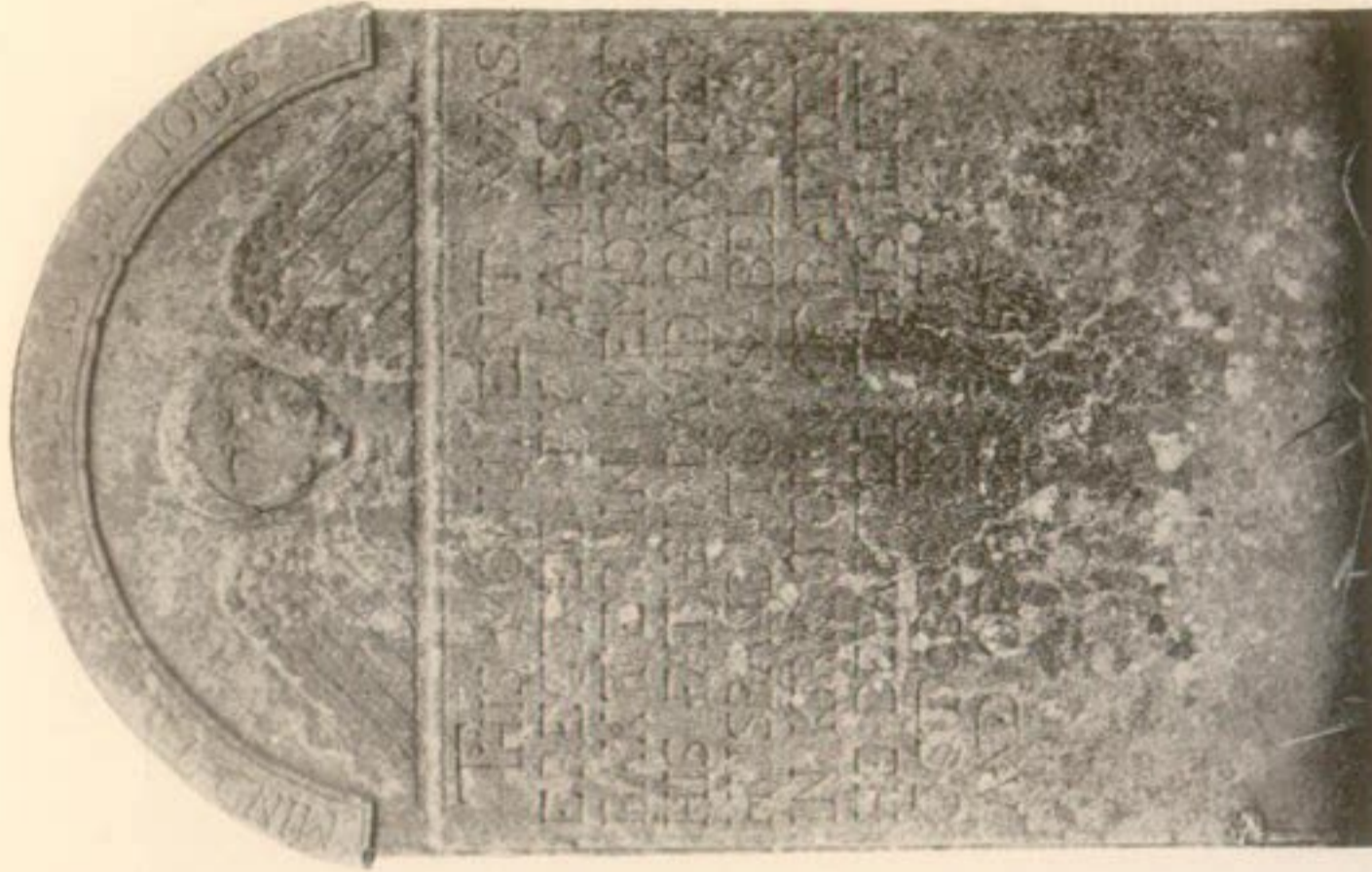


Fig. 28. The Inscriptions.

"This Monument Was Erected By James Baxter In Memory of His Father David Baxter Husband to Isabel Man In Kirkton of Rattery He Departed This Life October 18th 1754 And Of Age 65." These illustrations are from photographs kindly supplied by Mr J. B. MacLachlan.

Among the families buried in the private grounds and vaults of this churchyard are the Rattrays of Craighall, and of Nether Persie and Kingseat; the Whitsons of Parkhill; and the Rattrays of Coralbank. The present church, a plain square structure with an effective tower, was erected in 1820. The previous church stood a little southwards of the present site, and covered the ground now occupied by the burial-aisles of the Rattrays of Craighall and the Whitsons of Parkhill, whose forebears, therefore, were buried within the ancient church. One of the adornments of the old building was a tablet commemorating Mr Sylvester Rattray of Persie, rector and minister of the parish, whose death occurred in 1623. This tablet was originally in the church, and was built into the Craighall burial-aisle, the ancient choir, at the rebuilding of the church in 1820. The aisle having become ruinous, it was removed in 1875, from whence all trace of the interesting old tablet was lost. Its inscription and design had been copied, however, by the late Revd. Wm. Herdman; and in September of 1908 a restoration of the tablet was unveiled within the church by the donor, Lieut.-Gen. Sir James Rattray, K.C.B., of Craighall-Rattray. The Lyon King-at-Arms supervised the heraldic devices, which are appropriately tinted; Mr. A. U. Balfour Paul supplied the working designs, which were executed by Mr Beveridge of Blairgowrie; the inception of the laudable project being due to Major P. Chalmers, a descendant of Sylvester Rattray of Persie, first post-Reformation minister of Rattray. The arms are those of the minister and his two wives, the first, Grizel Robertson, daughter of Baron John Reid of Straloch, the second, Marie Steuart, daughter of George Steuart of Cardneys and Dalguise.

The Latin inscription reads:—HIC SITUS EST MAGISTER SYLVESTER RATTRAY HVIVS ECCLESIE RECTOR ET MINISTER QUI OBIIT PENULT JAN.

ANNO 1623: *ÆTATIS SUÆ* 67. The interpretation being, "Here is deposited Master Sylvester Rattray, Rector and Minister of this Church, who died 30th January 1623, in the 67th year of his age."