

## IV.

TRANENT CHURCHYARD. BY ALAN REID, F.S.A. Scot.

(With Photographs by Mr James Moffat and Mr B. A. Barlas.)

Symbolically and artistically the churchyard of Tranent is the richest in the Lothians. Quality and quantity run hand in hand, and variety is of conspicuous merit. There is a strong spice of originality as well; the record reaching a level unique among provincial burial-places, and challenging comparison even with those that are metropolitan.

In the fabric of the church erected in 1799–1800 several interesting fragments of the pre-Reformation sanctuary are incorporated. Among these are a portion of the moulded jambs of the south-east entrance, the base courses of the south aisle, the buttressed, north-west angle shown in fig. 1, and the burial enclosure shown in fig. 2.

Pictures of the ancient church of Tranent represent a long, narrow, tower-crowned nave and choir, vaulted and stone covered, and strengthened throughout its length by buttresses similar to those shown in fig. 1. At some later date the church was enlarged by the addition of north and south aisles, which, as one of its ministers put it, “communicated with the nave by arches of different forms and sizes.”<sup>1</sup> Of its general appearance from Reformation times till the close of the eighteenth century another local observer declared:—“Tranent old church looked like a donkey with a man on its back and two creels on its sides”; while the old *Statistical Account* is sternly severe in its condemnation of “a very ancient, incommodious, and unhealthy fabric.”

A portion of the northmost of these aisles, or “creels,” forms the

<sup>1</sup> These arches are still traceable in the north wall of the plain, modern building.

burial enclosure shown in fig. 2. One of the original windows is here seen *in situ*, but built up, as also the projecting base and splay common to contemporary mason work. Unfortunately, the mullion is incom-

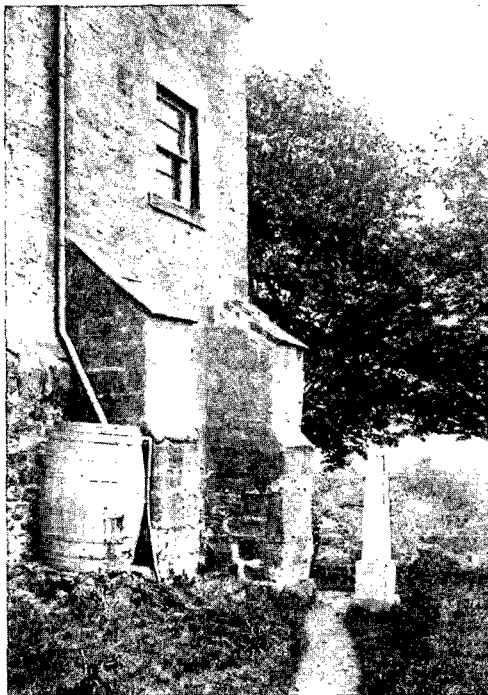


Fig. 1. Pre-Reformation Buttresses.

plete, and it is clearly evident that its relation to the transom has been inverted. Many of the Cadells, once superiors of Tranent, as of Cockenzie, lie buried within this aisle of the ancient church of Travernent.<sup>1</sup> The family obituary closes with the remarkable state-

<sup>1</sup> The aisle now belongs to Mr Polson. The Cadell family have, since 1871, been buried in the lower portion of the cemetery known as the Heuch.

ment that when Mrs Mary Buchan or Cadell died in 1841, aged 88, she departed " Beloved, revered, and lamented by her numerous offspring, of whom 9 children, 57 grandchildren, and 36 great-grand children were alive at her decease."



Fig. 2. The Cadell Burial Aisle.

Built into the northern wall, between the buttressed angle and the burial-aisle, is preserved the interesting memorial of another ancient family of great local importance, fig. 3. The picturesque castle of the Fawsides still dominates the rising ground south-west of Tranent; and it is probable that this panel commemorates that laird who, in 1616, was murdered in his barn by his servitor,

Robert Robertson, as narrated in Pitcairn's *Criminal Trials*. Certain it is now that from their extramural position "John Fawside of that Ilk," his esquire's crest, fesse, and bezants three,<sup>1</sup> keep watch



Fig. 3. "John Fawside of That Ilk" (30 x 24 inches).

and ward over the romantic "Doo cot" of David Seton, which borders the northern boundary of the ground, and dates from 1587.

The celebrated Colonel Gardiner, who fell at Prestonpans in 1745, and was buried *outside* of Tranent old church, rests now *within* the walls of its successor. During the erection of the present southern

<sup>1</sup> The Fawside motto was "Forth and Fear Nocht." See Dr Bedford's article on "The Fawsydes of that Ilk," in vol. xii. of the Society's *Proceedings*.

wall, over or beyond Col. Gardiner's grave, his marble memorial disappeared, and there is now no guide to the spot where lies the laird of Bankton, whose fine old mansion stands as of old a couple of fields away. In much the same way was treated the memorial of the Rev. Robert Balcanquhal, who died in 1664. It was removed from the interior of the church, stripped of its elaborate ornamentation, and used to block the old south-eastern doorway! "Mr

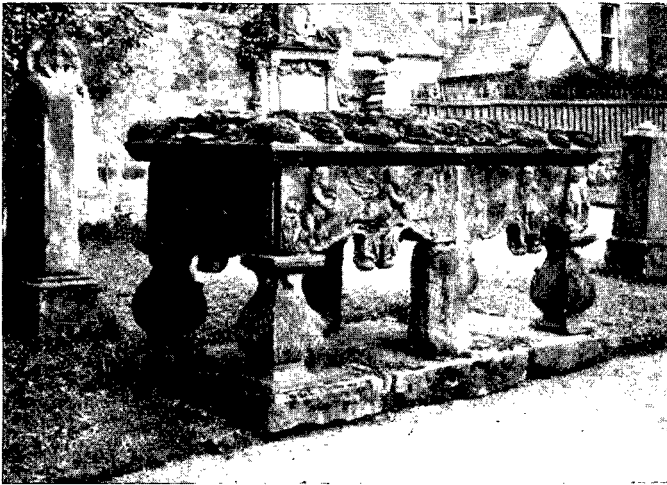


Fig. 4. The Seton Table Stone.

Robert," says the local historian, "together with his family, caused the Presbytery of Haddington, and the heritors of Tranent more trouble than did all his successors in office put together."<sup>1</sup>

The great table stone shown in fig. 4 stands on the higher portion of the ground, and measures 7 feet 6½ inches in length, by 3 feet 8 inches in height and breadth. In noble proportions, elegant ornamentation, and striking symbolism, it must be ranked as distinguished among

<sup>1</sup> *Tranent and its Surroundings*, p. 86, by Peter M'Neill.

Scottish "Through Stones," or as the most elaborate example of its kind now remaining.<sup>1</sup> It is not perfect, however, as is clearly seen by the absence of the central sconce; but as the missing detail ornaments the doorway leading to a neighbouring cottage, we are able to show the completion of the design, from a photograph kindly supplied by Mr Jas. Lyle, F.S.A. Scot. No lettering is visible on this fragment (fig. 5), and its details are much worn. But in bulk, feeling, and history, it conforms so exactly to circumstances, and



Fig. 5. A Detail of the Seton Stone.

requirements, as clearly to prove the vandalism which was at once the cause of its loss and its preservation. The end shown in fig. 4 bears boldly relieved cross-bones, the elaborate foliation which surmounts the table showing here a finely designed skull. A winged hour-glass appears as if poised on the skull, the motto *Mors Est Ultima Rerum* incised on a flowing scroll completing the symbolic design. On the side, or frieze, over the pillar supports, a series of four figures play their respective parts in the story of Death and Resurrection, as symbolised by the actions of sowers and reapers.

<sup>1</sup> Newbattle and Pencaitland churchyards show other excellent examples.

On the extreme left a cherub with seed-sheaf is depicted as sowing; a winged and equally chubby companion acting, apparently, as the Angel of Promise. Towards the right stands a costumed figure holding a scythe, evidently a typical farmer or reaper; the series being completed by a third cherub, thinner presumably, from his labours in the harvest-field, on whose sheaves he leans and stands. The delicate ornamentation of the strong but graceful corner pillars

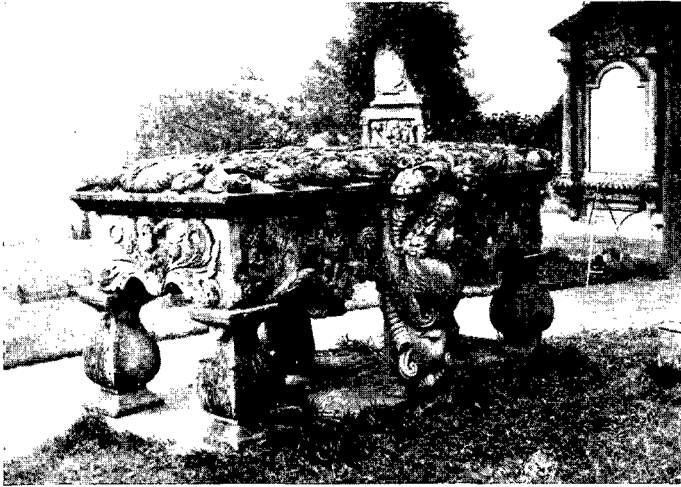


Fig. 6. The Seton Tomb from the S.W.

is noteworthy, as also that of the projecting table which serves as a cornice to the whole.

The west end (fig. 6) shows a beautiful winged cherub-head, a very intricate monogram panel appearing over this figure. Here the side of the memorial is complete, the central sconce showing cornucopiæ, under which is a life-size portrait bust, wearing a full wig, and very daintily costumed. If it be true, as has been stated, that this fine monument was erected by an Earl of Winton, we might here study his lordship's personal appearance, but the inscribed record lends

no support to the supposition. Two obituaries appear within the foliate elaboration of the upper surface. The older dates from 1706—the date of the monument, in all probability—and commemorates William Seton, farmer in Seton, and Agnes his spouse. Eventually, the family of Hutchison acquired the ground through relation to the house of Seton, and, in 1832, Captain William Hutchison, Governor



Fig. 7. A Panel from the Seton Tomb.

of Cape Coast Castle, was buried there. His name seems to be unrecorded; but the second obituary commemorates Captain George Hutchison, R.N., who died in 1852, and his wife, Emma, who died in 1873.

Again the frieze shows four symbolic figures, all cherubic on this side. The subject of the panel, shown enlarged in fig. 7, may be termed *The Source of Growth*. One of the cherubs points to the sun, whose rays stream down on growing corn, on a flower held in



the right hand of the pointing cherub, as on a pear, and a bunch of vegetables held by the other.<sup>1</sup> Thus, the growth of flowers, fruit, and food is attributed to the soul of nature, the design reaching its culmination in the last panel (fig. 8), where one cherub approaches with a long loaf—a veritable *staff* of life—the other being represented in the act of eating!

Mural monuments, here at one time conspicuous through their



Fig. 8. The Staff of Life.

number, are represented by five very meritorious examples. Fig. 9 shows the memorial of those later Vallances whose forbears were lairds of Tranent, their residence being the venerable tower still standing grimly useful within the ancient town. Here the family arms are displayed, flanked, as seems inevitable, by the cornucopiæ so prevalent in this graveyard. The names of four lairds appear on the restored central panel. These stretch from 1723, when the monument was erected, to more recent times, and include Patrick Vallance, who, in

<sup>1</sup> This standing figure is 13 inches high.

1746, named his son William Cumberland, a striking and significant corollary on what had happened so near his home in the previous year. Among the symbolic devices are a couple of fine cherubs that stand on the flanking scrolls, and hold aloft the suggestive skull and hour-glass.

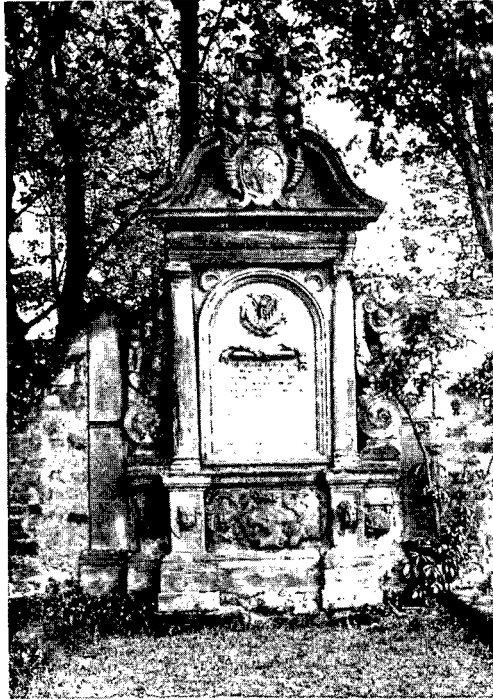


Fig. 9. The Vallance Memorial (12 feet high  $\times$  7 feet 4 inches in width).

The base is flanked by skulls, with *Memento Mori* ribands, winged cherub-heads adorning the sub-bases of the fine Ionic pillars. Cross-bones and crossed spades appear in the central panel, a thistle and rose superimposed, a military baton and the motto *In Utro Que* completing the adornments of this handsome tombstone.

Very stately also is the mural monument from which is taken the remarkable detail shown in fig. 10. The work dates from 1766, and commemorates, on a restored central panel, Bailie George Seton, farmer at Seton, and Katherine Turnbull, his relict. A rhyming epitaph reads :—

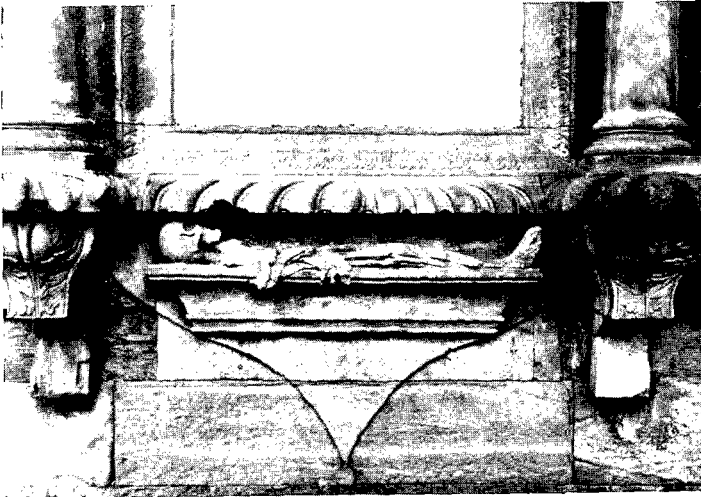


Fig. 10. "Keep Death still in your Eye." (The figure measures 31 inches long. The complete monument appears in the background of fig. 6.)

You err, O Reader, if you should expect  
 Big swelling words, I modesty respect ;  
 How short man's life ! 'las ! while we live we die,  
 To know man's life, keep Death still in your eye.

The Seton arms, cornucopiæ, cherubs, skulls, harvesters, etc., adorn this memorial, but its symbolic interest centres mainly on the striking representation of Death depicted on its lower portion. This figure lies robed within a bier whose side it clutches with a grisly hand, its utter realism and intense expression reaching a level rarely attained in

churchyard sculpture. Vastly different is the Bull's head, crudely designed and worked, though boldly relieved, on a flat stone lying near. No trace of any inscription can be seen ; but the slab marks the burial-

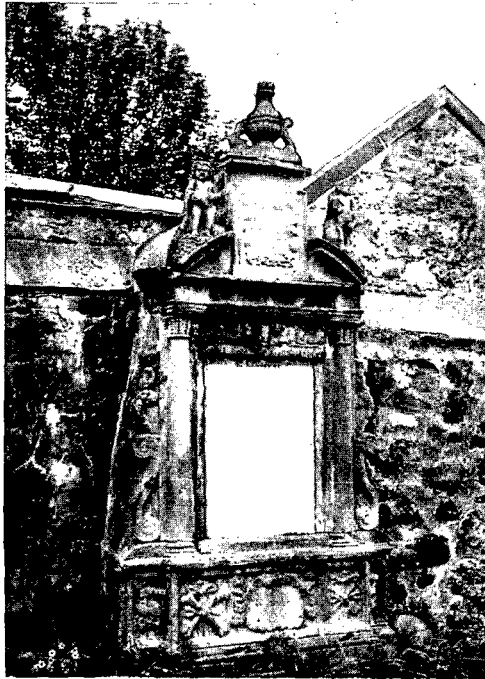


Fig. 11. A Mural Prototype.

place of many a member of the family to which, evidently, Katherine Turnbull belonged.

Though the oldest of these imposing mural monuments, the example shown in fig. 11 is more complete than the others ; but the modern marble inset commemorating John Glen, who died in 1827, detracts considerably from its artistic value. Nothing, however, could entirely

mar the beauty of the cherubic row disposed so gracefully under the pediment. Otherwise, the symbolism follows well-known lines, the base showing skulls, *Memento Mori* scrolls, cross-bones, and crossed spades. A varied assortment of cherubic figures appears on the flank-



Fig. 12. The Hynd Memorial.

ing members and pediment; while the finial, absent from the other examples, completes the graceful design.

In the lower panel shown in fig. 12, a sower and a reaper take the place of the usual emblems of mortality. These figures are flanked by skulls, which rest on single bones, and support *Memento Mori* ribands.

Particularly attractive are the cherubs poised upon the foliation of the flanking scrolls. Both hold aloft hour-glasses from which torch-like flames are issuing, thus intensifying the symbolic representation of life's swift passage. The flying cherubs over the worn central panel are meant, doubtless, to represent immortality, but they seem pitifully old and worn, as does the whole memorial, which dates from 1718, and commemorates the family of Hynd.

Last, but not least among these noble mural works comes the memorial shown in fig. 13, whose only decipherable words, a generation ago, were, "And also Matthew Haldane." Matthew was an influential local laird and farmer, who died towards the close of the eighteenth century. Though somewhat decadent artistically, his monument may be regarded as showing the high-water mark of eighteenth-century symbolism. It is interesting in all its parts, and beautiful, even, in some. Take the base, for example<sup>1</sup>: where in all our churchyard sculpture can we find design or execution superior to this, or the story of frail mortality more chastely told? Observe how the drama of Life seems to evolve itself from the central, winged skull; the long shaft of Death leading through crossed bone and scythe, and crossed spades, to the hour-glass, the symbol alike of origin and finality. The weeping cherubs, standing on the skulls which suggest their grief, are finely proportioned; while the trio of immortals, caught in the upper folds of the draped obituary panel, form a pictorial group unique and charming. Thus, Life, Death, and Immortality are so skilfully portrayed, and so artistically blended, that inevitable decay seems pitiable, and neglected repair reprehensible.

In dealing with the free-standing, upright stones, it may be observed that, while several of them bear a strong family resemblance, they differ considerably in age and character. Cherubic figures and cornucopiæ are conspicuous among their adornments, but their symbolism generally is extremely fresh, varied, and expressive. Fig. 14 shows a large

<sup>1</sup> The lower central panel measures  $50 \times 14\frac{1}{2}$  inches.

mural slab which had rested, originally, on a massive base, similar to those retained by other memorials of its class. The rectangular pediment here shown is also common to the site, but in its details the design

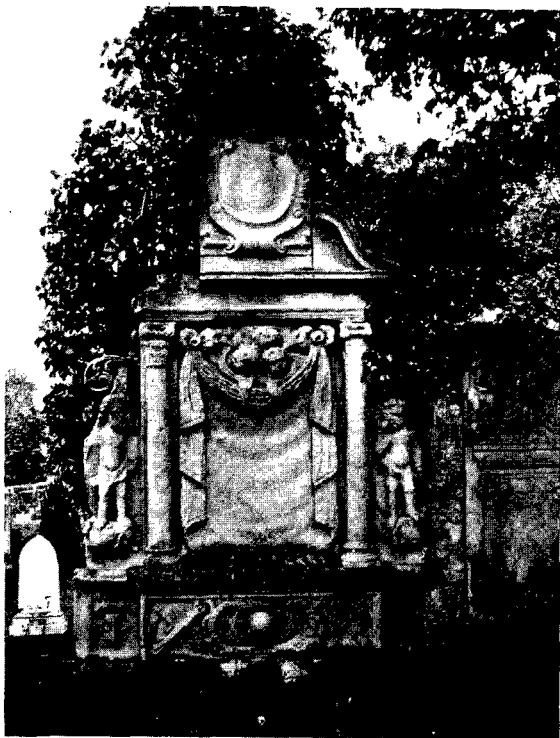


Fig. 13. "And Also Matthew Haldane."

is frankly original. The trumpeting cherubs, holding single bones, are its weakest feature. Otherwise, it might be termed beautiful, particularly in its artistic proportions and the classic feeling of its ornamentation. Chiefly interesting is the symbolic base, where, in a restricted space, the artist has skilfully introduced the hour-glass,

skull, scales, and cross-bones. The cross-bones are joined by a circle, the emblem of Eternity, other examples of which fall to be noted. No date or name are legible; but the work is that of the early eighteenth century, and identification rests on the pediment initials N B and I S.



Fig. 14. N B and I S (5 feet 9 inches  $\times$  3 feet 7 inches).

“David Mather, Quaichmaker,” who died in 1687, and lies at Ormiston Hall, is commemorated by the late seventeenth-century stone shown in fig. 15. Interest centres in the quaichmaker’s tools here represented—compasses, knife or scraper, and axe. The curve of the knife edge suggests the hollowing of the vessel on the turning



lathe, the method of holding the tool being indicated by the socket which is shown without its cross handle. It appears from this record that quaichmaking was a recognised industry of the period, but the death of the Tranent tradesman at Ormiston Hall suggests that his calling was pursued peregrinatively.

But his son, John Mather, was also a maker of quaichs—possibly of “bickers,” “luggies,” and “caups” as well—and died at Tranent in



Fig. 15. Quaichmaker's Tools (29 inches wide).

1756. His name, and that of his mother, Margaret Brown, appears on the same memorial, whose reverse is shown in fig. 16. Here we have, in addition to the conventional emblems of mortality, a riotous aggregation of winged cherub-heads and fiddle scrolls, which, however quaint, compares rather unfavourably with the fertility of idea so manifest in the near neighbourhood.

To a somewhat older slab (fig. 17), dated 1669, we may trace the origin of the design just noted. This monument commemorates a

butcher, rather suggestively named Outsides; and shows in a circular central panel the insignia of his calling, in cleaver, axe, and knife sharpener, or steel. The initials I O and E H appear in the pediment. The same initials are cleverly monogrammed on the reverse of the

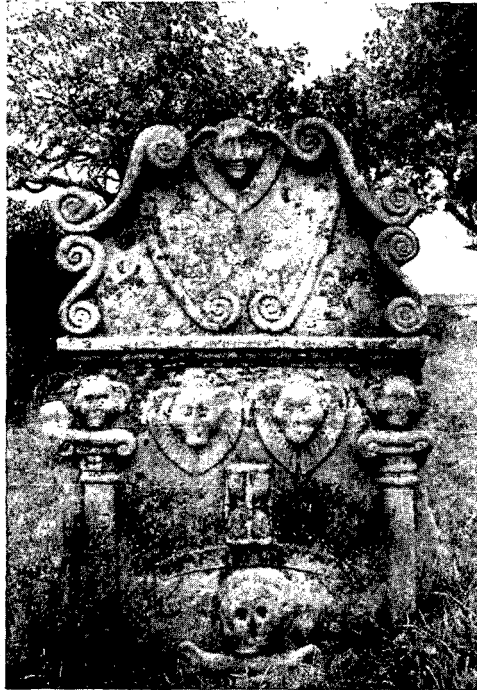


Fig. 16. Scrolls and Cherubs (40 x 29 inches).

Outsides' stone, as shown in fig. 18. Here the standard symbolism is crude and aggressive, and the designer has just missed the refinement sought through spiral Ionic pillars by forgetting their proper bases.

The two "wanderers" shown in fig. 19 now stand beside the eastern entrance to the church. The smaller stone seems to symbolise

Time by two bunches of grapes, and Eternity by the circle, which is skilfully undercut, and very obvious in its meaning. The other, which is dated 1679, was recovered from the bottom of a grave. It has considerable merit of design and purpose, and is further distinguished by a Latin inscription which runs : “ FRUGALITATA . TE . VALENS . FIDUS .



Fig. 17. Butcher's Implements (50 x 35 inches).

VALLA . IUIT . AD . ASTRA . QUIPPE . SUIS . CHARUS . OMNIBUS . EQUUS . ERAT . ÆTATE . VERO . 66 . OBIIT . ANNO . 1679.” That has been translated by Mr William Geddie :—“Strong in frugality, faithful, Valla (Wallace) went to the stars. He was dear to his friends and just to all. Aged 66 he died in the year 1679.”

Presumably, some member of the family to which the eminent architect William Wallace belonged is commemorated here. According

to Scott's *Fasti*, Robert Wallace, A.M., was minister of Tranent from 1603 to 1617. "He left three sons and a daughter, William, Rebecca, Robert, and George." William Wallace, the master mason, died in 1631, a date which makes almost clear his kinship to the Tranent minister.

Fig. 20 represents the upper portion of the memorial erected in 1736



Fig. 18. The Reverse of Fig. 17.

to the memory of Alexander Buchan, "Baxter" in Tranent. The baker's sponge and peels are rather poorly depicted on the reverse; the chief merit of the obverse, here shown, being the delineation of a "cottage" loaf, a very unusual type, cleverly represented on this somewhat common-place, and incomplete pediment.

"HEIR LYETH JOHN SHEIL TAILYOWER HWSBAND TO ALISON JOHNSTON IN PAINSTON—1620," runs the still legible inscription on

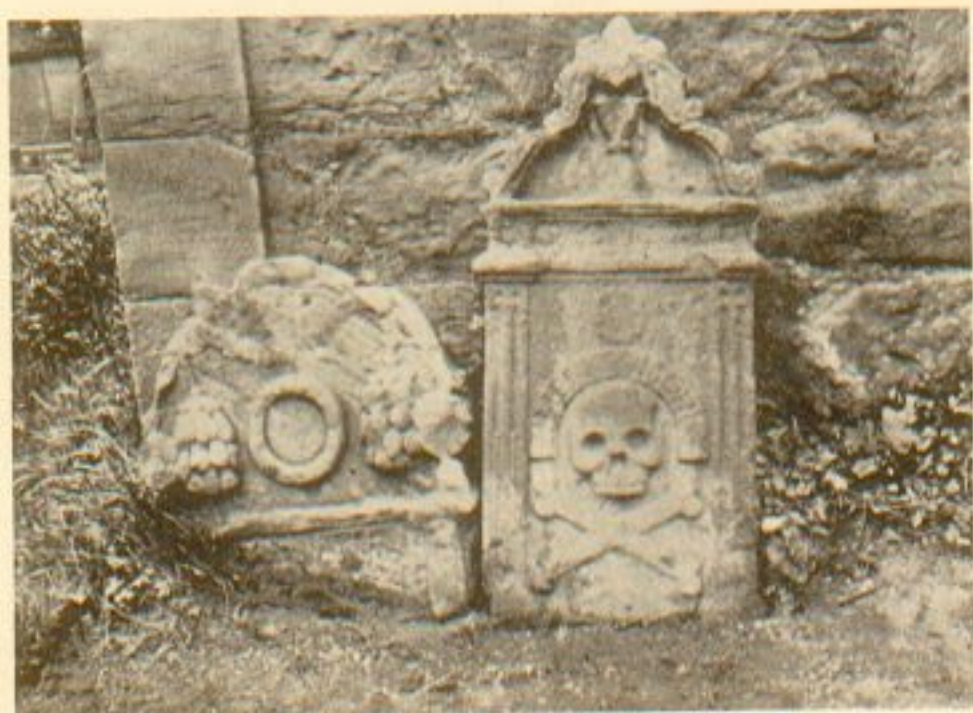


Fig. 19. Waifs and Strays (23 x 22 inches) (37 x 17 inches).



Fig. 20. Alexander Buchan, Baker (49 x 34½ inches).

the tiny memorial shown in fig. 21. The craftsman's implements are cleverly depicted within a beaded *Memento Mori* frame, the skull and cross-bones symbol appearing on the lower portion of the stone. The curious depression in the apex has occasioned some conjecture; but it can only be regarded as a feeble effort towards ornamentation, or, as was remarked by a Tranent worthy, "meant to keep the laddies frae sittin' on it."

The date here is quite venerable; but a fractured flat stone, now



Fig. 21. John Sheill, Tailor (28 x 22½ inches).

lying in a secluded corner of the ground, beats its record by a score of years. It commemorates John—who died in Seton on the 8th September 1600, and shows a shield on which two anchors appear; a pair of compasses and a square suggesting, as is common, that the deceased followed a plurality of occupations.

The art of tombstone designing seems to have reached perfection in the beautiful example shown in figs. 22 and 23. Front, back, sides, and top all bear evidence of much refinement and skill, and prove the outstanding merits of their author. The work, which is dated 1635, though on a slight scale, is of superlative merit; rich in the graces of

Jacobean art, and strikingly appropriate in its every detail. Unfortunately, the inscription over the mortuary emblems is illegible; the unknown monogram, I C, on the pediment, giving the only clue to identification. It seems highly probable that this monument was



Fig. 22. An Artistic Masterpiece (50 × 31½ inches).

designed by a Tranent man, William Wallace, King's Master Mason, or by William Ayton, his successor in the erection of George Heriot's Hospital, whose architecture is reflected in its every aspect.

Fig. 23 shows even more clearly the fine proportions and charming effect of this beautiful design. Here the pediment monogram, repeated in initials beneath, is A S, the cherubic suggestion of immor-

tality, and a worn armorial shield, still showing mullets, filling the lower central spaces. Again we note the masterly disposal of orna-



Fig. 23. The Work of William Wallace.

ment, and the grace of outline seen from every point of view, closing our survey at the striking motto : " SIC VIVE UT SERPE VIVAS." <sup>1</sup>

A couple of typical late seventeenth-century tombstones are shown in figs. 24 and 25. They are crudely conceived and executed, but

<sup>1</sup> Evidently intended for SIC VIVE UT SEMPRE VIVAS; *So live that you may ever live.*



their purpose is clearly enough expressed, both in design and symbol. The larger mortuary panel shows the hour-glass, crossed spades, the *Memento Mori* legend, a skull, and cross-bones, part of which is repeated on the companion stone in the background.

Fig. 25 shows the reverses of the same stones, their relative positions, of course, being altered. The costumed figure of "I M," in the fore-

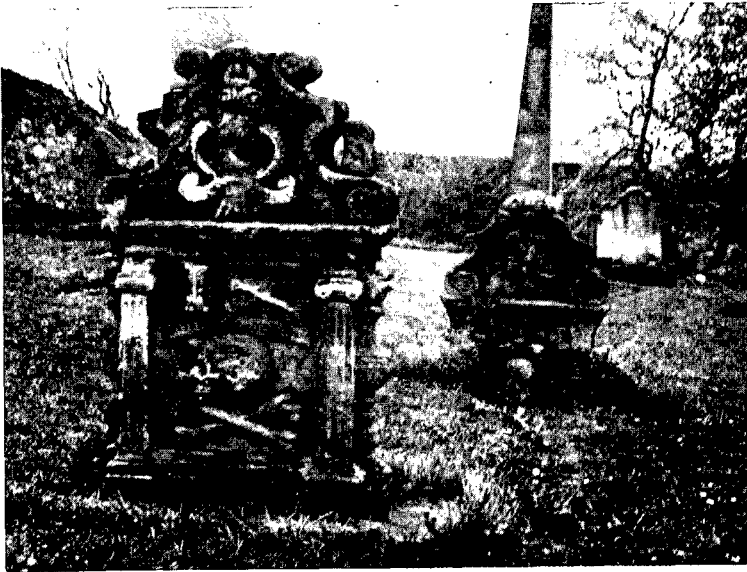


Fig. 24. The Common Emblems (50 x 35 inches)

ground pediment, is extremely interesting. The attitude is strongly suggestive of learning under difficulties, which is not lessened by the fact that a handsome, winged cherub-head directs a wary eye from the pediment scrolls upon the open book. A variety of tools appears on the reverse pediment of the stone, whose front is shown in fig. 24. In the centre a hand issuing from clouds holds aloft a diamond-shaped lozenge; compasses, square, hammer, chisel, and an object resembling

a drumstick—a screwdriver, probably—being grouped around the striking and uncommon central device.

In the hey-day of its mining prosperity, Tranent was celebrated for its butchers, as for the demands it made upon their wares. Hence, the signs of their prosperity and calling are fairly prominent in their last resting-place; the ornate slab, shown in fig. 26, forming a fair repre-



Fig. 25. Learning under Difficulties (40 × 34 inches).

sentative of its order. Full cornucopiæ are cleverly grouped in the pediment; a large, central panel displays the butcher's cleaver, axe, and sharpener, the steel hanging from a long chain which is attached to the leather belt whose "tongue" is seen under the junction of the horns. The front of the stone commemorates the Kedslie family, the obituary being surmounted by cornucopiæ and a fine winged-cherub head.

Alexander Williamson, farmer at Elphinstone, who died in 1708, is worthily remembered by the elaborate stone shown in figs. 27 and 28. There is excellent design here (fig. 27), and superior workmanship, which, almost with certainty, may be attributed to the mason-artificer



Fig. 26. Emblems of Prosperity (49 × 35 inches over base).

who was responsible, also, for our next example. The pediment shows a costumed sower, and two palm-bearing cherubs, who stand on the capitals of flat pilasters. These latter details are almost concealed by another couple of cherubs, who are depicted as standing on skulls, and seem to be directing attention to the elaborately framed obituary.

The reverse of Alexander Williamson's monument appears in fig. 28. The sudden transition from the rectangular panelling of the obverse to the circular panelling here shown is very striking. The effective use of single bones in the lower ornamentation, and the graceful

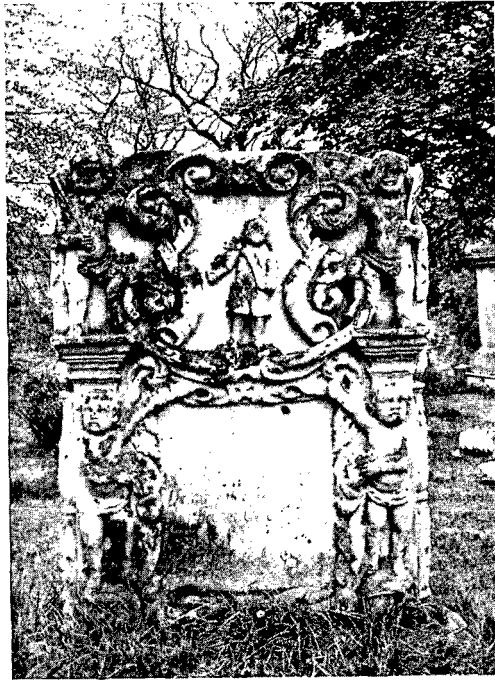


Fig. 27. A Farmer's Memorial (46 × 36 inches).

flanking pilasters, are worthy of note, as is the semi-Jacobean feeling of the design generally. The pediment panel, bearing the initials of the farmer and his spouse, merges most naturally in a winged cherub-head, and is flanked by two sheaf-bearing cherubs, one of whom holds an hour-glass, the other presenting a circular object, a wreath,

presumably, and not the symbol of Eternity, as its smooth and ring-like form might be supposed to indicate.

Fig. 29 shows the elaborate memorial of William Fender, mason in Seton, and Margaret Robertson his spouse, and dates from 1740.



Fig. 28. Reverse of fig. 27.

The pilasters show a graceful, banded arrangement of cross-bones, crossed spades, darts, scythes, picks, and hour-glasses, the central panel bearing the obituary. Compasses are cleverly set on the chevron of the pediment shield, and compasses and square are held by the cherubs, whose feet rest on skulls. The shield also shows three castles, as on other monuments at Prestonpans West Churchyard ;

and it seems correct to regard this device as locally emblematic of the stone mason's calling.

Ornament, more than symbolism, holds the field in the reverse view of this mason's masterpiece (fig. 30), which commemorates "Margaret Robertson, spouse to William Fender, mason in Seton, who died in 1740." *Life* seems to be the message of a varied render-

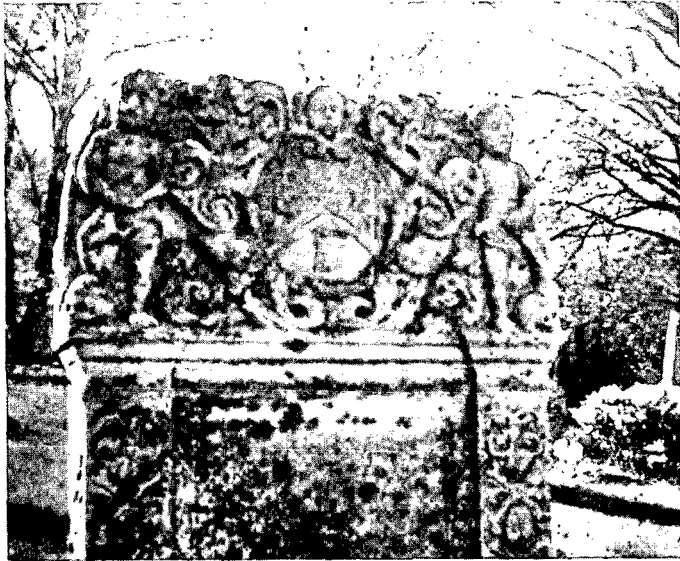


Fig. 29. William Fender, Mason (54 × 36 inches).

ing of cherubs, fruit, and flowers; *Death* being symbolised by two skulls, which suggest cherubic football, and by another which the draperied obituary just fails to hide. Despite their florid qualities, these works of William Fender—as of other contemporary craftsmen—are of much artistic excellence, their very exuberance flashing like a cheerful ray through a period architecturally arid, and ideally decadent.

Again we meet this plethora of ornament in the memorial of the Galhuayes family, which dates from 1702, and is shown in figs. 31 and 32. The laurel-framed portrait panel on the obverse (fig. 31) shows a man wearing the "bands" of a reader, schoolmaster, or



Fig. 30. The Reverse of fig. 29

cleric, but the local records contain no notice of any functionary bearing the curious and unusual name, which, presumably, is a form of Ghilhazie, often pronounced Gilhayes, or Gillies.<sup>1</sup> The upper portion of the stone shows the full and overflowing Cornucopiæ of Life, a device of *twisted* and *empty* horns, emphasising the effect of

<sup>1</sup> *Galloway* has also been suggested.

the more common emblems of mortality, which appear on the lower part of the monument.

The upper portion of the reverse (fig. 32) shows, amid a finely worked acanthus setting, a group of four chubby cherubs—John,



Fig. 31. George Galhuayes (46 x 34 inches).

James, Alexander, and Margaret, the children of George Galhuayes. This quaint sculpture seems to symbolise family affection; the realistic figures, with their surroundings of Corinthian and Ionic devices, arresting attention, and exciting not a little entertainment.

Within the church several mural tablets perpetuate the memory



of certain ministers of the parish, one of these being exceptionally good in design and execution. It is of white marble, and bears traces of past gilding, the representation of an open book on a circular panel in the pediment being in tint. An ornamental urn surmounts the whole, a couple of beautiful winged cherubs flanking the obituary

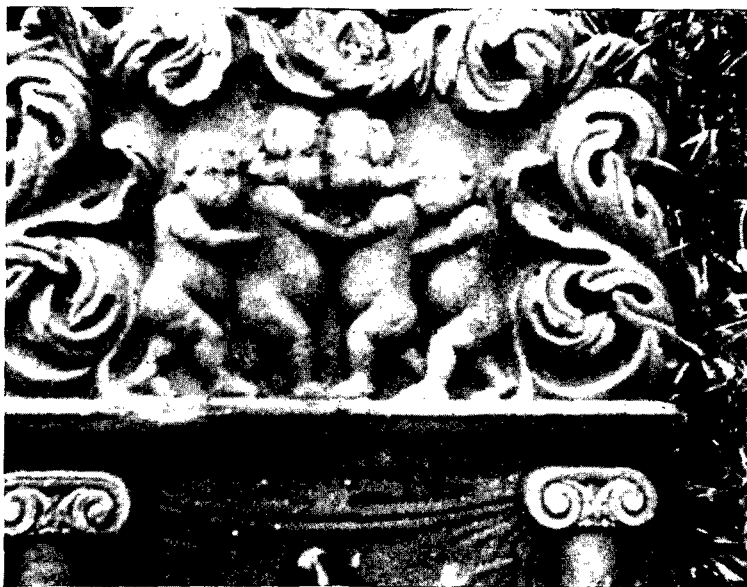


Fig. 32. The Children of George Galhuayes.

panel which reads—"To the Memory of The Reverend & Worthy Mr. Andrew Barclay late Faithful, Vigilant, & Orthodox Pastor of this Parish of Tranent: who died much Lamented, the 1st of August A.D. 1671, and of his age 48. And Katharin Cooper, his beloved, and Virtuous Wife, who died the 3rd of May, A.D. 1683, and of Her Age 59, whose Bodies Lye here interred, this stone was ordered by their dutiful Son, G. B."

The late fifteenth century, or the early sixteenth century, may be represented by the incised cross slab shown in fig. 33. This, presumably, is the oldest memorial remaining above ground, and it is unfortunate that its marginal record is now illegible. The upper por-

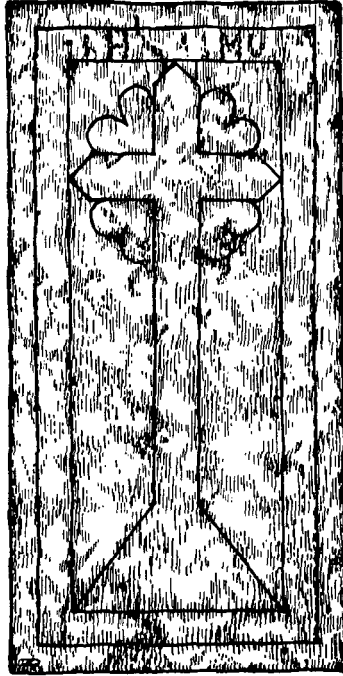


Fig. 33. Incised Cross<sup>1</sup> Slab (6 feet 3 ins. × 37 inches).

tion bears faint traces of lettering, but no date appears, and the local history is silent regarding its period and identity. The incised cross is of a remarkable character, its pointed limbs, connecting circles, and sloping calvary being of a type hitherto unrecorded among

<sup>1</sup> The shaft and arms are 5 inches broad, the width between the marginal lines being 4 inches.

Scottish sepulchral crosses. The V-shaped incisions have been carefully drawn, and deeply cut; but the effect lacks the richness of earlier work, the slab acquiring distinction mainly from the unique form of the Christian symbol. The design is crude, however, and conveys such an impression of immaturity as to suggest the weak copyist of comparatively recent times.

Humour does not obtrude itself in the diction of Tranent church-

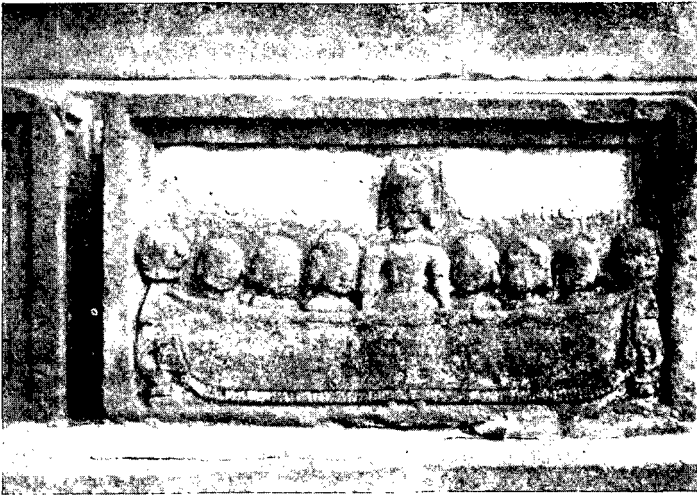


Fig. 34. Margaret Johnston and her Family (28 × 15½ inches).

yard, but it is not entirely forgotten; and it is strongly, though unconsciously, in evidence in the subject of the last illustration, fig. 34. This is not a representation of "The Old Woman who Lived in a Shoe," though, at first, such might well be imagined; nor of that other lady whose husband erected a neighbouring tablet, "as a Tribute of Filial Affection and Gratitude for her many Amiable Qualities"; for it pretends to show the counterfeit presentment of Margaret Johnston and her six children, all placed behind a drapery partly supported by

the hands of the said Margaret, and by a couple of pillars, whose lines, proportions, and tops are strongly suggestive of two more "children." The panel has at one time served as the support of a table-stone, and stands beside its fellow which commemorates Alexander Strathearn, Tayler in Tranent, who died in 1662. In 1559 William Strathearn was one of the Assize which tried and condemned Dr Fearne for having dealings with the devil. Presumably, he was the father of Alexander, who seems to have been twice married, his wives being Margaret Johnston, here portrayed, and "Jann Durrem," whose name is coupled with his own on the companion panel.

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