

II.

NOTICE OF TWO EARLY CHRISTIAN MONUMENTS FROM THE PARISH OF DALRY, KIRKCUDBRIGHTSHIRE. BY JOHN M. CORRIE.

In the garden grounds in front of Hastings Hall, Moniaive, Dumfriesshire, there stands the shaft of an Early Christian Cross, which, we believe, has not previously been described.

The stone is known to have been removed from the shepherd's cottage at Stroanfreggan in the neighbouring parish of Dalry, Kirkcudbrightshire, but of its early history no record has come down to us, and it cannot now be determined where or by whom the cross was first erected, or when and under what circumstances it was thrown down. The cross does not appear to have been known to the writer of the Account of Dalry Parish for the *Old Statistical Account of Scotland*, but in the account of that parish for the *New Statistical Account* we are informed that "In the farm of Stronfreggan there is a large cairn, near to which, in a rivulet that runs by it, are two large stones somewhat resembling human figures; one of them is about ten feet long and quite entire; the other is a little mutilated."¹

In a comparatively recent communication on "The Standing Stones of the Stewartry,"² Mr F. R. Coles states that these stones have vanished, but, from inquiries made, we are disposed to believe that the cross at Hastings Hall may be the mutilated stone above referred to; while a second stone, measuring 9 feet 9 inches in length by 1 foot 4 inches in greatest breadth, that at present serves as a garden seat at Manquhil, the neighbouring cottage to Stroanfreggan, may, in all probability, be the companion stone.

¹ *New. Stat. Acc.*, vol. iv. p. 371. *Vide* also Chalmers' *Caledonia*, new ed., vol. v. p. 230.

² *Transactions, Dumfriesshire and Galloway Natural History and Antiquarian Society*, 1894-95, p. 78.

Referring to the Hastings Hall Cross, Mr Dickson, shepherd at Stroanfreggan, informs us that he has often heard his father say that the stone, which was believed to have the figure of the Virgin Mary carved on it, was originally taken from "the Image Pool" in the neighbouring stream, and used as a lintel for the doorway at the shepherd's cottage. During structural alterations, some time prior to 1865, the stone was taken out, and the carving attracted the attention of the then tenant of the farm, the late Mr M'Turk of Hastings Hall, and he had the stone removed, for preservation, to his private residence at Moniaive.

By the courtesy of the present proprietor, J. A. Mather, Esq., we were permitted to closely examine and photograph the stone. A print of the photograph was submitted to Dr Anderson, and, at his request, we have prepared this brief notice of the stone.

It will be seen from the accompanying illustration (fig. 1) that the pillar, which is of felsite and hewn out of a solid block, is a good deal mutilated. As it stands it measures 5 feet 10 inches in height, 1 foot 6 inches in greatest breadth, and 7 inches in thickness. The sides are somewhat rounded, except where they show the fractures left by the removal of the arms of the cross. The figure subjects on the broad face, to which, no doubt, the Virgin Mary attribution can be traced, are arranged in a panel surrounded by a flattish border.

The design, an enlarged view of which is given in fig. 2, seems to represent two figures in the act of embracing, but is much defaced. Dr Anderson has been unable to identify the costume, but he expresses the opinion that the design may be intended to represent the salutation of Mary and Elizabeth, a notable representation of which occurs on the Ruthwell Cross. On the top portion of the pillar there are slight indications of a triangle divided by a grooved line across the middle and surrounded by a flat border, but there is no other design.

The Auchenshinnoch Cross.—A second monument from the same



Fig. 1. Cross-shaft at Hastings Hall, Moniaive, Dumfriesshire.

parish is recorded by Mr Coles in the contribution already referred to, but his notice is short, and the illustration he supplies cannot be accepted as satisfactory.

Since his paper was submitted to the Dumfriesshire and Galloway



Fig. 2. Enlarged view of the Panel with Figures.

Natural History and Antiquarian Society, the stone has been removed to the garden grounds at Woodlea, Moniaive, the residence of R. M'Millan, Esq., to whom we are indebted for permission to photograph and take measurements.

The stone (fig. 3), which measures 4 feet 1 inch in height, 2 feet $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches in greatest breadth, and from 2 to 9 inches in thickness,



Fig. 3. The Auchenshinnoch Cross Slab, now at Woodlea, Moniaive, Dumfriesshire.

originally stood on the crest of a knoll to the east of the dwelling-house of Auchenshinnoch, Dalry. No attempt has been made to bring the natural irregularities of the stone into a regular form. The cross which is sculptured on the face of the stone is of the simple incised character, without any features by which the sculpturing may be associated with any general type. It closely resembles a cross from Daltallachan in the neighbouring parish of Carsphairn,¹ although in the Auchenshinnoch cross the lines forming the sides of the shaft are not connected at the base. The cross is formed by incised lines about $\frac{5}{8}$ of an inch wide and $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch or thereby in depth. The workmanship, although rude, is more symmetrical than that to be found on several other stones of a similar character, *e.g.* the Laggan-garn stones.

The extreme length of the cross is 1 foot 9 inches and the breadth across the arms $12\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The shaft is $4\frac{1}{4}$ inches wide at the base, and tapers to about 3 inches at the intersection of the arms, where the cross is ornamented by a circular boss $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter. The arms are 5 inches in length by $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches in greatest breadth, tapering to about $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches at the intersection. The upper portion measures $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length by 4 inches in greatest breadth.

Immediately below the cross the following inscription, which is, of course, much more modern than the cross itself, has been added :

DAVID M'MILAN AND
FLORANC HOUATSON
BOUGHT AND PAYED
THIS GROUN THE
YEAR 1734

¹ Described by Mr W. R. M'Diarmid in the *Proc. Soc. Ant. Scot.*, vol. xiv. p. 284. *Vide* also Dr Anderson's *Scotland in Early Christian Times*, 2nd series, p. 92.