

IV.

NOTE ON A CELTIC CROSS-SLAB AND TWO FRAGMENTS RECENTLY FOUND AT ST ANDREWS. BY D. HAY FLEMING, LL.D., F.S.A. Scot.

Since the closing meeting of the last session of this Society a Celtic cross-slab and two fragments have been recovered in St Andrews. The gravel at the east end of the Church of St Mary on the Rock, better known locally as the Culdee Chapel, became so thin that the projecting foundation stone of a buttress was exposed. Though the surface of this stone was much worn, it was obvious that a border at least had been worked upon it. Accordingly, when Mr Peers and Mr Baines were there on the 9th of July it was taken out. It was then found to be a complete recumbent slab, measuring 4 feet 1 inch in length, the breadth varying from $19\frac{1}{2}$ inches to $20\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and the thickness from $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches to 6 inches. The cross upon it (fig. 1) shows no trace of decoration, but there is a semicircular cusp in each of the four angles. For the size of the cross the limbs are very broad. There is no ornamentation of any kind either on the reverse or sides. One corner had been broken off, but is now attached again by copper dowels. The slab had apparently been utilised by the builders of the chancel of the church in the thirteenth century.

Early in October the masons who were pointing the Abbey wall found the lower part of a cross-slab close to the Whyte Melville tomb. This fragment had been utilised by the builders of the wall in the first quarter of the sixteenth century. The narrow side which they left exposed was perfectly plain, and gave no indication of the purpose to which the stone had been originally devoted; but, in picking out the old lime from the bed, a mason noticed traces of decoration, and the stone was therefore carefully taken out. It proved to be 23 inches high, as many broad, and 4 inches thick. The shaft of the cross, both

on the obverse and reverse (fig. 2), has been quite plain, save for the narrow border lines, but on both there is a rich panel on either side of the shaft. Neither on the obverse nor reverse are the panels of the



Fig. 1. Celtic Cross-Slab found at the Church of St Mary on the Rock, St Andrews.

same breadth. In the one case, however, the pattern is the same, a zigzag key with perpendicular lines running through it; but in the other the patterns are quite different, one being a square key and one having rounded corners. Neither on the obverse nor the reverse



Fig. 2. Obverse and Reverse of Fragment of Celtic Cross-Slab
found in the Abbey Wall, St Andrews.



Fig. 3. Edge and Obverse of a Fragment of a Celtic Sculptured Slab found in the Enclosing Wall of the East Infant School, St Andrews.

are the panels the same length, and there is no return line or fillet at the bottom. One corner had been cut off when the Whyte Melville tomb was erected some forty years since.

A considerable time ago Dr Elder Cumming, in passing the East



Fig. 4. Reverse of a Fragment of a Celtic Sculptured Slab found in the Enclosing Wall of the East Infant School, St Andrews.

Infant School, observed a small carved stone in the modern enclosing wall. In November last the School Board cordially granted permission to remove it, and this was done. While in the wall only the narrow side or edge (fig. 3) was exposed. From what remains of the pattern it seems to have been a foliaceous scroll, but there is so little of it that

its precise nature is uncertain. The fragment, which only measures 10 inches by 10 inches by 5 inches, has been part of a Celtic cross-slab, having sculptured panels both on the obverse and reverse, but on neither is a complete panel left. One has had an effective angular fret pattern (fig. 3), the other (fig. 4) an interlaced pattern, which is much wasted. The illustrations are from photographs by Mr J. Wilson Paterson of H.M. Office of Works.