

II.

SOME CARVED STONES FROM ARGYLL. BY ANGUS
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A preliminary word as to how this paper came to be put together will not be out of place, as otherwise the selection of subjects for illustration might seem haphazard, and the notes both meagre and ill-prepared.

The late R. C. Graham, F.S.A. Scot., the father of the present author, after publishing *The Carved Stones of Islay*, with which some members may be familiar, embarked on similar researches in the island of Mull. Certain photographs of grave-slabs and crosses which he took there and in other parts of Argyll remained unpublished at the time of his death, and only came to the author's notice a few years ago. Unfortunately no written matter of any kind was preserved along with the negatives. The author wished to publish the photographs in order to make them available for students of this type of art, but was in something of a quandary for lack of descriptive notes; in most cases, indeed, even the provenance of the stones was unknown, and he was himself furth of Scotland, and quite cut off from books of reference. However, the Council considered that the beauty and interest of the photographs were in themselves sufficient to warrant publication, and during the past two summers two indefatigable workers, Mrs O. St C. O'Malley and Mr J. Graham Callander, have succeeded in locating nearly all the stones, and have supplied the author with notes as to dimensions, material, etc., on the strength of which he prepared such descriptive matter as he was able. He wishes to take this opportunity of expressing his indebtedness for this very kind assistance, and also to Mr Callander and Mr James S. Richardson, Inspector of Ancient Monuments for Scotland, for help and advice in the writing of the paper.

The subjects illustrated are as follows:—a cross-shaft at Kilmore, Dervaig; a cross-shaft at Pennygowan; a slab and fragments of two others at Tobermory; two slabs at Kilinailean, and another at Kilninian, all in Mull; and a slab at Kilmory, Knapdale; another at Kilfinan, Cowal; and two fragments at Saddell, Kintyre, all on the mainland.

CROSS-SHAFT IN CHURCHYARD AT KILMORE, DERVAIG.

A portion of the head of this cross has disappeared, leaving the greater part of the shaft. The upper fragment is 1 foot 5 inches long and the lower 3 feet 10 inches; breadth at bottom, 11½ inches; breadth

below arms, 10 inches; thickness of top, $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches. The head is unusual and at present consists of two crescents, the upper end missing, placed back to back, with a third interlaced across them, all consisting of a double-beaded cord.



Fig. 1. Cross at Kilmore,
Dervaig (front view).



Fig. 2. Cross at Kilmore,
Dervaig (back view).

The front (fig. 1), which bears a panel within a double-roll margin, shows immediately below the head a representation of Our Saviour on the Cross, flanked by the figures of SS. Mary and John, somewhat rudely executed. The top of the cross terminates in a fleur-de-lis. The arms of Our Lord sag, instead of stretching along the arms of the cross, which probably indicates a late period. The two saints are supported on the

heads of two monsters whose open jaws and tongues point upwards, and whose necks develop into foliated intertwined scrolls which occupy the whole of the rest of the shaft. At the bottom is a pair of shears.

The back (fig. 2), which also bears a panel within a double-roll margin, shows a surface completely covered with scroll-work similar to that on the front.

The difference between the shapes of the fracture as shown in the two photographs is due to the fact that the photographs were made from plaster casts, which reproduced the flat carved surfaces only.

CROSS-SHAFT AT PENNYGOWAN.

This cross-shaft of schist stands inside the ruined church at Penny-



Fig. 3. Cross-shaft at Pennygowan (front).



Fig. 4. Cross-shaft at Pennygowan (back).

gowan. It measures 5 feet in length above ground, 15 inches in breadth tapering to $12\frac{3}{4}$ inches, and 3 inches in thickness tapering to 2 inches.

The front (fig. 3) shows in the centre of the shaft a figure of the Virgin and Child, seated on a throne, the podium of which is ornamented with a motif of Gothic tracery, and the front of the legs with small dog-tooth ornament in very high relief, the details of the drapery, the head-dress, and the throne being clearly seen. Below the figure are nine lines of inscription which are not legible in the photograph, and beside and above it is a simple and beautiful foliated scroll. Round the margin is a roll moulding with nail-head ornamentation inside.

The back (fig. 4) shows at the base a clinker-built galley with high bow and stern, oar-holes, and sail set, and above this a very fine griffon, the tail of which becomes a foliaceous scroll and occupies the remainder of the surface. The griffon and scroll are full of character, and form a most satisfying piece of ornament.

This stone, in several of its features, notably the griffon with the tail running into a foliaceous scroll, so closely resembles the Mackinnon Cross-shaft at Iona, which bears the date 1489, that there seems little doubt that both were cut by the same sculptor.¹

SLABS IN CHURCHYARD AT TOBERMORY.

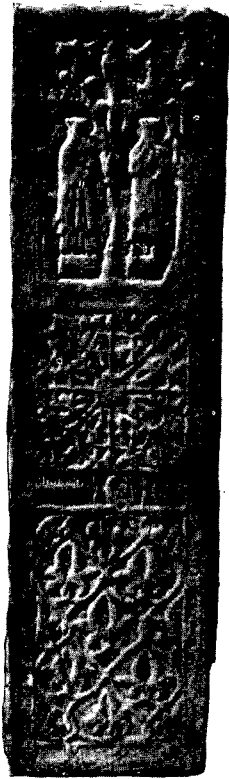


Fig. 5. Grave-slab at Tobermory.

The first slab (fig. 5), which is of blue schist, measures 7 feet 1 inch in length, 1 foot 11 inches in breadth at top, and 1 foot 10 inches at bottom, and 3½ inches in depth. It contains three main divisions. The top one shows two recumbent human figures clad in long dresses with their feet resting on cushions, set in panels of debased Gothic treatment, composed of column supports and canopied heads enriched with crockets and finials; the middle one an elaborate floreated device on a geometrical basis of eight radii, and the lower one a striking diaper of interlaced and foliaceous designs. A broad border surrounds the decorated space, and this carries an inscription of which only three words are legible in the photograph; these are "OBIIT ANNO: DOMINI:". The inscription is not carried round the lower part of the slab, but there is a series of pateræ instead. The top and middle panels are also separated by a band of illegible

inscription, and the middle and lower ones by a row of domestic objects comprising two plates, two pairs of shears, and a double-toothed comb.

¹ Drummond, *Sculptured Monuments of Iona and the West Highlands*, Pl. xxxvi.

The next is a fragment, the upper portion of a slab (fig. 6), of blue slate, scaling badly, and measuring 2 feet 11 inches in length, 1 foot 9 inches in breadth, and 1½ inch in depth. At the top is a panel of foliaceous and interlaced work, based on eight branches radiating from the centre. Below the panel is part of a helmeted head, much damaged. The helmet appears to have been in the form of a cap strengthened with two rings round the temples, and to have had side-plates for the protection of the ears and cheeks.

The third (fig. 7), also a fragment, is of schist, measuring 2 feet 3 inches in length and 1 foot 5 inches in breadth on the face, increasing to 1 foot 7 inches at the back. The edge is chamfered. It appears to have formed

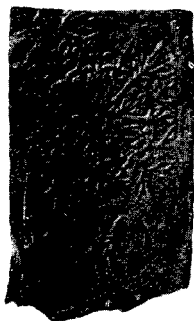


Fig. 6. Cross-slab (fragment)
at Tobermory.



Fig. 7. Cross-slab (fragment)
at Tobermory.

the lower half of a recumbent slab, as there is a strip of irregular foliated ornamentation along the fracture, which no doubt was part of a panel. Below this ornamentation is a blank space, and at the bottom a collection of objects. These comprise (i) a pair of shears; (ii) two round plates; (iii) an irregular five-sided object; (iv) a metal-mounted casket; (v) a rectangular object of indeterminate use. The whole is enclosed by a border, the broad raised bead of which is interrupted by diamond-shaped pateræ at regular intervals.

SLABS IN OLD CHURCHYARD OF KILINAILEAN.

The first slab (fig. 8), of bluish schist, measures 6 feet in length, 1 foot 8 inches in breadth at top and 1 foot 5 inches at bottom, and 4 inches in depth. The sides are sloping so that the slab thickens slightly

towards the back. It is bordered by a double-roll moulding with nail-head ornament between.

The slab bears in the centre a claymore with a fan-shaped pommel and depressed quillons with swelling ends of common type. This is



Fig. 8. Grave-slab at Kilinailean,
Mull.

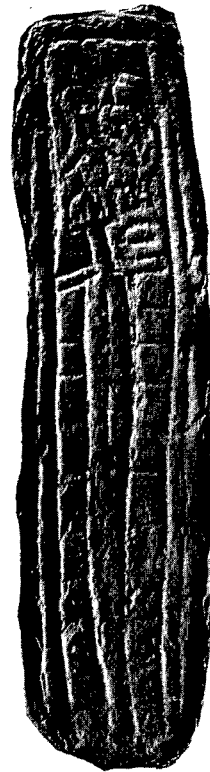


Fig. 9. Grave-slab at Kilinailean.

surrounded by an interlaced foliaceous design which runs into a semi-geometric interlaced device at the head. The ornamentation at the foot is much damaged, but suggests a casket and a square object with a circular depression in the centre, like the one on the stone (fig. 10) at Kilninian, which is doubtless meant to represent a trencher.

Kilinailean churchyard is situated on the northern slope of Glen Aros, between Tobermory and Salen.

The other slab (fig. 9) is of grey-green schist and measures 5 feet $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length, 1 foot 1 inch in breadth at top, 1 foot $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches at middle, and 1 foot $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch at bottom, and 3 inches in depth.

The very crude representation of a sword forms a decided contrast to those on figs. 8 and 10. It will be noticed, however, that the sculptor has made some attempt to indicate a blood-rib and some constructional detail in the pommel. There are also other indistinct markings at the top of the slab. The spaces on both sides of the blade are broken up by horizontal lines.

SLAB AT KILNINIAN.

This slab (fig. 10) is of blue-green schist and measures 5 feet 11 inches in length, 1 foot 5 inches tapering to 1 foot $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches in breadth, and 3 inches in depth. The edge is chamfered.

The principal ornament is again a sword, evidently sheathed, with a round pommel with a blunt-ended projection on the top, straight quillons with quatrefoil terminals, a chape, and a baldric showing the buckle wound round the scabbard. To the right of the hilt are a pitcher and bowl, and to the left a casket with its serrated metal-edge binding and cross-straps on the lid clearly defined. There is running scroll with leaves and fruit on each side of the sword and a splendid foliated cross above the pommel. A separate panel at the foot of the slab contains a pair of shears, a comb, and a square plate with a circular depression in its centre. The slab is surrounded by a double-roll moulding with a twisted cord pattern between.

SLAB AT KILMORY, KNAP.

The upper part of this slab (fig. 11) is occupied by a pattern based on two tendrils carrying leaves and fruit. These form a circle and then, crossing one another above, unite to form a square panel of floreated decoration on the radial plan. The lower part bears in the centre a pair of shears, and on the left an axe. The shears, besides being large, are of an unusual pattern, the ends being broad and blunt, and not pointed as they generally



Fig. 10. Grave-slab at Kilninian, Mull.

are on these monuments, and within the circular spring head is a quatrefoil ornament. The axe has a triangular blade similar to that



Fig. 11. Grave-slab at Kilmory, Knap.



Fig. 12. Grave-slab at Kilfinan, Cowal.

appearing in the hand of the figure carved on the shaft of Macmillan's Cross, also at Kilmory, Knap. Round the slab is a double-roll moulding with a fillet between.

SLAB FROM KILFINAN, COWAL.

This slab (fig. 12) is narrow, particularly at the lower end, and unsymmetrical in shape. The upper two-thirds of its length appear to have been occupied by two panels of interlaced work with a blank space

between them, and the lower portion by a pattern built up of circles; but the details are not well preserved. The stone is bordered by dog-tooth ornamentation.

FRAGMENTS OF SLABS AT SADDELL, KINTYRE.

One fragment (fig. 13) is evidently the upper end of a slab which has lost its upper left-hand corner. The chief feature is a panel containing

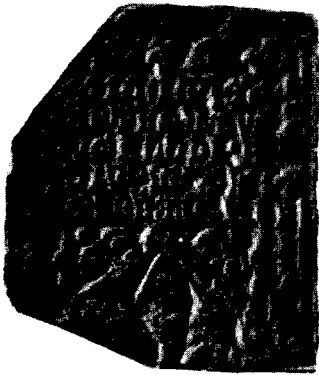


Fig. 13. Grave-slab at Saddell.



Fig. 14. Grave-slab at Saddell.

five lines of inscription, of which the following can be made out: "HIC JACET" in the first line and "DVGALLDI" in the third.

Below this panel is seen the top of a niche with pointed roof, side finials that carry bulbous swellings just below their tips, and crockets of debased foliaceous character. Inside the niche is a head wearing a conical helmet.

The other fragment (fig. 14), which is very similar in style to the last (particularly as regards the detail of the border), shows two figures enclosed in niches. The upper figure, from which the head is missing, is in a standing posture, wears a jupon and greaves, has a scabbard across

the left thigh, and appears to hold in the right hand a spear, or some other weapon, the end of which rests on the ground. Below this is a smaller niche with pointed roof and side-posts that are similar to those of fig. 13, containing an unarmed figure in an attitude of prayer. It also carries a decoration of tendrils and fruit. There is a broad border round the whole of the worked space.

It is possible, but not certain, that these two fragments (figs. 13 and 14) are really parts of the same slab; in this case the head appearing at the bottom of the former would belong to the standing figure just described upon the latter.