

III.

THREE CROSSES IN THE SOUTH-WEST OF SCOTLAND.

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1. *Carleton*.—At the farm of Carleton, about two miles south-west of Glasserton House, Wigtownshire, there has been preserved an



Fig. 1. Cross-slab at Carleton, Wigtownshire.

ancient slab with a cross carved on it (fig. 1). Many years ago it was brought from the neighbouring farm of Craiglemine. Craiglemine is already noted for the discovery there of a portion of a cross-shaft of green slate, and a fragment of a cross-head with boss and circular depression—both mentioned in the *Inventory of Ancient Monuments in Wigtownshire*, and both now in the National Museum of Antiquities in Edinburgh. There is no record or tradition of any ancient chapel or graveyard at Craiglemine. The probability is that the crosses were carried there from Glasserton Churchyard, which is little over a mile away. This was no uncommon act of vandalism in the districts round, down to comparatively recent times.

The cross-slab at Carleton is a rectangular piece of Silurian sandstone, carefully shaped, smoothed back and front, 1 foot 2 inches long, $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches broad, and $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch thick. Originally the slab was longer; the lower end being now broken off, taking with it a part of the shaft of the cross.

The cross on the slab is in low relief, about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch high. The drawing is very rude; no two of the arms are of the same shape or length—the length varying from $1\frac{7}{8}$ inch to $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches from the point of intersection. The full length of the vertical arm of the cross is 8 inches, and of the horizontal 7 inches. Whilst the

drawing is rude, the sculpture work shows no mean ability in the handling of tools.

The design of the cross is evidently of the Northumbrian type. It is very similar to one found in St Ninian's Cave, illustrated in fig. 8 in the *Inventory of Ancient Monuments*. The latter cross is much the better in its drawing, and is probably of slightly earlier date. The date of the Carleton cross may be tenth century, or a little later.

From its slimness, and also its present condition, it may be concluded that the slab was not meant for a headstone or a standing monument. In all likelihood it was used as a grave-cover.

2. *Glasserton*.—The cross, as shown in fig. 2, has been known for many years, having been discovered during the renovation of the interior of the church of Glasserton over thirty years ago. It is recorded in the *Inventory of Ancient Monuments in Wigtownshire* on p. 1. So far as I know, it has not yet been illustrated. When I first saw it, the cross-slab, broken in two, lay neglected on the stair-head outside the door of the "loft." It is now preserved in a temporary box in the vestibule of the church.

The cross-head is of the well-known Whithorn type, of which so many have been found in the district. In this case the arms of the cross are defined by a cord, formed by two grooves roughly parallel. This cord may have extended downwards, enclosing a panel. The head has been marked off from the panel beneath by a single incised line. Flat discs fill the hollows between the arms, whilst the centre is marked out by two concentric rings. The panel beneath, save for the merest fragment, has disappeared.

The greatest breadth of the cross-slab is $17\frac{3}{4}$ inches, and the depth from the top of the stone to the incised line above the panel is 14 inches. The diameter of the larger circle in the centre is $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

The drawing and the workmanship of this monument are considerably below the level attained in the best examples of this type. In all probability it belongs to a later date, when the genius and the skill of the craftsmen were in decline. A date suggested is the late tenth century.



Fig. 2. Cross-slab at Glasserton.

3. *Fardenreoch, Colmonell, Ayrshire.*—When motoring from Glasgow into Wigtownshire last summer (1925), I had occasion to visit a farm near Pinwherry. In the course of conversation with a friend I inquired as to the known antiquities in the neighbourhood. By dint of questioning I learnt that there was a stone with carving on it in the wall of the stable at Fardenreoch Farm. This name was familiar, for here Dr Joseph Anderson records that a very fine stone axe was found. On

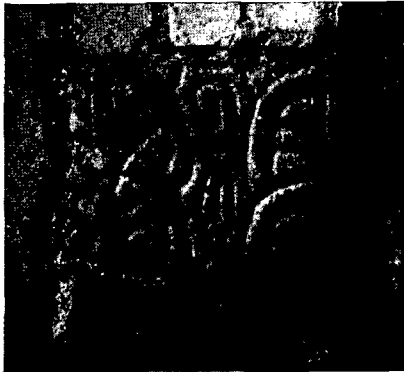


Fig. 3. Fragment of a Cross at Fardenreoch, Ayrshire.

my way I stopped at this farm, and found that the carved stone was the fragment of the shaft of a cross (fig. 3). Many years ago this had been found near the top of a hill behind the farmhouse, and had been built for preservation into the stable wall. Another fragment was noticed about the same time but was not salvaged, and is thought to be still hidden in the dyke of the same high field. The fragment in the stable wall is 1 foot in breadth, scarcely 1 foot in length at its longest, and 6 inches thick.

The design consists of a rope border at each edge of the shaft, within the border on each side a loose three-cord plait, and filling the centre, vertically, a twist ornament. The style is a very rare one in Scotland, but is not uncommon on the other side of the Border. The rope and the plait and the twist are a combination familiar in Cumberland in the late tenth century.

According to the farmer at Fardenreoch, the back of the cross-shaft was plain, but on each edge of the stone there was a similar twist ornament to that carved on the face.

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