

2. TWO PICTISH SYMBOL STONES RECENTLY FOUND AT TILLYTARMONT, ROTHIEMAY, ABERDEENSHIRE.

North Tillytarmont Farm, $\frac{1}{2}$ mile NW. of Rothiemay railway station, lies near the junction of the Rivers Isla and Deveron. The field of Donaldstone Haugh forms the point of the peninsula.

In 1867 an incised stone was ploughed up there. This is recorded by Stuart (*Sculptured Stones of Scotland*, II, 63, and pl. cix). Romilly Allen follows in *Early Christian Monuments of Scotland*, pt. iii, 185. The stone, of red granite, is now built into the wall of an outhouse at the farm and bears the figure of a goose along with the "mirror" and "mirror-case" symbols (Pl. XLII, 3). This may now be called Tillytarmont No. 1 (*P.S.A.S.*, LXIX (1934-5), 227, fig. 2).

In 1944 a second stone was ploughed up in the same field. The farmer, Mr Edwards, observing some markings, placed it at the side of the field. There it was seen by Dr Mackay of Huntly, who told his townsman Mr G. W. Mitchell, F.S.A.Scot. The latter advised its removal from the open field, where it was being rapidly hidden by grass. It now stands a few hundred yards away across the Isla in the grounds of Whitestones, home of Mr Wyness D. Riddoch.

Up till then the symbols had not been clearly seen. In July 1954, however, the writer was able to make a positive identification of the symbols, and informed

¹ *Antiquity*, XXI (1947), 205-11.

Dr Douglas Simpson, M.A., D.Litt., F.S.A.Scot., Chairman of the Ancient Monuments Board. Dr Simpson visited Rothiemay, already well known to him (see *P.S.A.S.*, LXIX), and began the process of having the stone recorded and mapped.

This will be Tillytarmont No. 2 (Pl. XLII, 2).

Dimensions: 4 ft. 3 ins. high, 2 ft. wide, 6 ins. thick.

Material: Red granite.

Incised markings:

- (a) Crescent and V-rod. The right shoulder is partly broken away. There are traces of ornament, like a C and reversed O, on the brow of the crescent.
- (b) Double disc and Z-rod. The discs have inner eccentric circles. The upper arm of the Z-rod shows floriation on one side only.

This discovery was followed by another. On the occasion of Dr Simpson's visit to Rothiemay, Mr Riddoch drew attention to a passage in Gordon's *Chronicles of Keith* (1880), 421, which states that two stones were found in 1867. The "goose" stone, Tillytarmont No. 1, is known. Where is the other? It is unlikely to be Tillytarmont No. 2, which was ploughed up from a depth of about 2 ft. On the strength of this reference, Dr Simpson advised the cleaning of a likely looking stone on the edge of Donaldstone Haugh. This was done by Mr Riddoch, assisted by G. Foster Forbes and Mr Mitchell. It is now at Whitestones also.

This is shown at Pl. XLII. The markings are faint.

Dimensions: 3 ft. 9 ins. high, 3 ft. wide, 1 ft. 3 ins. thick.

Material: Red granite.

Incised markings:

- (a) Crescent. No V-rod visible.
- (b) One ring with concentric inner ring, possibly part of double disc or mirror.

To the right are some pitted marks. In a photograph these appear to form a "fan," as in the "tuning-fork" symbol or as seen in the Redhill fragment mentioned below, but they may be the rest of a double disc. It seems impossible to be more definite even with the aid of powdered chalk, water or torchlight.

The fragment originally at North Redhill (illustrated by Allen, *op. cit.*, 154) had been moved to Rothiemay Castle, which is now unoccupied. On the advice of Dr Simpson it was set up beside the other two at Whitestones. It is shown in Pl. XLII, 1; a narrower undecorated rectangle appears to the right of the one drawn by Romilly Allen.

Altogether, then, three stones of Class I have been found in the field of Donaldstone Haugh. The site, a haugh near the confluence of rivers, reminds one of Inverurie, where three stones of Class I from the old church walls can be seen in the graveyard. The hills above Rothiemay have many cairns; the haugh was a point of settlement in the valley.

A connection between symbol stones and Early Christian settlements is here seen again. St Drostan of Deer had a cell in Rothiemay, and was followed by Knauchland. The foundations of what is known as Drostan's Chapel are near Rothiemay Castle.

Rothiemay shows strong continuity of occupation. The addition of two further symbol stones argues a centre of importance in Pictish and Early Christian times.

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1. North Redhill.



2. Tillytarmont No. 2.



3. Tillytarmont No. 1.



4. Tillytarmont No. 2.

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