

Descriptive Inventory of Early Medieval Monuments TR1-40 from Portmahomack

By Kellie Meyer

TR1: Lower part of a carved cross-slab, including the tenon, with vine scroll, Pictish symbols and a figurative panel.

Dimensions: H 65cms W 110cms D 15cms.

Geology: Yellow micaceous sandstone with a pink tint, very fine grain and multiple inclusions of iron blebs.

Present Condition: Greatly damaged and worn

Description: Sub-rectangular stone slab with breakage along the top and bottom edges as well as along the back face. The tenon is an area of unworked stone (approximately 93 x 22 cms) at the bottom of the slab and shows that this fragment was the bottom of what was most likely a cross-slab. Despite the damage to the back of the stone, some areas of the surface appear to be smooth, arguing for a period of re-use after the initial impairment. The pink tint to the stone as well as numerous black flecks, green marks and a white colouration over some areas may be evidence of pigmentation, or the result of environmental factors or the conservation process. The cross-slab fragment is carved on three faces: Face 1 (broad), Face 2 (left narrow), and Face 3 (right narrow).

FACE 1 (broad) is divided into two fields of decoration; a decorative border (field A), and the central figurative panel (field B). Field A, an inhabited vine-scroll, is contained within two parallel flat band mouldings, the inner, which separates the vine-scroll from field B, is 30mms wide, while the outer is 40mms wide. As a whole, this decorative border is 18cms wide with the scrolls within inhabiting the entire area. The vine-scroll is carved in quite shallow relief ranging from 10 to 15 mms. Wear to the stone has undoubtedly made the relief shallower than it was originally. The vine-stems are thin, approximately 10mms wide, although they do thicken to 30mms at the jointures. Two separate single-stem vines spring to either side from a chalice-shaped source and form scrolls that pass at least twice around winged quadrupeds or bipeds. The winged bipeds and quadrupeds inhabiting the scrolls are also quite shallow, displaying a maximum height of 15 mms above the surface of the stone.

Field B, a damaged panel depicting both animals and humanoid figures, is carved in high relief measuring up to 25mms above the surface of the stone. Beginning in the top left-hand corner of the composition, the chest, forelegs and torso of a left-facing quadruped are clearly visible. The legs of this creature are slim and tapered and measure approximately 80 mms in length. Wear to the stone makes it impossible to determine if this creature is hooved. The torso of this creature tapers upwards, before the line of carving descends downwards in a bulge at what would be the appropriate place for the hindquarters. However, the haunches of the creature are apparently to the right of this bulge, as the unbroken line of carving demonstrates. This makes for a rather unnaturally elongated creature in a composition that otherwise features naturalistically portrayed creatures. The figure in the right-hand side of the composition is clearly human or angelic (identifiable by unmistakable human legs) and also features shallowly carved lines jutting out from the waist that may represent either wings, the stylised drapery of cloth, or possibly even a trumpet. The lower register of figures comprise an interrelated group comprising two left-facing quadrupeds and a humanoid figure. The left-most quadruped is characterised by a broad chest, a torso which tapers up to the haunches,

legs approximately 70mms long that rest directly on the frame, and no discernable hooves. The head is not clearly visible, but a long heavy tail hangs down behind its legs to practically touch its feet. The second quadruped, which is much less damaged, has the same characteristics. In addition, its clearly visible head shows a blunt snout, open mouth, visible fangs and the suggestion of short rounded ears. The right-facing humanoid figure, characterised by a torso which bends at the waist, outstretched arms and legs, might represent a simian figure or a human. Damage to this figure makes it impossible to determine if it is wearing any clothing. This figure is >sat= with outstretched legs a few millimetres above, rather than directly on top of, the back of the left-most quadruped. Its right arm is stretched behind and slightly above its head while its left arm reaches into the open mouth of the second left-facing quadruped.

FACE 2 (narrow left): The shallowly incised (maximum depth of 5 mms) interlace design is heavily damaged along the left edge. From what remains it is possible to see a two-strand, complete pattern characterized by angular bends. It is not specifically identified in the Anglo-Saxon Stone Corpus, and is misidentified as pattern no 658 in *ECMS* I,257; II, 74.

FACE 3 (narrow right): The damaged remains of three identifiable Pictish symbols and an amorphous shape that might have been animal or a fish in its original state. All are carved in a very low relief of a maximum height of 5 mms. The symbols were also internally decorated; only very faint incised marks can now be seen. The top-most symbol is a Crescent and V-rod. It is embellished with a decorated circle placed within the central area formed by the intersection of the V-rod with the outline of the Crescent. The left-hand terminal of the V-rod is shaped like a trident, the right-hand terminal is no longer visible. Below the crescent and V-rod, so close as to be touching, is a >tuning fork= symbol with no discernable decorative embellishments, below which is carved a serpent and Z-rod symbol. The Z-rod displays a trident termination and floriate ornamentation while the serpent is depicted as if it were seen from above with visible bulges representing either eyes or ears on either side of its head. Beneath this symbol are the remains of shape which may have represented the haunches of animal or the back and fins of a fish. Lower part of a cross-slab, including the tenon. *Face 1*: Border of vine-scroll ornament similar to that on Hilton of Cadboll, containing part of an unidentified figurative scene. *Face 2*, side : Crescent and V-rod; a serpent and Z-rod; an animal- perhaps the Pictish dolphin. *Face 3*, side: interlace. 3'8"x2'1"x6". Probably the base of a cross-slab, originally c 3m high.

The closest parallel to the inhabited vine-scroll on TR1 is that featured on the Hilton of Cadboll stone, and although there are some differences in the arrangement that may affect an interpretation of their iconographic significance, primarily centered around the left side of the vine on the Hilton of Cadboll design, both examples share the same light, shallow, carving technique, and inclination for elongated, wiry creatures with tails or hindquarters that extend beyond the scrolls and interact with the vine tendrils, as well as scrolls that pass at least twice around the creature=s bodies. These stylistic and technical affinities strongly suggest that they share a common source of production and perhaps even the same carver

*TR 1 was at Invergordon Castle in 1903, standing next to Hilton of Cadboll. It had lain in Tarbat Churchyard until c1850. This is the Aone half of an ancient sculptured stone@ referred to and marked on OS 1907 as a Across-slab@ east of the church (near Dingwall Memorial) (ECMS, 73). The rest of this cross is said to have been thrown into the grave and covered up (Name Book 1872). The grave concerned has not been identified, but it may be that of *****. TR 1 lay in the churchyard until it was taken to Invergordon before 1850. It was gifted to the NMS before 1956. A smoothing of the defaced back side*

might imply a period of re-use for building [IB 190; ECMS III, 73-5, no 1; Stuart 1856, II, plate xxx; Miller 1889, 438; PSAS 56 (1921-2) 63-4; PSAS 74(****) : 60-117; Bull; TR1]

TR 2 Four pieces from an upright cross-slab, with central interlace shaft and panels ornamented with serpents.

Dimensions

2a, b Top conjoined fragments: **H** 49 cms **W** 47cms **D** 5cms

2b Bottom fragment: **H** 32cms **W** 46cms **D** 5cms

2c **H** 210mms **W** 190mms **D** 40mms

Geology: Grey/green micaceous sandstone with a very fine grain

Present Condition: Broken and worn

Description: TR2-2b are three closely related fragments, two of which are conjoined to make up the top piece as presently displayed in the NMS. This piece of sandstone is further broken along all four edges as well as along the back face. The bottom piece is also broken along all edges and the back face. Both the top and bottom pieces of TR2 feature high and low relief carving. Taken as a whole, the cross-face features a central panel (49 x 26cms) of interlaced knots, panels of interlaced serpents to either side, and two lower panels underneath the serpents. Only the remains of the spiral ornament within the right-hand lower panel can still be seen. The central panel of interlace, enclosed by two straight edged, vertical, flat-band mouldings 20mms in width, features three vertical rows of low relief (approx 5mms high) interlaced knots (approximately 70mms in diameter) which form a closed encircled pattern characterised by diagonal lines and v-bends, categorised by Allen and Anderson as pattern no. 709. Both of the recessed panels (approx 20mms) containing serpents are heavily damaged, but some details are clear. Carved in high relief (approx 20mms), the serpents vary in width from 10mms at the points where their bodies interlace, to 25mms at their heads and central bodies. The three visible serpents within the right side panel have open mouths and clearly visible fangs; at least two of them are biting either their own bodies or another serpent's body. In contrast, the two serpents in the centre of the left side panel demurely touch noses, though the serpent in the lower corner has an open mouth and visible fangs. The left side panel also retains evidence of boss and spiral ornament with one small boss (30mms in diameter) raised 20mms from the surface. The lower panels of decoration are separated from the serpent panels by a plain, flat-band moulding measuring 35mms in width, the remains of which are the only evidence left on the left-side. However, the remains of a spiral and boss pattern can be seen in the right panel. These bosses, measuring approximately 35 mms in diameter, are raised 20mms above the surface and are surrounded by the very faint remains of a spiral and peltae design with C-shaped connections. Unfortunately, not enough details are visible to decipher how many bands the spirals might have had, which direction they might have been moving in, or the length or decorative embellishments within the peltae; all elements necessary in order to enable a classification of the design.

2 c is Sub-triangular sandstone fragment broken along two sides and the back face but retaining its original, smoothed edge along one side. The front face of the stone displays a flat-band moulding raised 30mms above the surface of the stone that runs adjacent to the unbroken edge that measures 40mms in width. In addition, one small boss (approximately 30mms in diameter) raised approx 15mms in relief can be seen clearly, while the remains of a second boss can be partly discerned. Wear to the stone makes any further decoration impossible to pick out.

These fragments most likely come from the cross-face of the cross-slab, with the central interlace pattern most likely the cross-shaft. It is quite possible that the serpents in both of the side panels originated from central bosses, as they do on the side panels of the Nigg cross-slab.

Both the geology of the stone and the remnants of the boss ornament make it probable that TR 2c fits with TR 6, and that both of these fragments come from the same >Danish cross= as TR2. It is possible that TR6 and TR2c also both come from the lower right-hand panel of decoration on TR2, since all three of these fragments bear the remains of boss and spiral ornament. Either or both the geology and decorative designs of TR5 and TR8 make it extremely likely that these too are part of the >Danish Cross=. In addition, it is possible that TR14 is also related to the >Danish Cross= as it is also a fragment of grey/green micaceous sandstone with a very fine grain.

The pieces of TR 2 were seen in the churchyard before 1776, removed to Invergordon Castle c 1850 and given to NMS in 1956. Possibly to be associated with the ADanish Cross@ noted in 1845 (p000) [NMS IB 280-1; ECMS II, 88, 90 no 2, 2a, 2b, 2c; Stuart 1856, II, plate xxxvi; Cordiner 1780; Bull. TR4, 5]

TR 3 Fragment of relief sculpture, with interlace, measuring 6x3.5x2 ins thick and possibly belonging to TR2

TR3 was found in the churchyard and was on the window sill of the west tower of the church before 1903. Not in NMS and presumed lost (ECMS III, 90, no 3; Bull. TR12)

TR 4 Sandstone fragment carved in a mixture of high and low relief, most likely the >armpit= and part of the cross-shaft from a cross-slab.

Dimensions: H 270mms W 190mms D 35mms / 12"x9"x2" thick

Geology: Yellow micaceous sandstone with a grey tint, fine grain and several inclusions of iron blebs. It is possible that the current grey tint is due to environmental damage or the conservation process.

Present Condition: Worn

Description: Sub-rectangular sandstone fragment with the edges and back face broken away, leaving decoration only upon the front face. This decoration consists of a plain, flat- band moulding raised 20 mms above the surface of the stone. Measuring approximately 35 mms at its widest point, this moulding takes the form of a curved semi-circle, unevenly bisected by another slightly less curved line. At the junctions, two single bands move vertically and horizontally away from the centre. There is no decoration within the sub-circular shape formed by the moulding. Adjacent to this moulding is an interlace design carved in shallow relief (maximum height of 5mms) and the remains of a raised boss, also covered in shallow interlace. Breakage to the stone makes the accurate dimensions of the boss impossible to determine, but the radius is approximately 60mms. Wear to the stone also makes the height of the boss (approx 20mms) somewhat lower than it probably was originally. From the remains of the design, it appears that the interlace was a complete pattern made up entirely of curved lines, with added outside strands; ECMS no. 791. These outside strands form additional interlace patterns characterised by long straight lines and angular bends, within the spaces between the boss and the moulding. Unfortunately not enough remains this pattern to

classify it. The shape of the moulding suggests a specific cross head design with the remnants of a hollow arm-pit, outer ring, and part of the squared cross-shaft and cross-arm.

Quite possibly part of the same monument as TR1, as the geology of the stones (a yellow micaceous sandstone, with a very fine grain and inclusions of iron blebs) is very similar.

TR 4 was found in the churchyard and taken to Invergordon Castle about 1850 [IB 282; ECMS II, 91 no 4; Bull. TR6]

TR 5 Circular boss from a cross-slab comprising 7 small bosses in a wreath of interlace.

Diameter: 310mms **Depth:** 55mms. 1'1" diameter x 2.5" thick.

Geology: Grey/green micaceous sandstone with a very fine grain.

Present Condition: Very worn

Description: Circular-shaped fragment broken along all edges and along the back face, retaining carved decoration only on its front face. This ornament consists of a spiral and boss design within a raised wreath featuring various decorative patterns. The seven small (30mms in diameter) bosses are raised 20mms from the surface of the stone and it appears from the faint incisions still visible upon them that they form the origin point three-band spirals which subsequently move down around the bosses to form interconnecting peltae. This incised pattern is so worn that any further details are impossible to decipher, though Allen and Anderson categorise the design as pattern no. 1096.

The severely worn and considerably damaged wreath that surrounds this design is raised 20mms and carved all along its width of 50mms with a variety of interlace and key patterns in a low relief (maximum 5mms). Beginning to the left of the most damaged area at the bottom of the stone (as it is presently displayed) and moving in a clockwise fashion, the designs (as far as they are able to be deciphered) are as follows: A simple interlace pattern morphs into either a key pattern or extremely angular interlace before turning into a very tightly eight band interlaced plait characterised by strait lines and angular bends. This plait briefly turns back into a key pattern different from the previous one before turning back into an interlaced plait, slightly looser and more angular than before. Extreme wear to the stone make the next sequence extremely difficult to decipher but it appears as if the plait motif continues, though with more gently rounded curves. In certain areas the interlace designs have escaped the confines of the wreath and move into the central area of decoration, moving in between the spiral bosses. Though the wreath contains several different interlace and spiral patterns, Allen and Anderson specify only one, key pattern no. 987. It is difficult to determine which specific piece of key pattern they were referring to, as the pattern definitely changes from section to section.

Both the geology and the decorative designs on TR5 point to a relationship with TR6. Both of these bosses are also quite likely related to TR2, and all of these fragments could have come from the so-called >Danish-Cross=. As mentioned in regards to TR6 (see above) the relationship with metalwork studs on Insular shrines might point to a specific function for the >Danish-cross= as a symbolic reliquary, readily accessible by the general public.

TR 5 was found in the churchyard and taken to Invergordon Castle about 1850. It was seen there by Miller in 1889 (PSAS 23 (1889) 444) and given to the NMS in 1956 [IB 283, ECMS II, 91 no 5; Bull. TR7]

TR 6 : Circular boss of carved stone carved in a mixture of high and low relief, most likely from a cross-slab.

H 340mms **W** 300mms **D** 40mms. [14.5"x13.5"x2".]

Geology: Grey/green micaceous sandstone with a very fine grain.

Present Condition: Very worn.

Description: Sub-circular sandstone fragment broken on all sides and the back face but retaining decoration carved in high relief on the front face. The decoration consists of a central, plain boss (approximately 70 mms in diameter) raised 30mms above the surface of the stone, which is surrounded by a wreath 230mms in diameter, also raised 30mms above the surface. Outside of the wreath are the remains of several small (approximately 30mms in diameter) raised bosses decorated with spirals and connected by shallowly incised peltae. The band of the wreath, which is 60mms wide, is ornamented by a low relief key pattern characterised by interlocking diagonal T-shapes with some U-bends, classified by Allen and Anderson as pattern no 1021. The remains of a shallowly incised spiral pattern with C-shaped connections (peltae) can also be seen joining the small raised bosses.

Discussion: The geology of TR6 argues for it originating from the same monument as TR2 and TR5. All these pieces quite possibly come from the >Danish Cross=.

TR 6 was dug up by Mr William Mackay, grave digger, near the E side of the N aisle at a depth of 6-7 ft below the surface in the late 19th century, in the burial place of Ross of North Balkeith. Miller saw it lying on a window cill under the tower. It was gifted to the NMS by Miller before 1889. Miller notes that it was weathered and suggests that it had come off a cross that had been more recently destroyed [cf the ADanish Cross@] (ECMS no 6; Miller 1889, fig 1; Bull. TR 3).

TR 7 Three conjoined fragments carved with an ornamental spiral design. Possibly from a cross-slab.

H 240mms **W** 175mms **D** 15mms.

Geology: Yellow micaceous sandstone with a pink tint and fine grain

Present Condition: The fragment retains very sharp edges; damaged but not weathered.

Description: Sub-rectangular fragment broken along all sides as well as on the back face. Its edges are sharp and the remaining carved ornament on its front face is well preserved. This ornament consists of a spiral and peltae decoration carved in high relief ranging from 15 to 20 mms. From what remains of the design, it can be seen that it was characterized by large, triple-band spirals (approx 70mms in diameter) which originate from a central point, and move in a counter-clockwise motion. Hooked peltae form C-shaped connections between the large spirals and, in turn, terminate in smaller, double-band spirals (approx 20mms in diameter) that move in a clockwise motion. The bands of the large spirals are quite thick (10-15mms) while the bands of the hooked peltae/spirals are only 5mms thick. The peltae, which are approximately 110mms in length, are further adorned with a floriate design characterised by almond-shaped >leaves=.

The design is described by Allen and Anderson but not assigned a pattern number ECMS, vol. 2, 91-92 (no. 7). The particular design of the peltae is more ornate than the

simple hollow triangle bisected by a vertical line found in most of the other peltae that connect spirals in the Tarbat collection, and is seen most often in manuscript and metalwork depictions of spirals (see below). Similar spiral and peltae decoration is found on nos. 9, 10, 18, 20, 32 and 40 of the Tarbat collection, although none of the other examples display quite the same floriate variation within the peltae, as does TR7.

The geology of TR7 is most similar to that of TR18 and TR32. It is therefore possible that all three came from the same monument. It is unlikely however, that they came from the same panel of decoration since the more elaborate peltae embellishments and the counter clockwise motion of the large spirals on TR7 are different in detail from those on TR18 and TR32. It is most likely that while TR18 and TR32 probably come from the same panel of decoration, TR7 came from a separate panel with a similar motif. It is also possible that **TR7**, 18 and 32 may have come from the same monument which produced TR10, 20 and 40 [NO, see geology report].

TR 7 was dug up by Mr William Mackay, gravedigger, at a point about 4 yds from the E gable of the church in the 19th c in the burial place of Roderick Bain of North Tarrel. Miller saw it lying on a window sill under the tower. It was gifted to NMS by Hugh Miller jnr before 1889. Miller notes that it is fresh Abroken off by wanton violence@ and suggests that it had long lain buried. ECMS says A4 yards from the W gable (ie in the Macleod enclosure) but Roderick Bain=s grave is 4 yds south of the east gable, so Miller is right. (Cordiner 1776, 66; Petley IV, 345; ECMS III, 91-3 no 7; Miller 1889, fig 3; Bull. TR2).

TR 8 Triangular sandstone fragment carved with key pattern in relief; most likely from a cross-slab.

H 250mms **W** 160mms **D** 60mms 10.5"x5"x2.5" thick

Geology: Grey/green micaceous sandstone with very fine grain

Present Condition: worn

Description: Triangular fragment broken along two the longest edges and along its back face with the shortest edge worked smooth. The front face of the fragment bears a key pattern, categorised by both horizontal (or vertical) and diagonal interlocking bars in rectangular bays, that is carved in high relief (approximately 15mms). This key pattern has been classified by Allen and Anderson as no 974. Key pattern no 974 appears on Shandwick and Rosemarkie (slabs 1 and 2) as well as on stones at Farr, Reay, St. Vigeans (no 24), Meigle (no 4), and St Andrews (nos. 7,8,14, and 20). In addition, it appears in the *Book of Kells*, the *Lindisfarne Gospels*. Since one of the edges of this fragment is smooth, it is likely that this fragment came from the edge of a monument, most likely a border panel of decoration such as on the back face of the cross-slab at Nigg. The geology of this stone points to the possibility that this fragment also came from the >Danish Cross= (see TR2).

TR 8 was found in Tarbat churchyard and taken to Invergordon Castle before 1889. It was gifted to NMS in 1956 [IB 284; ECMS II, 93 no 8; Miller 1889, fig 2]

TR 9 Triangular sandstone fragment carved with a mixture of high and low relief on two faces; most likely from a cross-slab.

H 220mms **W** 180mms **D** 190 mms 9"x7"x8@thick

Geology: Yellow micaceous sandstone with very fine grain and a pink tint. The pink tint may be due to environmental factors as it appears only on the surface of the stone; breakage shows the yellow hue underneath.

Present Condition: Very worn

Description: Triangular sandstone fragment broken along all three edges but with front and back faces intact, displaying decorative designs carved in relief. The front face (Face 1) features a spiral and peltae pattern while the back face (Face 2) contains an interlace pattern. Only Face 1 can be seen on display at the NMS.

FACE 1: The design contained on face 1 is quite worn, reducing the relief in some areas to 2-3mms, but the following details can still be deciphered: Large (70mms in diameter) spirals with triple bands originating from a single point move in a counter-clockwise motion while medium (50mms in diameter) sized triple-band spirals move clockwise. These spirals are joined by peltae that are further embellished with a central hollow triangle bisected by a vertical line. Small triangular pellets also dot the spaces between the spirals and peltae. In the areas of the least amount of wear, the relief is as high as 20mms.

FACE 2: Unable to record.

Oddly enough, this fragment showed no evidence of the iron blebs that commonly appear in the yellow sandstone. Allen and Anderson record the stone as being greenish sandstone (*ECMS*, vol. 2, p. 93 (no 9)). Both the triangular pellet and the bisected central triangles within the peltae are characteristic of the spiral work on TR 10, 20 and 40. The particular bisected triangle within the peltae on TR9 might be specific to the Tarbat collection. There is a strong possibility that the TR 9 fragment came from the same monument which produced TR 10, 20 and 40 as the affinities with the spiral designs on these stones are quite close, and the geology quite similar.

TR 9 was found in Tarbat churchyard and taken to Invergordon Castle before 1903. It was gifted to NMS in 1956. [IB285; ECMS II, 93 no 9].

TR 10 A*The Inscribed Stone*@ Rectangular sandstone fragment bearing decoration on one face and a Latin inscription on the narrow side.

H 470mms **W** 310mms **D** 170mms 19"x12"x6.5"thick

Geology: Yellow micaceous sandstone with a very fine grain

Present Condition: Heavily damaged and worn

Description: Sub-rectangular fragment with breakage along the top, bottom and left sides, the back face and the lower part of the front face.

FACE 1(broad) Despite damage, remnants of a spiral and peltae design in shallow relief (approximately 15mms high) are possible to decipher. Two large adjacent spirals with an approximate radius of 35mms (the diameter being impossible to determine) and three bands that originate from a single point, move in opposite directions; the top anti-clockwise, the bottom clockwise. These spirals are joined to two smaller three-band spirals, also moving in opposite directions, by C-shaped peltae that are embellished by a bisected hollow triangle at their widest point. In addition, a further triangular flourish is carved on top of the smaller

spirals that fits perfectly into the corner made by the remains of the diagonal raised (15mms) flat-band (25mms wide) moulded frame enclosing the design.

FACE 2 (narrow) The Latin inscription is carved in relief along eight horizontal lines with letters approximately 45mms high in an Insular script (Higgitt 1982, 310-315). Though it suffers from significant damage, the letters have been transcribed and the inscription reconstructed thus: [I]N NOM[IN]E IHU X[PI IN] COM[MEM]ORA[TIO]NE REO[Y]LII [YD]IE HA[CY], which can be roughly translated as >In the name of Jesus Christ, the/a Cross of Christ in memory of Reo[Y.]lius Yon this dayY=. Above the inscription and a blank area of smoothed stone, the very bottom of an interlace design can be seen. Not enough remains to assign this design a pattern number, but it appears to have been a simple design with angular bends at the corners.

Like TR 9, this fragment has no clearly visible iron blebs, despite its yellow colour. The spiral ornament on Face 1 is also seen on TR20, also within a diagonal frame, as well as on TR40. A close variation appears on TR9. Both the geology of the stone and the spiral ornament make it a certainty that TR10 came from the same stone as TR20, and probably TR40. In addition, it is possible that TR9 and TR14 are also related to these fragments.**[OR TR14 belongs to TR2 slab; see TR2]**

TR 10 was seen by Rev J M Joass of Golspie built into the manse garden wall before 1903. It was taken to Invergordon Castle where it lay with geological specimens. It was gifted to NMS in 1956. [NMR no NH98SW0015. NMS acc no IB 286; ECMS III, 82,94 No 10; Higgitt 1982; Bull TR13).

TR 11 was described by H Miller as a small boss richly fretted like a knot of young adders interlaced in olive green sandstone.

TR 11 was seen by Miller at Invergordon Castle in 1889 (PSAS 23, 444). He saw TR 5 at the same time, but does not specifically say TR 11 came from Tarbat. It has not been traced (Bull. TR15).

TR 12 A Fox and cockerel Fragment of sandstone with animal and decorative designs carved in relief.

H 170mms **W** 190mms **D** 40 mms 7"x8"x2" thick.

Geology: Yellow micaceous sandstone with a green tint and fine grain

Present Condition: worn

Description: Sub-rectangular sandstone fragment broken along five edges and along the back face with one edge along the left side retaining its original smoothed state and the remnants of flat band moulding. The front face of the stone features the remains of two different fields of decoration: a recessed (10mms) figurative panel carved in shallow relief (10mms), and a decorative panel carved in slightly lower relief. The area underneath the decorative panel is blank. The figurative panel contains the remnants of two creatures; a left-facing bird, identifiable by its wings and legs and the hint of a head, and a slim, canine-like hind-leg and bushy tail of a right-facing beast. Despite the unnatural scale of the bird in comparison to the beast, both are very naturalistically portrayed, with the feathers on the bird clearly visible and light scoring on the beast's tail giving the impression of fur. The decorative panel

underneath forms a border; two horizontal flat bands of moulding enclose a simple half-pattern interlace design made up of no more than two bands characterised by angular bends at the left corners but U-bends elsewhere. In the centre of this design are two pairs of rectangles, one on top of the other, the effect of which reveals a hidden cross.

Notes: Though TR12 has a similar geology to TR1 in that both are yellow micaceous sandstone, the grain of TR12 is not as fine as TR1, it has no visible iron blebs, and it has far more flecks of mica. It may be possible that TR12 is from the same stone as TR9, which is also a yellow sandstone fragment without visible iron blebs, but again, the grain does not appear as fine as that of TR9. The difference in tints may be due to different environmental processes. The creatures portrayed in the figurative panel have been identified as a cockerel and a fox. From the remains of the carving both creatures certainly give this impression.

Recognizable cockerels do not appear on any other Pictish stones, though a pair of cockerels are depicted on one of the panels of the Breedon-on Hill friezes in a style quite similar to that of the remains of the bird on TR12. Cockerels are also portrayed, along with other naturalistically depicted birds on folio 67v of the *Book of Kells*, folio 10r of the *Trier Gospels*, and folio 12v of the *Harley Gospels*. Like the cockerel, the fox did not seem to be a popular subject on Pictish stones, though a quite naturalistically carved fox does appear within the figurative panel on the back face of the Shandwick cross-slab.

The depiction of a cockerel on TR12 could belong to a context involving other birds and some type of vine imagery. The motif was a particularly popular one within the court school group of manuscripts, though the motif originally derived from early Christian art and can be seen on early Christian sarcophagi. In none of these representations is the cockerel specifically associated with a fox. According to the *Physiologus*, the fox was a symbol of death and the snares of the Devil, due to its hunting techniques. In his quest for food the fox smears his body with earth and holds his breath. Believing him to be dead, birds alight on him, only to be killed and eaten (Baxter 1988, 45). There is, however, no particular association between the fox and the cockerel in the *Physiologus*. As there is no evidence of vine or plant life in this fragment it is difficult to assign any specific meaning to the imagery on this stone, though it is quite possible that it may be a fragment from a much larger panel depicting a variety of animals such as that on the back face of Shandwick. On the other hand, nothing about this stone is particularly >Pictish=. Neither the interlace design nor the portrayal of the animals is very characteristic the carving on the Tarbat peninsula, with the possible exception of the fox on Shandwick. This fragment may have come from a monument of a later period.

TR 12 was reported by D J Ross , Merchant, Portmahomack in 1927 as being Afrom the old kirkyard at Tarbat, Ross-shire@ and to measure 7.5x6.75 inches [IB209; PSAS 61 (1927) 10; Bull: TR10].

TR 13 Rectangular sandstone fragment with crosses and interlace band

H 430mms **W** 350mms **D** 80mms /14"x17"x3"thick.

Geology: Red micaceous sandstone with a medium grain and some dark discolouration due to environmental factors or burning?

Present Condition: Very good

Description: Rectangular sandstone fragment with two edges broken, two smoothed, and a

front and back face bearing carved decoration. Face 1, which can be seen displayed in the museum, features three recessed cross shapes along with an additional geometric shape while Face 2 features a key pattern carved in relief. The stone is in very good condition and the details are easy to delineate.

FACE 1: A flat band moulding measuring approximately 30mms wide runs along one of the smoothed edges, while a 10mm flat band runs along the other. A recessed panel, with an incised line border, in the shape of a double barred L with the bars pointing right) occurs on the left-most side of the stone. A recessed cross-shape, also with an incised border is adjacent to this design; placed in between the bars. To the immediate right are two further recessed cross-shapes with incised line borders, one on top of the other, which occupy the top left and bottom right corners of the fragment. All of the recessed shapes are geometrically unequal. For instance the top bar of the double barred L shape measures 130mms while the bottom measures 140mms. The central cross-shape measures 120 x 155mms, the top corner cross-shape measures 110 x 145mms, and the bottom corner cross-shape measures 110 x 185mms. All of the recessed shapes are quite shallow, with a depth of no more than 5mms.

FACE 2: (Not on display: No measurements possible). A key pattern (ECMS no 963) in shallow relief is carved between two horizontal flat-band mouldings. The pattern is very regularized and characterised by interlocking diagonal T=s.

The simple geometric design on Face 1 is reminiscent of several different Insular enamelled metal objects such as the 8th-9th-century Oseburg mount; a 7th-8th-century belt buckle from Lough Gara, co. Sligo; an 8th-9th-century hanging bowl mount found in Myklebostad, Norway; an 8th-century mount from Lough Derravaragh, Co. Westmeath; and a mount from the Osberg tomb wooden bucket. These types of metalwork were most likely models for the similarly decorated Cross-carpet pages (particularly folios 1v and 125v) in the *Book of Durrow*. The Cross-carpet pages (folios 2v, 94v, 138v and 210v) in the *Lindisfarne Gospels* also display this geometric, metallic quality. Key pattern no. 963 can be seen on St Andrews 14, Mugdrum and Rosemarkie 1, as well as in the *St Gall Gospels*.

It is unlikely that this piece of sculpture came from a cross slab because the geology of the stone is of a much lesser quality than that used on the other cross-slab fragments and cross-slabs on the Tarbat peninsula. It is more likely that it came from an altar screen or chancel, and its similarity to the enamelled metalwork and carpet pages suggests that it was at one time probably painted, most likely in red and gold.

TR 13 was found in digging a grave in Tarbat Kirkyard, Portmahomack, Ross-shire at a depth of 6 feet and presented to the NMS in 1939. The greater part of the slab is still in the grave, under the coffin. Which grave is not recorded.[IB250; PSAS 73 (1939), 333].

TR 14 Fragment of sandstone with interlace pattern carved in relief.

H 210mms **W** 160mms **D** Unable to determine

Geology: Yellow micaceous sandstone with a fine grain and iron blebs. The remains of mortar and/or white plaster can be seen in the grooves of the interlace.

Present Condition: Worn

Description: Sandstone fragment displaying an interlace pattern carved in relief and a plain flat-band moulding along one side. All other visible edges have been broken and the stone is

worn. The height of the relief is only approximately 5mms; this may be due to wear. The decorative design takes up the entire face of the fragment with the exception of the moulding, which is 30mms wide. The interlace is a tightly woven turned pattern with long diagonals and no angular bends. The interlace appears to be closely related to pattern 658A.

The geology of this fragment makes it possible that it came from the same cross-slab that supplied TR10, TR20 and TR40. In fact it is entirely possible that its interlace is a continuation of the fragment of interlace seen above the inscription on TR10. The mortar or plaster seen on the stone may be an indication of an earlier re-use of the stone as the white mortar on TR20 points to its re-use in the foundations of Church 2.

Fragment with interlace.

TR14 remains incorporated into the relieving arch (S22) which supports the 17th century belfry of Tarbat Old Church. Seen in 1984 by G Stell (p000).

TR 15 Cross slab with maltese cross formed from five circles.

3ft 4ins long by 2ft broad by 7inches thick. Reddish sandstone.

TR 15 was seen in 1914 leaning up against the boundary wall of the churchyard. Dug up from beneath a recumbent tombstone which bore the date 1778. Broken up and recycled to make foundations for another monument in 1914. (Ritchie 1915, fig 1) (Bull. 16)

TR16 Fragment with letter AA@ in insular majuscule. Included in the blocking of the south door at the east end of the nave [F *****].

Dimensions: 250 x 220mms

Geology: Grey/green micaceous sandstone

Condition: Very worn, with individual letters of the inscription very difficult to pick out

Description: Sub-rectangular gray/green micaceous sandstone fragment built into the wall. One face, measuring approximately 250mms in length and 220mms in width, is visible. This face bears the remains of several incised letters, the largest suggesting an >A= or alpha symbol, and the remains of a decorative motif above it. Parallel horizontal grooves, approximately 60mms apart run along the top of the stone, and further incised grooves suggest the remains of further letters, though extreme wear to the stone makes this identification tentative. The leftmost set of incisions suggest the letter >E=, while the rightmost suggest an >H=, though one with a disproportionately wide central bar [???? CHECK]. Though it is true that the style of the letter >A= present on this fragment, can be seen in the Lindisfarne Gospels, there is nothing to specifically date it to this time period..

TR 16 was spotted by Ross Trench-Jellicoe in 2000, built into the blocked doorway of the south wall of the nave (east) among pieces of a 17th century gravestone (see Chapter 7, p000)

TR 17 Three conjoined sandstone fragments bearing decoration on one face; most likely from a cross-slab.

Dimensions: H 215mms W 205mms D 30mms

Geology: Yellow micaceous sandstone with a grey tint, no visible iron blebs.

Present Condition: Very worn

Description: Three conjoined sandstone fragments that share one unbroken edge and both incised and relief-carved decorative designs on the face. All of the other edges, and the back face, are broken. The decoration upon the face of the fragment consists of a flat-band moulding that measures approximately 40mm in width with two parallel incised grooves that are 10mm apart, and three linked decorative designs. As displayed with the moulded border at the bottom of the stone, they can be described as follows: Directly above the border are the incised (approximately 5mm) remains of a sub-triangular elongated shape to the left and an interlace pattern to the right. This interlace is a loosely plaited two strand half-pattern with u-bends and outside strands which join with the triangular shape to the left or the spiral ornament above it. The remains of this relief spiral, which takes up the rest of the area available on the fragment, has bands which are approximately 20-25mm thick. As the centre of the spiral is not visible due to the breaks in the stone, it is impossible to determine which direction the bands are moving.

The elongated sub-triangular shape in between the moulding and the spiral is most likely the remains of a pelta. The interlace is ECMS no 619. There is a possibility that this fragment comes from the same stone that supplied TR1 as the geology is quite similar.

TR17 was found during clearance of the crypt in 1991 by Jill Harden.

TR 18 Small fragment carved in relief; most likely from a cross-slab.

Dimensions: H 110mm W 90mm D 70mm NOTE Previously recorded as: 82x111x72mm. thick

Geology: Yellow micaceous sandstone with a fine grain, but no visible iron blebs.

Present Condition: very worn

Description: Sub-triangular fragment bearing evidence of smoothing along two sides and breakage on the back face and three other edges. The face of the fragment retains decoration carved in deep relief (approximately 15mm). The decoration consists of the remnants of a plain, flat-band moulding approximately 30mm in width and a spiral and pelta. The remains of the pelta, which has sustained damage at both ends making the terminals impossible to see, measures 70mm in length and 30mm at its widest point where it incorporates a triangle bisected by a vertical line into its design. Two curving lines to either side of the triangle further embellish the pelta. Two bands of a small (approximately 25mm) clockwise-moving spiral are visible in the interstice of the pelta and the moulding. These are most likely the terminations of another closely situated pelta. Peltae with a hollow triangle bisected by a vertical line can be seen in the designs on TR9, TR10, TR20 and TR40, with which this fragment may be associated.

Previous recording of this fragment described the spiral as a curled tendril with a spade-shaped leaf to the right, which was pressed up against a curved strand running along the bottom of the panel. In addition, the recorder saw a portion of an additional spiral above this >curved strand=. It may be that rather than a spiral and peltae design, this ornament is more organic in nature. She also noted a thin line (incised?) on the >end face= suggesting that it was also carved. This needs to be double checked.

TR 18 was found during clearance of the crypt in 1991 by Jill Harden.

TR 19 Roughly-shaped rectangular stone bearing a simple cross in relief. 340x126x80mm.

Found by Ian Fisher (RCAHMS) and removed from southern wall of graveyard by Niall Robertson in 1994.

TR20: The AMonk Stone@ ADragon Stone@ or AApostle Stone@ ; fragment from a large cross-slab. Face 1: panels of spirals forming part of a cross, inset by a composite beast (ADragon@). Face 2: two lions disputing a deer carcass, a bear, and a row of four clerics.

Dimensions: 700 x 420 x 180mms (Recheck dimension, mine disagree with Liz=s)
710x410x178mm thick.

Geology: Yellow micaceous sandstone with a gray tint, fine grain and multiple inclusions of iron blebs.

Condition: The breaks appear crisp and the relief carving is well preserved.

Description: Sub-rectangular slab of yellow? micaceous sandstone with a grey tint, very fine grain, and multiple inclusions of iron blebs. The stone is broken along its shorter side and diagonally along its bottom edge. Though heavily damaged with a great deal of chipping, the longer side bears the remains of its original smoothed surface and the top side also retains its original edge. In general the breaks appear clean and crisp and the carving well-preserved. The longest side of this slab measures 700mms and the shortest 360mms, while the width of the stone is 420mms and its thickness 180mms. Evidence of its re-use in the two stages of the crypt building can be found in the remains of the white mortar and green silt and brown clay bonding still visible after conservation within the deeper areas of carving. Black deposits (Much like those on TR1?) in various recesses might be evidence of pigmentation. The stone is decorated upon the front and back faces as follows:

Face 1:

A wide (50mms-recheck, mine disagree with Liz=s), plain flat-band moulding runs along the top of the stone while a thinner (25mms) flat-band moulding runs down the left hand-side of the stone. In addition, a variety of plain, flat-band mouldings function to separate the different panels of decoration. The top panel features a shallowly carved (approximately 5mms in depth) decorative design featuring spirals connected with C-shaped peltae. The spirals within this design are of two different sizes; the larger, which form two horizontal rows and move in a clockwise motion, measure 55mms in diameter, the smaller, which are found primarily along the border of the design and move in a counter clockwise motion, measure 25mms. Large or small, both types of spirals incorporate 3 separate bands originating from a single point. Each of these bands goes on to form its own pelta, which in turn, terminates in either a smaller spiral along the edge of the design or hooks into three other peltae in the central row between the large spirals. The peltae are further embellished by a central triangular shape bisected by vertical line a signature of the Tarbat collection. This design has not been classified with a pattern number.

Beneath the spiral and peltae design is an oddly shaped recessed panel created by the borders of the ornamental patterns around it. This panel contains a right-facing quadruped carved in relief (approximately 25mms high). This creature is crouched in an anatomically

impossible position with its hindlegs bent in opposite directions so that its feet meet in the centre. The beast is further stylised with incised scrolls at the shoulders, hips and knees, an ear that points unnaturally forward, and a tail that curls around itself as it arches over the beast's back and terminates in a serpentine head viewed from above with prominent side ridges representing either eyes or ears. Further noteworthy details are the long claws on the feet, the elaborately curled nose, the open mouth that contains two large fangs in addition to the rows of teeth, and a tongue which extends all the way to the border of the panel. The beast takes up practically the entire space available in the panel, with its tail and ear actually running into the borders. This beast has been identified as a dragon (see p000, above)

The remains of a quadrangular panel of spiral ornament, which bisects a curvilinear flat band moulded border approximately 25mms wide, occupies the space directly beneath the crouching quadruped. This panel has been sheared off diagonally at the bottom, but it is probable that the original shape was diamond or lozenge-shaped. The ornament within this panel is a spiral and peltae design. This design also features two different sizes of triple-band spirals connected by C-shaped peltae, but the layout of the design is quite different from the pattern at the top of the slab. Two pairs of small spirals (approximately 30mms) occupy the central space of the design. The spirals within each pair move in opposite directions. Peltae ornamented with a central bisected triangle connect these spirals to each other and also to four other pairs of large spirals (approximately 60mms in diameter) that form a square around the central space. (Only one spiral each from two of the right-hand spiral pairs is visible due to damage to the panel but it is apparent that four complete pairs were originally present). Like the central spirals, each of these spirals moves in a direction opposite to that of its mate. The pattern is finished by an additional small spiral pair (approximately 25mms in diameter) that are topped by ornamental triangular shapes that reach into the very corners of the panel. Small individual triangles are also placed in the interstices left by the spirals, peltae and moulding of the panel. This design has not been classified with a pattern number.

The quadrangular panel of spiral ornament is most likely part of a cross; either a panel of decoration embellishing a ringed cross-head (*Bull.* 2, Fig 9), or the remains of an arm of a >saltire=, or *decussated* cross (see p000, above).

Face 2: The remains of three panels of relief carving, two figurative, one decorative, are visible on the back face of TR20. Like Face 1, Face 2 has a wide (approximately 50mms recheck dimensions) plain flat border at the very top. A 20mm wide flat-band moulding separates the top panel from the middle, while the remains of a 20mm wide flat-band moulding borders the third panel, in which a remnant of spiral decoration is discernable. All three panels are incomplete due to the damage to the stone.

The top recessed panel, measuring approximately 290mms x 420mms, suffers from damage on both sides, though only the moulded border on the right side seems to have been broken away, as the figurative carving on this side is complete. The animals within this panel are carved in a relief approximately 7mms high and are generally in good condition. In the top right hand corner of the panel, a left-facing quadruped with a down-reaching head, paces with stiff, though naturalistically portrayed legs. There is a slight indication of shoulder scrolls, though wear to the stone makes it difficult to determine positively. This beast has an extended muzzle, rounded ear at the back of the head, slightly open mouth and possible fangs, gently humped back, no visible tail, and flat-bottomed, slightly elongated paws. There is no visible carving for the eye, but a small iron bleb exists where one would naturally be located, leading to the premise that the carver took advantage of this natural phenomenon.

Directly below this beast is a left-facing quadruped with an erect head that is over twice the size as the previously described beast. This animal has a short, squared snout, visible fangs, a lightly incised oval shaped eye, a long tail hanging down to its feet, and large block-like flat paws, though the hind-most paw carries the suggestion of the ball and claw style of paw. (See Henderson???) The neck is very thick and light scoring in this area suggests a deliberate attempt to convey a mane. There is also the hint of a decorative scroll at the hip. The head, chest and foreleg of mirror-image beast that confronts this left-facing beast are all that remain of the creature on the left side of the panel. In all pertinent details, the characteristics of this animal are the same as the creature to the right. Situated in between these two animals are the downward pointing haunches and hind legs of a third animal. The fact that only half of the animal is visible is not the result of damage to the stone, it has been carved that way deliberately. This truncated animal displays slender legs that end in upward pointed hooves and a short, tufted tail held tightly against the body.

The middle panel of carving bears the remains of four frontally faced human figures. Only the vague outline of a head, or perhaps a nimbus (measuring approximately 70mms in width; length is indeterminable), remains of the left-most figure due to the angle of the broken stone and subsequent wear. However, the head, shoulders, waist, one arm (and possibly a hand) of the figure immediately to the right are visible. This figure has two locks of well groomed hair on the left side of his head (which measures approximately 60mms x 50mms) and one on the right, the faint remains of a moustache and close-shaven beard, round eye sockets and incised circles for cheeks. His garments are characterised by a high, squared collar and sophisticated lines of drapery that fold in such a way to suggest arms crossed on his chest or that his hands are held together in prayer, though this is not clearly visible. The next figure is visible practically to the hem of his robes. His head (measuring approximately 60mms x 50mms) exhibits a rather bushy hairdo with three locks on the left and one on the right, and a full beard and moustache. Almond-shaped eyes set low down in the forehead, round cheeks and a nose are also clearly visible. His elaborate robes features a cross-hatch design down the central panel. His left arm is held across his chest while his right arm is held against his body and his right hand grasps a staff. The right-most figure is visible from his head to his toes though the right side of his body has been sheared away. This figure has long, well-groomed hair with no side curls, (or is he bald??? double check) almond-shaped eyes, round cheeks, prominent nose and a forked beard rounded at the tips. His head measures approximately 60 mms x 40mms. He also has elaborately draped robes with the faint lines of a cross-hatch design visible at the hem. This figure holds a book in his right cloth-draped hand, which he points to with his left hand. Standing on tiptoe, his feet point to the left, and are shod in sandals characterised by a strap and circular buckle around the ankle.

Only the very remnants of an ornamental design, perhaps spiral, can be seen in the bottommost panel. The overall impression created by the depiction of the topmost beast in the right hand corner of the top panel is that of a lumbering bear, while the animal group depicted below it is most likely a representation of two lions confronting each other over the remains of a deer. These lions are carved in a manner that is typical for the Tarbat collection, with thick necks and chests, and torsos which taper into the haunches. Although the manes are not clearly visible, this is most likely due to wear to the stone. Despite the hint of stylised shoulder scrolls, these beasts are depicted quite naturalistically.

The identification of the human figures in the second panel is most likely that of some of the apostles. The middle figure with the wild bushy hairdo is most likely Andrew (Richard

Bailey, pers. comm).

On its discovery, Joanna Close-Brooks (pers. comm.) associated TR20 with TR10 on the basis of their shared spiral ornament, and this is supported by their geology (see p000, above).

*TR 20 was located in 1995 built into the crypt vault and extracted 1997.
(Int19/2/1040/72)*

TR21: Small cross-slab bearing a hollow-armed cross on one side and a chisel-ended cross the other.

Dimensions: 520 x 190 x 40 mms 510x195x45mm ???.

Geology: Red micaceous sandstone with a medium grain

Condition: Three fragments joined together. Stone is still incomplete as broken off at the bottom. Carving is still crisp.

Description: Three conjoined fragments of red micaceous sandstone forming a rectangular small cross-slab (measuring approximately 520 x 190 x 40 mms) significantly broken along the bottom edge. All other edges are smoothed, though there is significant chipping along the along the bottom left of Face 1 (bottom right of Face 2 and the top right of Face 2. Carving on Face 1 is still crisp. Face 1 features a cross-shaped recessed panel (of an approximate depth of 60mms) within which is a cross raised in shallow relief (approximately 60mms). The cross is characterised by a long shaft approximately 390mms long (but broken at the bottom, so true length is unknown), short arms (approximately 175mms), and hollow armpits; a style categorised as type 11a by Cramp (1988), and similar to ECMS 101A and 106A. Besides an incised line which forms a border all around the edges of the cross, there is no other decoration, though the entire face has been worked smooth.

Face 2 features a roughly worked surface with an imprecisely incised Greek style (equal-armed) cross with arms approximately 120mms across and a shaft 150mms in length. This right-angled cross with curved terminals can be categorised as Cramp type 1E. The form of a cross with round hollow angles is a common type in Scotland, with local examples from Lothbeg, Golspie, Shandwick, Wester Delnies, Brodie and Drainie. Plainer incised crosses with double-outlining are found among the re-used memorials at Govan (ECMS 7,13,34,35). The simple standing slab with incised geometric cross is known from grave-markers in early Northumbria (for example Hartlepool) and the form is adapted as the motif for carpet-pages in the Lindisfarne Gospels. The form was also employed in early Irish sites. The >chisel-ended= style of cross seen on the back face of TR 21 can also be seen incised on a small cross-slab from Eilean Naoimh, currently displayed in the NMS.

TR 21 was located during excavations in 1996, built into the foundations of earlier church. Extracted 1997. (Int17/2/1016/9)

TR22: The ABoar stone@. *Face 1* (side, horizontal): lion and boar in relief in panels. *Face 2* (end): cross in relief.

Dimensions: 1040 (Check, different from Liz=s) x 450 x 250mms 1065x460x230mm.

Geology: Yellow micaceous?? sandstone with fine grain any iron blebs?

Condition: ????

Description: Yellow micaceous? sandstone measuring 1065mms? in length, 450mms in width and 250mms at its thickest point. The bottom, top, and one end are broken (as is the side opposite the carving)? When removed, the stone was found to be 460mm wide, and the hidden side was smooth, suggesting it was complete in **width (according to Liz, but I thought it was broken--Recheck)**. Upon excavation the underside was found to carry part of a downwards groove or seating. This groove is not currently visible due to the display. Two faces, one along the horizontal length and one along the width of the slab, retain relief carving.

Face 1 features two complete recessed panels inhabited by animals carved in relief and the remains of a third panel and animal. Each of the panels is recessed approximately 10mms and the animals within are carved in 10mm relief. The panels do not follow a straight horizontal line, but instead move gradually upwards from the left to the right, with the right-most damaged panel's base line at a level approximately 20mms higher than the base line of the middle panel. The left-most panel, measuring approximately 306 x 180mms (breakage along the bottom of the panel makes it impossible to determine its true width) is inhabited by a right-facing, pacing quadruped with an erect, though downward pointing, head. Measuring approximately 240mms in length, this animal displays a leonine head characterised by a tapered ear which points forward, squared muzzle with barely visible fangs, a round eye socket and an extended tongue. The chest, torso and legs are all quite thick, though the torso does taper slightly at the haunches. Breakage to the panel makes it difficult to determine the nature of the paws. The creature's long tail is pressed close to the body and curves up between its hind legs. In general, the beast is very naturalistically portrayed with no stylised scrolls at the shoulders or hips, and is probably intended as a lion (see p000, above).

The middle panel, measuring 340mms x 180mms, contains a quadruped that inhabits the entire space with both its tail and nose touching the sides of the panel. This right-facing quadruped prances with its right foreleg raised to the edge of the panel. The animal is characterised by a downward hanging head, held almost parallel with its raised foreleg, curved back, little pointed ears, long snout with barely visible tusks and a slightly curved mouth, an oval shaped eye, cloven feet and a short, straight tail. This creature is very naturalistically portrayed, and is probably intended as a boar (see p000, above).

The heavily damaged rightmost panel contains only the head of a third beast which measures approximately 80mms from ear to tongue. This left-facing down turned head is characterised by a squared snout with a pointed nose, erect pointed ear, clearly visible fang, open mouth and extended tongue.

Face 2, which is broken along the top and bottom, displays a relief equal-armed hollow armpit cross with squared terminals within a panel recessed approximately 10mms. This type of cross is categorised as Cramp type 11a in the Anglo-Saxon Stone Corpus, and ECMS 101. The arms of the cross extend all the way to the edges of the panel and thus merge with the un-recessed dressed stone. The damage to the panel makes it impossible to determine the original dimensions of either the cross or the panel.

TR22 was located in excavations in 1996, built into foundations of earlier church. Extracted 1997. (Int17/2/1016/10).

TR23: Tiny fragment with spiral in relief.

Dimensions: 55 x 30 x 10mm

Geology: Yellow micaceous sandstone (iron blebs? Fine grain?)

Condition: Worn

Description: Sub-rectangular yellow micaceous sandstone (iron blebs, fine grain?) fragment, broken along all edges and the back face. The decoration remaining on the face shows a triple-band spiral moving in a clockwise motion carved in shallow relief (less than 5mm). Triple-band spirals are found on TR7, TR9, TR10, TR18, TR20, TR32 and TR36 within the Tarbat collection as well as on the Hilton of Cadboll, Shandwick and Nigg cross-slabs. Spiral ornament was a popular motif throughout Pictland and Ireland. This fragment may have come from the same monument that spawned TR7, 18, or 32, all of which demonstrate a similar geology.

TR23 was found in the Glebe Field excavations in 1996. (Int14/1002/272)

TR24: Roughly shaped stone with crude cross scratched upon it. 470x245x130mm. *Found in the service trench on the north side of the church in 1996. (Int16/1001/1).*

TR25: Roughly shaped stone with crude cross incised on it. 231x195x47mm.

Found in the service trench on the north side of the church in 1996. (Int16/1008/3).

TR26 Carved sandstone fragment re-used as a lintel stone within the north window of the Tarbat Old Church crypt. The broken slab is still *in situ*, with only an undecorated side visible.

Dimensions: Exposed side 58x23 x 18 cms

Geology: grey/green micaceous sandstone

Condition Impossible to determine, but most likely good.

Description: Carved sandstone slab of undetermined size due to its incorporation into the fabric of the crypt. The geology is likewise difficult to determine, though the stone appears to be of a greenish hue. It is impossible to determine in its present location whether the stone is complete or a fragment from a larger monument. The exposed side is plain, but has been smoothed and carved with a shallowly incised border parallel to the edge approximately 10mm away. This same simply incised border can be seen on the face of the slab, only 20-30mm of which is visible. Curvilinear carving can be felt by probing slightly deeper into the crevasses of the window fabric, but no designs can be determined definitively. The fact that the stone narrows visibly from one end to the other suggests that this slab was an upright monument as cross-slabs were typically left slightly larger at the bottom.

Found in 1997 and left in situ. (Int19/19/1044)

TR 27 A stone post with side-grooves, possibly a "shrine-post" (cf Iona) or part of a *cancellum*. *Removed by Niall Robertson from an unknown location in the graveyard..*

TR28: A The calf Stone@ Trial piece or partially worked slab with rendering of bull, cow (or two cows) one licking a calf, in low relief; also part of horseman/woman. Maybe unfinished. Joins with TR35.

Dimensions

TR28: 720x480x100mm.

[of TR28/35 together]: 740 x 640 x 80mms

Geology: Red micaceous sandstone with a rough grain and multiple inclusions of gravel.

Condition: Despite its broken condition, TR28 appears much less worn than does TR35.

Description of TR28/35 together: Two conjoined fragments of red micaceous sandstone forming a sub-rectangular slab 740mms long, 640mms high and 80mms thick. The grain of the stone is quite rough and has at least 10 inclusions of gravel ranging in size from 2mms to 10mms. The left, right and bottom edges, as well as the back face have all been broken, leaving only the top side smooth and the front face carved. When joined together, the break between the two stones runs diagonally from the top left to the bottom right. The slab is carved in a mixture of very shallow relief (maximum height 5mms) and incised lines. Five of these lines form a border for the figural composition along the top of the stone, while a further two function as the bottom border. The stone beneath the bottom border (an area measuring roughly 130 x 690mms) has been only very roughly carved.

The figural decoration on the panel is as follows: In the top right-hand position is a left-facing, pacing quadruped carved in shallow relief that features faintly incised shoulder and hip scrolls. This beast's head displays a rounded eye socket and a beak that appears closed, except for a faint discoloration in the stone which may be evidence of an open beak that has since flaked away. Faint marks on the head and chest suggest feathers might have been intended. The torso of the animal betrays a slight hump over its shoulder and there is a slight protuberance between its legs possibly meant to represent an udder. A long curled tail arches over its back and its stiff legs are cloven footed.

Immediately to the left of this creature is a shallowly carved left-facing, crouching quadruped. This creature features stylized shoulder scrolls and other >unnatural= details such as abnormally elongated forelegs which are bent underneath the torso in an anatomically impossible manner, while the hindlegs, proportionately much smaller, are in a rearing posture, thus combining characteristics of both rest and motion in one awkwardly portrayed stance that gives the impression of a hopping kangaroo. The head of the beast features an elongated snout, thick, pointed back ears, and an oval eye socket. A long, thick tail curls down to hang well below the torso, and all of the legs are hooved.

Directly below this pair of animals is a left-facing quadruped double their size. Carved in shallow relief, this animal features the same characteristic incised shoulder and hip scrolls as well as additional scrolls along the neck joint. The stone is broken along the snout of the beast, making it impossible to definitively determine what type of head it had. However, from the remains of the carving it is possible to determine that the mouth was open with a visible tongue. No ears are visible on the creature, and the eye socket is slightly oval. The torso is thick and tapers slightly to the hips. The tail is long, heavy and strait with the suggestion of a tuft at the tip. The legs of this creature are quite problematic in that they are not all on the same >ground= plane, nor are they of the same proportion. The hindmost leg thus appears to be considerably shorter than the other three, all of which follow a >line=

which rises slightly upwards from the right to the left. Furthermore, the hindmost leg ends in a typically Pictish clawed style of paw (RE Henderson?) while the other three legs end in a blunt, block-like paws.

Immediately to the left of this creature are the remains of a right-facing, hooved, rearing quadruped. The forelegs of this creature appear quite unnaturally short in proportion to the visible chest and the assumed length of the torso.

Four beasts occupy the lowest register of the composition. In the left-most position are the damaged remains of a right-facing beast that displays a head with small forward pointed ears, an oval eye-socket and tapered snout. In proportion to the hooved, slightly back-bent forelegs, the head seems unnaturally small. One of the forelegs breaks the incised line of the bottom border. The other three beasts within this arrangement form an integrated unit; a clearly identifiable bovine group. All three are characterized by the stylized shoulder, hip and neck scrolls; despite this they are also depicted with a naturalism not seen in any of the other creatures carved on this stone. For instance, the left hindleg of left-most bovine is slightly bent and held slightly up off the line of the border, creating a very naturalistic impression of a cow resting its weight on one leg. The front legs, on the other hand are quite stiff. The cow=s head is characterized by a small, back-pointed ear, a curved horn, and a slightly tapered but blunt snout. The sculptor has also quite cleverly used a gravel inclusion as the eye of the creature. Directly in front of the cow=s face, so close as to create the impression of nuzzling it, is a very small right-facing calf with rather stiff legs and a short tail. Further details are difficult to pick out because a large area of the calf=s body is obscured by the head of the third bovine, which is actively engaged in licking the calf. This left-facing creature, who is significantly larger than the left-most bovine, raises one foreleg off of the border, giving an impression of steadying the calf. Meanwhile its hindmost leg breaks the border of the composition.

The quality of carving on this stone is very uneven. While the cattle group is expertly portrayed, the depictions of all the other animals are problematic in terms of proportion or detail. It is difficult to determine whether the various unnatural details which characterize some of the animals in this composition are deliberate mannerisms or the result of incompetence. For instance, the abnormally folded forelegs of the left-most top beast can also be seen on the >dragon= on TR20 and seem to be a typical Pictish representation, no matter how impossible the pose may be in nature. The uneven proportions between the forelegs and hindlegs of the same beast may also have resulted from the necessity of carving around the awkwardly positioned gravel inclusion, or even by a general lack of space; supposing that this beast was carved later than the larger beast under it. This creature is also difficult to identify due to the combination of long, thick, curly tail, horse-like hooves, and canine-style head. It has been suggested that this creature is meant to represent a lamb (*Bull.4*), but if so it does not resemble any of the other lambs carved on Pictish stones, though this too may be the result of incompetence. On the other hand it is possible that the creature may be a representation of a mixed beast from the Physiologus.

The beast in the top right corner of the composition is also difficult to identify due to cross-species conglomeration of attributes. It has been suggested that it is meant to represent a mantichore, and is therefore menacing the lamb to its left (*Bull. 4*). While this identification is not without interest, it is equally possible that its vagaries result from a lack of space or skill.

The rough stone beneath the border of the figural carving was most likely not meant to be seen, and probably functioned as a tenon. There is no trace of carving on the back, so the panel may have been hacked off a thicker slab. In this case it may have formed a panel at the bottom of a slab, similar in theme and composition to one on the Shandwick cross-slab (ECMS III, 72). But a role as the side-panel of a shrine or stone coffin is also possible. The importance of this piece has been raised even further by its being the only Tarbat sculpture so far found to be certainly carved in local stone (p000, above).

While the finished top edge of this slab makes it likely that it was at some point intended as a finished monument, the poor quality of the majority of the animal depictions suggests that this stone was at some time used as a practice piece. A probable sequence of events might be that the stone was begun as a piece of architectural sculpture or as a sarcophagus panel or altar frieze, etc. After carving a top and bottom border, (below which the unfinished stone quite possibly functioned as a tenon), the bovine group was carved. (It is possible the left-most creatures were also carved at this time; though their remains seem ill-proportioned, were we to have their entire bodies before us, the ungainliness might disappear). Faults in the stone, such as the rough grain or gravel inclusions may have led to the abandonment of the original purpose of the stone and its re-use as a practice piece. In particular, I believe that it was used as a practice piece for top panel of the back face of TR20. If one directly compares the two, it is possible to see that the basic compositions echo each other very closely. In both arrangements, a large lion-like creature paces to the left underneath a smaller humped-back creature. It is entirely possible that the carver was practicing the spatial layout before carving the cross-slab, which would quite handily explain why the lion's feet on TR28/35 are dissimilar and out of proportion, but are done correctly on TR20. It is also possible that the stone went through another period of reuse, with students or apprentices filling in every space left available; thus explaining the extremely inept lamb and a bear turned into a >manticore=. It is difficult to determine when the stone broke, though it seems probable that it was before its final re-use as part of a post-medieval drain as TR28 is much less weathered and worn than is TR35, suggesting that the two were separated before the sixteenth-century.

Whether or not the broken slab ever functioned as a trial piece (and it is quite possible that all of the perceived >mistakes= were, in fact, intended by the sculptor) the theological significance which can be attached to the cattle group (as well as to the manticore, lamb and lion) argues for the proposed purpose of display within an ecclesiastical environment at least sometime in its life. In other words, this stone was originally carved with, at the very least, the cattle family, and its purpose was religious. It was not simply a trial piece from beginning to end.

TR 28 was found re-used as medieval drain cover in the Glebe Field excavations in 1997.(Int24/1370/131)

TR29: Piece with part of stepped cross in low relief.

Dimensions: 30 x 260 x 70 mms [325x72mm].

Geology: Grey/green micaceous sandstone

Condition: Weathered and worn

Description: Sub-triangular fragment of gray/green micaceous sandstone, broken on all

sides, but with evidence of smoothing on the back face and carved decoration on the front face. The fragment measures 330mms at its longest, 260mms at its widest and is approximately 70mms thick. The remains of a cross can be seen carved in shallow relief (no higher than 5mms). The dimensions of the cross are impossible to determine as breakage to the stone prevents the full design from being seen. However, it is clear that the cross-head featured a square center and rectangular (perhaps squared) arms at right angles with stepped arm-pits.

This fragment most likely represents part of a gravestone. Stylistically it belongs with TR21, TR30, TR33, and TR34; all free-armed crosses carved on small slabs. There is a possibility, however, that TR29 came from a larger monument; though the back has been smoothed, it may have been done so when inserted into the crypt wall, rather than as part of its original function. The reasoning behind this assertion is the geology of the stone. The other stones mentioned (TR21, 33, and 34) all appear to be red micaceous sandstone with a medium to rough grain; appropriate enough for simple carving such as relief crosses. The grey/green micaceous sandstone, on the other hand, seems to be reserved for highly complex decorative or figural carving on very high status monuments such as that on the >Danish Cross= fragments. Therefore, it may be that TR29 is a fragment from a larger monument. Although it is unusual to have such a small cross on a large cross-slab, it is not unheard of; as such a layout can be seen centrally located on the back of the slab at Ulbster in Caithnessshire; and at Mortlach in Banffshire. The cross-slab at Rosemarkie features small crosses on both the front and back faces; the one on the front located at the top, while the one on the back is more centrally located. The parallel with the cross on the end panel of St Andrews Sarcophagus, a very high status monument, may be very significant and point to the possibility that TR29 was originally part of a sarcophagus or corner post shrine.

*Found during excavations in the church in the western wall of the crypt in 1997.
(Int17/97/1295/361)*

TR30: Part of cross-slab with incised hollow-angled cross. At least 560x620mm. *Found built into the foundations of the south wall of the early church in 1997. (Int17/63/1180/465)*

TR31:Part of cross-slab with incised hollow-angled cross. At least 190x180x70mm. *Found built into the foundations of the south wall of the early church in 1997. (Int17/63/1180/466)*

TR32: Small fragment with plain border against an incised decoration of tendrils similar to those on TR18. On the edge is part of a key pattern.

Dimensions: 46 x 80 x 52mms [*135x85x50mm*]

Geology: Yellow micaceous sandstone with a fine grain

Condition: Mixed, with both worn and crisp edges, pointing to different periods of breakage.

Description Yellow micaceous sandstone fragment with a fine grain, broken along the three sides and the back face. The wear on these faces is uneven, with the bottom side showing much wear while the breakage along the top and back appears much crisper. The front face and one side bear carved decoration. The front face features a wide (35mm) flat

band moulding and the remains of spiral and peltae decoration carved in deep relief reaching to 20mms in places. Breakage and wear make it impossible to ascertain if the spiral, which moves clockwise, is made up of two or three bands originating from a single point. It is also impossible to determine the diameter of the spiral. The pelta, most likely part of a C-shaped connection, features a small (approximately 25mms in diameter) spiral made up of two bands also moving in a clockwise motion. The peltae is further embellished by a centrally incised elongated triangle. The smoothed side of the fragment bears the remains of a shallowly incised key pattern in one corner. From what can be seen this appears to be a pattern similar to ECMS no. 925 a design using diagonal and straight lines to form triangles to fill rectangular spaces.

Both the similarity in design and the geology (yellow micaceous sandstone with a fine grain) of TR32 and TR18 suggest that these fragments are related and quite possibly originated from the same panel of ornament. The deep relief of the carving and the triangular embellishment to the pelta can also be seen on TR7, which also appears to be a yellow micaceous sandstone. Although the spirals on TR7 move in a counter clockwise direction, there is no reason it may not have come from the same monument, but a different panel of decoration.

TR32 was found among the rubble blocking beneath the arch in the west end of the church during restoration work in November 1997. (Int 23/1121/44)

TR33 Small sandstone slab featuring a low-relief cross.

Dimensions: 530 x 212x 90mms

Geology: Red micaceous sandstone with medium grain and an inclusion of gravel (approximately 20mms) below the left arm of the cross.

Condition Very worn

Description: Three conjoining fragments of red micaceous sandstone with a medium grain which form a complete slab that is 530mms high, 212mms wide, and is 90mms at its thickest point. The slab is broken away along the left edge while the other three sides suffer considerable flaking. The face of the slab, which features a carved cross and other decoration in extremely low relief (maximum height of 4mms), also bears considerable signs of wear. The cross-head, with right angled armpits and wedge-shaped terminals (classified as type 1B by Cramp) is broken away on the right side. A disc (approximately 30mms in diameter) is carved in extremely shallow relief in the crossing of the arms, while four additional detached discs (approximately 25mms in diameter) are located between the cross arms. The shaft of the cross narrows considerably in width from the top of the cross, where it measures 50mms to the bottom, where it measures only 40mms. The left and right arms are also only 40mms in width. An additional set of cross arms appear towards the bottom of the shaft. These are rather inexpertly carved; while the upper line of arms is relatively straight, the lower is very uneven and slopes very gradually downwards from the left to the right. In addition, the left side of the base of the shaft does not quite match up with the line of the shaft above it. The areas directly below these arms have only been very roughly carved out with the deepest relief occurring adjacent to the bottom of the shaft while the terminals of the cross arms are practically level with the surrounding stone. The cross-shaft rests upon a horizontal platform characterized by two incised parallel bars below which the stone is only very roughly smoothed and suffers from considerable flaking.

The depiction of the cross on TR33 shows a conflation of two types; the *majestis crucis* and a patriarchal cross. It has parallels at Iona (see above, p000).

TR33 was found in the foundations of the south wall of the early church during restoration in 1998. (Int17/63/1180/467)

TR34 Sandstone fragment bearing the remains of a cross in high relief.

Dimensions: 350 x 350 x 75mm

Geology: Red micaceous sandstone with medium grain

Condition: Worn, but carving is clearly visible

Description: Sub-rectangular fragment of red micaceous sandstone with a medium grain. The top, bottom and both sides are all broken, while the back face has been smoothed and bears a vertical flat-band moulding approximately 10mm in width, located approximately 170mm from the edge. The face of the slab features the remnants of a cross carved in relief approximately 20mm high. cross. From what can be seen of the right and bottom arms, the cross appears to be a hollow armed cross with squared terminals, classified as Cramp type 11A by Cramp and ECMS no. 101.

This fragment is most likely part of a gravestone dating from the 8th-9th-century, originating from the Phase 1 cemetery of the Tarbat monastery, which predated the building of the earliest stone church.

TR34 was found in the rubble foundations of the external stairs leading to the upper floor of the north aisle during restoration in February 1998.

TR35: Fragment joining with TR28 with rendering of lion, the forelegs of which conjoin with the feet on TR28 (qv). *Found in 1998 during excavations in the Glebe Field, re-used as the lining of a medieval drain. 380 x 330 x 80mm. (Int24/166/1453/1798)*

TR36: Small fragment of triskele carved in relief. 86 x 50 x 31mm. *Found in 1998 during excavation in the Glebe Field. (Int14/1506/2119)*

TR37: Small fragment of double strand interlace. 89 x 45 x 20mm. *Found during excavations in the Glebe Field (Int14/1510/2122)*

TR38: Fragment of double strand interlace probably from the same piece of carving as TR37. Comprises two conjoining pieces. 114 x 88 x 35mm. *Found during excavations in the Glebe Field (Int14/1510/2120)*

TR39 ABlosse Stone@ Fragment of yellow micaceous sandstone with a prominent interlace boss.

Dimensions: 100 x 100 x 50mm Recheck

Geology: Yellow micaceous sandstone with a fine grain and some discolouration due to iron blebs?

Condition: Worn

Description: Sub-triangular fragment of yellow micaceous sandstone with a fine grain measuring approximately 100mms in length, 100mms in width (recheck) and 50mms thick. The fragment is broken along all sides and the back face and the stone as a whole is very worn. The front face features the remains of a slightly elongated, raised (approximately 35mms above the surface) interlaced boss and the remnants of a further interlace design surrounding the boss. The interlace on the boss is very shallow (maximum height of 7mms) and tightly woven design made up of diagonal strands which bend back upon themselves forming an encircled pattern. Some strands leave the pattern and join the loose interlace on the lower surface of the stone, though not enough of this design remains to identify the pattern.

The slight elongation of the raised boss suggests that in its original, undamaged, state the boss was lozenge-shaped rather than circular. The escaping strands of interlace may very well be snakes, though damage to the stone makes it difficult to determine this with certainty. The geology and provenance of this stone argue for an association with TR 40.

TR39 was found by Richard Blosse in 1999 among stones bought by Ann Perry, for whom he was building a garden wall. The stones originated from the Manse steading which had recently been demolished. 23 July 1999 Richard Blosse discovered two worked stones among the material taken from the demolished Manse steading for wall-building at Ann Perry's house.

TR40 ABlosse Stone@ Sandstone fragment bearing geometric ornament carved in relief on the front and back faces.

Dimensions: 370 x 270 x 190 mms.

Geology: Yellow micaceous sandstone with a fine grain and multiple inclusions of iron blebs.

Condition: Worn

Description: Sub-rectangular yellow micaceous sandstone slab fragment with a fine grain and multiple inclusions of iron blebs. The slab is broken along the top, bottom and left and right sides, all of which are worn; though some jagged edges remain, the breaks are not crisp. The slab measures approximately 370mms along its longest edge, is 270 mms in width and is 190mms thick. The front and back faces carry geometric ornament carved in relief which also shows signs of wear and substantial flaking.

Face A features a key pattern carved in shallow relief of a maximum depth of 7mms. The pattern is closest in design to ECMS no. 829 B; a decorative arrangement based on diagonal interlocking T=s. The design takes up the whole of the face though flaking has caused considerable damage to the edges. Face B an interlace design and spiral ornament, both carved in shallow relief (maximum depth 5mms). The interlace, composed of interlocking circular knots arranged in facing pairs are composed of symmetrical loops with extra cords that pass through each loop and cross in the center of the design.

The spiral ornament is contained within the remains of a panel bordered by a flat-band moulding measuring 20mms in width. Damage to the stone makes the design difficult to categorize but the following characteristics can be seen. A large (50mms in diameter) triple band spiral moves in a clockwise motion while a pair of smaller affronted spirals move in opposite directions immediately above it. A small triangular shape carved in the upper right-hand corner of the panel completes the design, which thus inhabits the entire space of the panel. The remains of other large spirals and C-shaped peltae are faintly discernable in the rest of the panel.

Damage and wear make it almost impossible to definitively classify this pattern, but it appears to be closest to ECMS nos. 713 and 714. A close variation (no. 709), appears within the central panel of decoration on TR2. An almost identical layout of spirals and triangles to that which is discernable on Face B of TR40 can be seen on TR 10 and TR20, and these provide the closest affiliation.

TR40 was found by Richard Blosse in 1999 among stones bought by Ann Perry, for whom he was building a garden wall. The stones originated from the Manse steading which had recently been demolished.