

Incised Carved Decorated Stone *by*

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A single decorated building stone was recovered from the excavations (no. 1). It lay on top of the fortress wall in Site E where it had been structurally re-used, not in the original fabric, but in one of the later rebuilds. The stone has previously been published (cf. Brewer 1985, 28, no. 39, pl. 15). (Site S F21 Phase IV).

The front face of this fine-grained grey sandstone, wedge-shaped stone is decorated with two vertical palm- or fir-like motifs stretching for almost the complete height of the block. These are carved to either side of another motif, consisting of a vertical groove running down the centre of the block, with a curved incision on either side cut towards the upper end. If this motif is a trident (cf. Brewer 1985, no. 37), the curved lines would

be very unusual and it is perhaps most likely a military standard is intended; in which case the motifs to either side would indeed be palms. Height 150mm, width 270mm, depth 70mm. Probably late first or second century. (E SF21 Phase IV).

The decorated face of this building stone shows many signs of weathering. This must have occurred when in its original setting, for subsequent to its re-use it has been protected by mortar adhering to much of the stone. Mortar, mainly white but with small patches of pink as well, also covers the edges of the stone. The presence of two types of mortar, especially on the decorated face, would seem to indicate that it had been re-used on two separate occasions. At one time the upper edge must have been the external face for a small piece of rendering painted dark red still adheres to it.

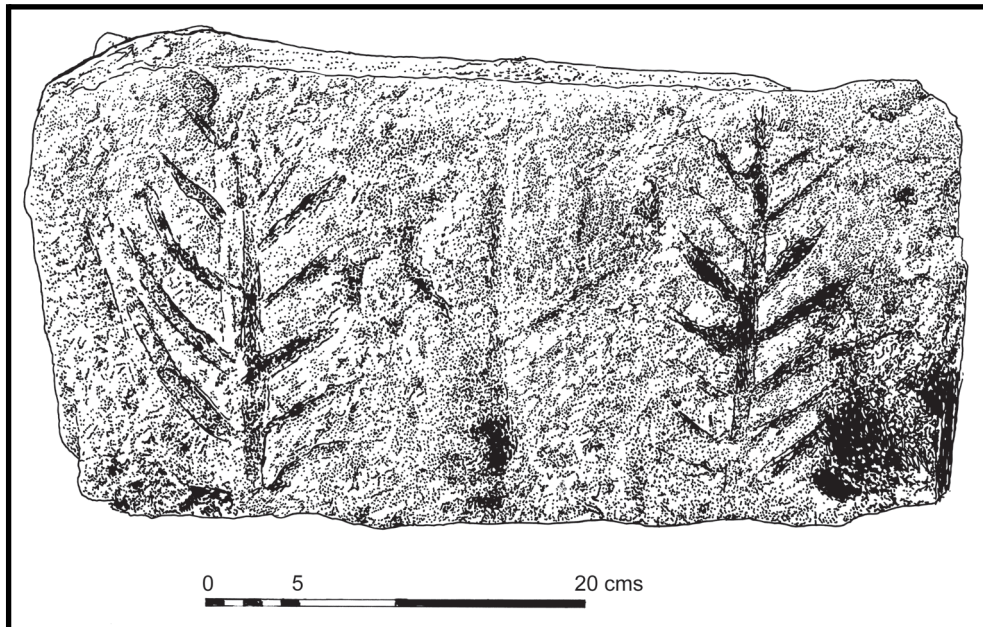


Fig. 53: Incised stone re-used in rebuild of wall on Site E