pictish arts society

journal 2

autumn 1992

EDITORIAL

Efforts to improve the presentation of this publication continue: this second edition of the PAS Journal is longer and better illustrated, and has a glossy cover. Suggestions for further improvements would be welcomed.

As Editor, I was in the happy position of receiving more material than could go in a single copy of the Journal. Apologies to those contributors whose work has had to be held over for future editions.

A remarkable number of discoveries of undescribed Pictish or EC stones have been made this year, and several of these are given their first publication here.

The most important PAS event during the remainder of this year is intimated on the pull out sheet, Conferences 1992. This is the PAS Aberdeen Conference, for which a distinguished panel of speakers has been arranged. Those members who came to the PAS Dunnichen Conference in May will recall a worthwhile and enjoyable occasion: we hope that even more people will attend this one day event in Aberdeen, which will go along with a craft fair and evening ceilidh.

May I direct readers to Graham Ritchie's appeal, in the Letters pages, for help towards the publication of a second edition of the Handlist of Pictish Stones, a valuable project which agrees splendidly with the reasons the PAS was established.

The third edition of the PAS Journal will be published in Spring 1993. Contributions should be sent to Niall M Robertson, PAS Journal Editor, 28 Fairies Road, Perth, PH1 1LZ (Tel: 0738 25022).

Niall M Robertson.

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Cover photograph - Eggerness Deer Carving, Galloway (Tom E Gray).

The Gododdin and the Picts

Sometime around the year AD 600 a force of Britons from the Lothian-based Kingdom of Gododdin launched an attack upon the northern Anglo-Saxons at a place called Catraeth. The latter has been identified as Catterick in Yorkshire, although the identification of the battlefield with such a southerly location can be questioned (Clarkson, in prep).

The British army was annihilated, but the tragic event became famous in a contemporary poem which celebrated the bravery of the vanquished Celtic warriors. Long after the Anglian conquest of the Gododdin kingdom the poem continued to be sung in Strathclyde, the last remaining bastion of the northern Britons, from where it eventually arrived in Wales. In the latter country the poem became a classic of its genre, and was committed to writing, in which form it has been preserved for posterity in a single Mediaeval manuscript. It was perhaps in Wales that the poem also received the title by which it is most commonly known: *Y Gododdin*.

The principal interest in the work from a Pictish standpoint is its reference to several warriors from Pictland who seem to have accompanied the British expedition to Catraeth. The presence of Picts among an army which was essentially the warband of the king of Gododdin raises a number of implications regarding the relationship between the British realm and its neighbours north of the Forth. These questions are in turn important to questions concerning the extent of Gododdin territory during the late C6th, particularly in relation to the kingdom's frontier with southern Pictland.

In the poem, three warriors who seem to have been Picts are mentioned. Their names are given as Llif, Gwid and Bubon in the following lines (translated by Jarman, 1988):

> The princely hero protected a hundred men.
> Of noble nature, a foreign horseman,
> Cian's only son from beyond Bannog.
> The men of Gododdin do not tell on the field of battle
> that there was anyone harsher than Llif.
>
> II.258-62.

> No more than a rock of vast circumference moves
> would Gwid son of Peithan be budged.
>
> II.370-1.

> From beyond the Sea of Iddew, most valiant in battle,
> three times fiercer than a savage lion,
> Bubon acted, full of anger.
>
> II.944- 6.

Of the three, only Llif can be identified with certainty as a Pict, on account of his dwelling-place "beyond Bannog". Since the latter is unquestionably the range of hills from which the Bannock Burn rises, there can be no doubt that Llif's home lay in Pictland (Watson, 1926, 195). Moreover, the description of him as "a foreign horseman" refutes any suspicion that Llif was, say, a Briton who held lands in Pictish territory. Another stanza which may also refer to Llif includes the following line:

> The young son of Cian from Maen Gwyngwn.
>
> I.93.

Maen Gwyngwn is unidentified, but if the Cian mentioned in this line is indeed Llif's father, then it was presumably a place which lay in southern Pictland.

The scant information that can be gleaned from the poem does not allow us to infer Llif's social position either among the Picts or in relation to the Gododdin kingdom, although if the phrase "princely hero" is to be taken literally, then his family was evidently of high or even royal status in its local area.

Gwid son of Peithan is a rather enigmatic character. His father's name may in fact be an error for "Neithon", a name which, in the form Nechton, was popular among the Picts. Curiously, a Pictish king-list mentions three sons of a certain Wid as rulers during the first half of the C7th, thereby providing a chronological context for Wid himself around the time of the Gododdin expedition. It is therefore possible that Wid and Gwid were one and the same, and that the three Pictish kings of the succeeding generation were sons of a warrior who had perished at Catraeth (Smyth, 1984, 65).

Lastly, the ferocious Bubon was arguably a Pict, since his home lay "beyond the Sea of Iddew", a phrase which means "on the northern side of the Firth of Forth". Iddew was probably the name of the citadel-rock upon which Stirling Castle now stands, and in the post-Roman period was in all likelihood a Gododdin stronghold. The *Gododdin* does not say how far Bubon's home lay beyond the Forth, but the extreme south-east of Pictland along the British frontier seems a realistic location.

What, then, are the inferences we might draw from these references in the *Gododdin*, as far as the Pictish-British interface around the Forth is concerned?

In general terms it would appear that the Gododdin kingdom exerted some influence among royal and other high-status groups in southern Pictland during the late C6th and early C7th. An objection to this theory would be to suggest that Llif, Gwid and Bubon were merely bold adventurers or mercenaries who sought fame and booty outside their own home territories, but who were not a representative sample of their countrymen. Some support for this alternative view may be given by the recorded presence of warriors from distant British realms among the Gododdin army at Catraeth. However, there is little doubt that the Gododdin maintained a foothold north of the Forth, where the district of Manau - a name preserved today as an element in Clackmannan and Slamannan - was a part of their domain (Jackson, 1969, 72). The inhabitants of Manau were perhaps of mixed Pictish-British stock,

owing allegiance to the kings of Gododdin, and participating in their wars. The legendary founder of the realm of Gwynedd, Cunedda, is said to have travelled to Wales from Manau Guotodin (ie Manau of the Gododdin).

There is, moreover, a certain amount of evidence which appears to show that Gododdin's influence north of the Forth was not entirely a one-way process. For instance, among the several heavy silver chains which have been discovered in Gododdin territory, and which have been interpreted as late C6th military decorations, two examples bear Pictish symbols (Alcock, 1983, 14). The practice of Early Christian burial in long cists, which has a distribution extending from Lothian northwards along the coast into Angus, likewise seems to provide further evidence of close ties between the people of Gododdin and their Pictish neighbours (Thomas, 1968, 108). Such links were probably forged in the Britons' own frontier province of Manau, an area within which an exchange of social customs and ideas perhaps occurred.

The presence of Pictish warriors among the Gododdin warband at Catraeth may thus owe less to political pressure exerted by the British realm than to a shared cultural milieu which in the C6th united the peoples living on either side of the Forth.

Tim J Clarkson.

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A REPORT ON A SCULPTURED STONE FROM INVERKEITHING

If the records that have come down to us are correct, a Class III sculptured stone disappeared from the parish of Inverkeithing in Dunfermline District, Fife, sometime between 1845 and 1856.

History

The earliest account of the Inverkeithing Stone is in Sandy Gordon's Iter Septentrionale of 1726 (Gordon, 1726, 157, Pl LV iii). He believed a number of Pictish sculptured stones were in fact set up in commemoration of Danish invasions and battles in the early C11th. Comparing accounts of invasions and battles with the actual positions of stones, Gordon proposed that these: "Monuments of Antiquity serve to confirm the truth of the (Danish) Actions as much as the Hieroglyphical Symbols of these rude Ages possibly could". He cited an account of a battle between Canutus and Bancho c1035 at Inverkeithing. He then goes on:

> At Inverkeithing there stands an Obelisk, 10 foot above the Surface of the Earth, which as Tradition goes was erected as a Monument of that same defeat of the Danes. On this stone are engraven, in low Relievo, several Hieroglyphics, which I copied on the Spot, but as I am at a loss how to give any satisfactory Explanation of them, I have taken care to exhibit them and shall leave them to the Perusal of abler and more judicious Antiquaries.

Gordon has an engraving of the Stone, which is copied in Stuart's Sculptured Stones of Scotland, Vol I (Aberdeen, 1856, Pl CXXXI).

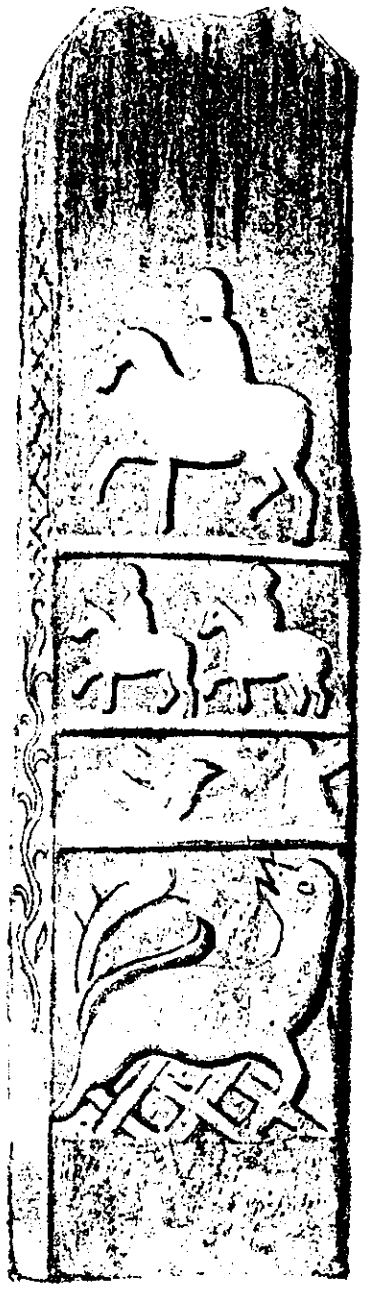
In the Statistical Account of Scotland, Vol X (Edinburgh, 1794, 511) the following entry is listed under Antiquities in the parish of Inverkeithing:

> Towards the north part of the parish, there is a stone set up about 10 feet high, 2½ broad, and 1 thick, commonly called the standing stone. Many rude figures seems to have been cut upon it, but are much defaced by the weather and length of time; however, two armed men on horseback, the one behind the other, appear pretty discernible on the east side. It is supposed, that after some battle between the Scots and Danes, fought near this place, some Dane of distinction had fallen, and been buried there, and this stone, as was then very commonly done, raised as a monument over his grave.

Similarly, in the New Statistical Account, Vol IX (Fife) (Edinburgh, 1845, 239), it is stated:

> In the north part of the parish there is a stone 10 feet high, 2½ broad and 1 thick, with rude figures of men and horses cut upon it, but now much defaced, supposed to be a Danish monument.

When Stuart was preparing his volume, published in 1856, no trace of the stone could be found (Stuart, 1856, 41). The first Ordnance Survey map, of 1855, gives no indication of where the stone was. Stuart used Gordon's sketch with the qualification that "none of Gordon's engravings have much pretension to minor accuracy, yet, as they furnish a general likeness of the stones, I thought it desirable to copy his sketch as the original cannot now be found".



Sketch from Stuart, after Gordon.

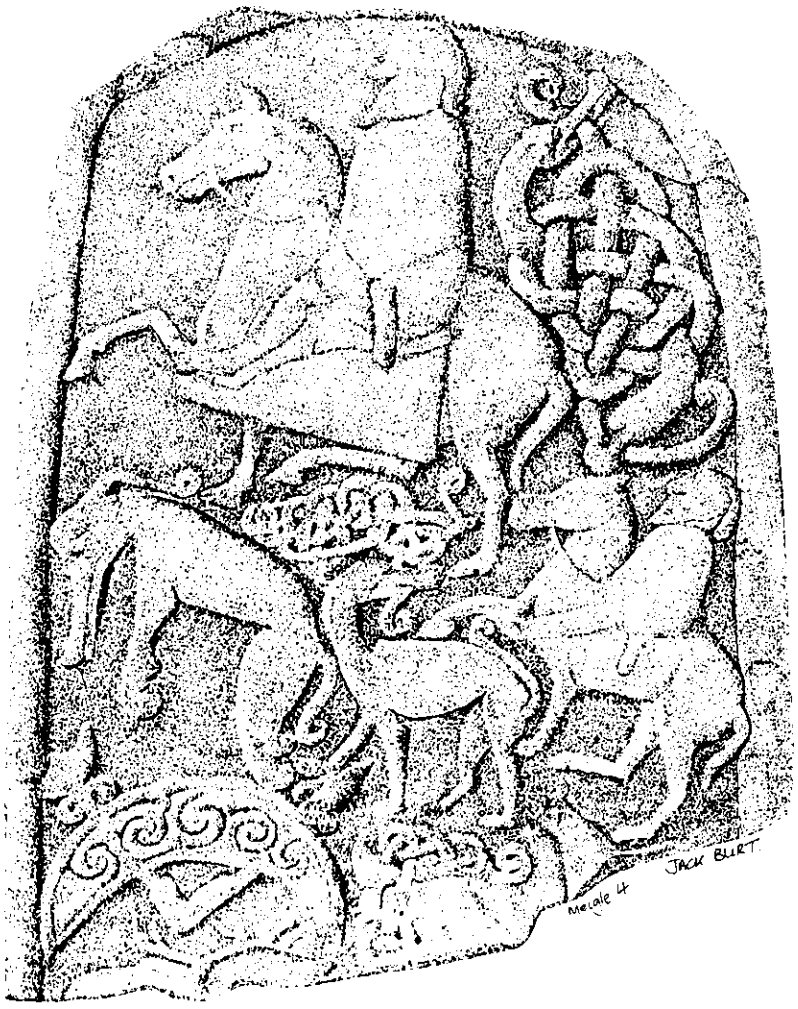
Romilly Allen dismisses this sketch (Allen and Anderson, 1903, 367):

> The sculptured stone formerly stood towards the N. part of the parish of Inverkeithing, but is now lost. The illustration of it which has been preserved is not sufficiently good to enable an accurate technical account of the ornament to be given. It appears to have been an upright cross-slab with figures of horsemen and beasts on the back.

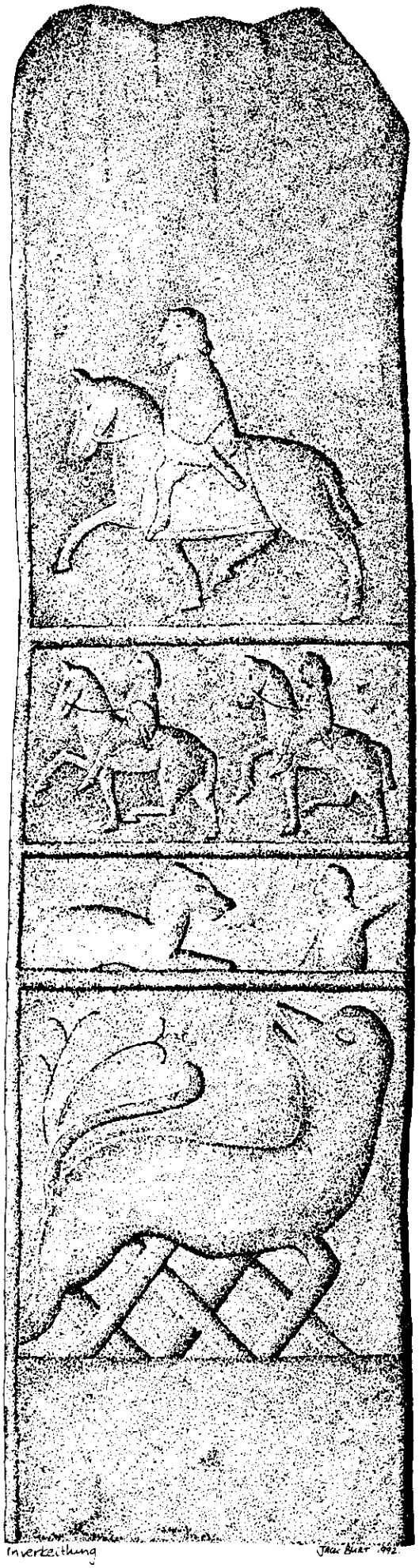
Sculpture

We are told by Gordon that the stone was sculpted in relief (Gordon, 1726, 157). We have a sketch of only one face, however, the east. This side was already defaced and weathered when the sketch was made, but four panels, one above another, can be seen. I have redrawn Gordon's engraving.

The uppermost panel has a horseman facing left. In the panel below are two smaller horsemen, one behind the other, again facing left. Representations of men on horseback occur frequently on Pictish sculptured stones. There are over twenty Class II cross-slabs with horsemen (eg Meigle 4, illustrated here), as well as over thirty Class III stones from the area of Pictland.

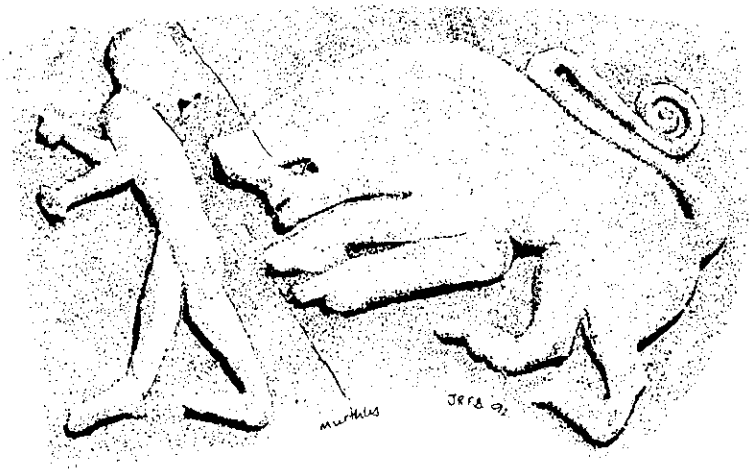


Class II stone with horsemen (Meigle 4).



The Inverkeithing Stone (reconstruction by J Burt).)

In the panel below the horsemen is the figure of a man on the right apparently running away from a pursuing beast. This is a scene which appears on other stones such as Murthly, Perthshire. Allen suggested that the beast on the Murthly stone was intended as a variant of the fabulous man-eating *Manticora*, which is described in some versions of the Bestiary as being in bodily form like a bear (Allen and Anderson, 1903, 306). There is also a Bestiary manuscript from the C13th in the British Museum which shows the *Manticora* with the body

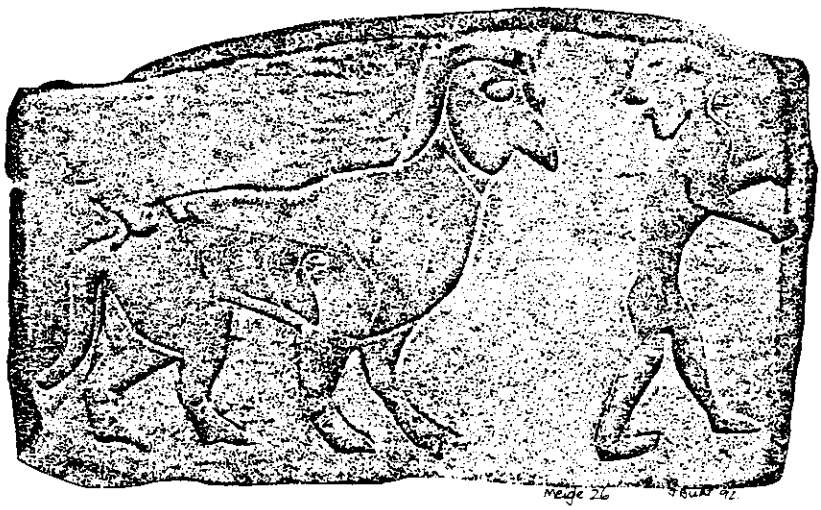


Murthly Stone (detail).

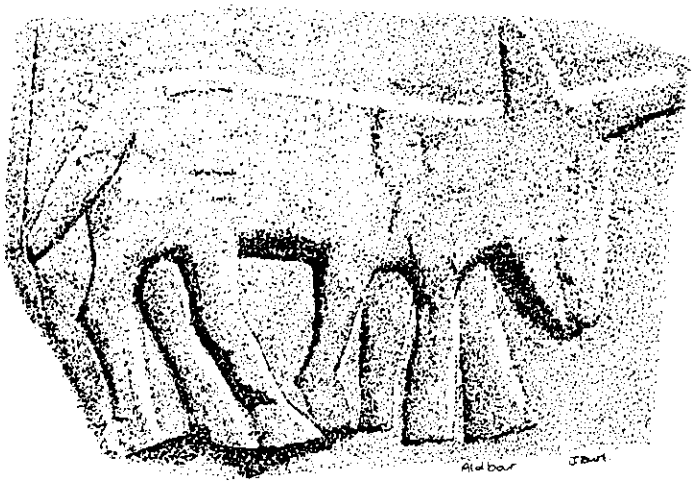
of a beast and the head of a man. A rather amusing representation of this may be the scene on the end of a recumbent stone at Meigle (Allen and Anderson, 1903, 305).

The lowermost panel contains a curious creature with a seal-like head, seven legs and a curved tail. Beasts with seal-like heads appear on other Pictish sculptured stones, eg Ulbster, Caithness or Shandwick, Easter Ross. At the bottom of a cross-slab from Aldbar, Angus, now in Brechin Cathedral, there is a donkey with eight legs.

It is possible that there was a further panel above the top remaining one as there is



Meigle 26 (head end).



Aldbar Stone (detail).

room on the stone. If there were a panel here, and if it contained a horseman, then this Inverkeithing Stone would be very similar in layout to one from Mugdrum, also in Fife. The Mugdrum Stone has one face divided into four panels, the top three contain one, one and two horsemen from top down (Allen and Anderson, 1903, 367). It is even possible that one sculptor was responsible for both monuments.

Jack R F Burt.

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The Lost Warrior of Dunnichen

Anyone searching for the "Lost Warrior" of Dunnichen (PAS Journal 1, 4) need look no further than Dundee Museum.

The Rev James Headrick's ". . large flat stone on which is cut a rude outline of an armed warrior's head and shoulders" is none other than the Dunnichen Stone currently housed there.

The Dunnichen Stone.
Drawn by Kate Butcher.

Andrew Jervise, writing about the "Dunnichen Monument" (PSAS 2, 189), and referring to Headrick's description, states: "It is worthy of remark, however strange it may appear, that the flat stone, which is here represented as being the warrior's head and shoulders, is nothing else than the carved stone monument now under review, - a fact which shows how variously and absurdly the emblems on these stones are interpreted, and how necessary and useful it is that they should be preserved by the engraver.*".

The asterisk in the quotation refers to Plate 92 in John Stuart's Sculptured Stones of Scotland (Aberdeen, 1856), a lithograph, not an engraving, and a reduced version of the Jastrzebski original in Patrick Chalmers' The Ancient Sculptured Monuments of the County of Angus (Bannatyne Club, 1848).

Chalmers was the first to bring out a systematic publication, albeit dealing with only one county, and his friend Stuart, to whom he generously gave permission to reproduce from his plates, was inspired by, and modelled his comprehensive national work on it.

Chalmers and Stuart were both concerned to have accurate illustrations of the stones. They insured that the artists they employed transferred their own drawings directly onto the litho stones, ". . and thereby avoided one considerable source of mistake". But they both allowed many errors to appear and, while recognising some of the difficulties involved, were quite ready to blame the shortcomings of the artist. Stuart is particularly unkind about Jastrzebski, whose "removal to Australia" presumably made him an easy target. He states: "In

several cases, Mr Jastrebski's [sic] drawings . ." were ". . deficient in minute accuracy, apparently from their hasty execution". In contrast, he heaps praise on Gibb, who took over from him, whose drawings "throughout . . .. are not only minutely accurate and trustworthy, but that gentleman has imbibed a thorough interest in the subject . .". Be that as it may, it did nor prevent him from making mistakes, but Stuart did not seem to recognise them.

Jervise' faith in the "engraver" was perhaps over-optimistic and many misrepresentations appeared (and still do). The work of these artists can never have been easy, travelling around the country at that time to the often inhospitable sites of the stones, many of which were in poor condition, their designs obliterated through severe weathering, or camouflaged by coatings of lichen. The artists, as well as the stones, were at the mercy of the weather, and their visits would rarely coincide with favourable lighting conditions. On top of all these problems, they had to painstakingly transfer their sketches onto litho stones, in the printer's workshop, and submit proofs from them to the scrutiny of their fickle patrons.

We should recognise the important early contribution made by these draughtsmen, and excuse many of the mistakes and deficiencies in their attempts.

When ECMS was being planned these shortcomings were acknowledged, and it was hoped to overcome them by general use of photography. This proved to be impractical, and too costly, and many of the illustrations had to be made from photographically reduced rubbings, casts and squeezes of the stones.

Now that we can all appreciate the benefits of available technology, and have access to considerable and accurate representations of the stones (such as Tom E Gray's outstanding photographs), Jervise might be amused to know "how variously and absurdly the emblems on these stones are interpreted" to this day.

David Henry.

Some Thoughts on the Mirror and Comb Symbol

Early on in the study of the Pictish symbol stones, the student learns that the mirror and comb symbol signifies a female reference of some sort. The origin of this idea may possibly be traced to a statement by Joseph Anderson in his introduction to The Early Christian Monuments of Scotland (Edinburgh, 1903), where he mentions a passage in Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English Church and People. In Book II, Chap 11, 125 (Penguin Classics, 1990), Bede reproduces a long letter from Pope Boniface to Queen Æthelburh, wife of King Edwin of Northumbria (617-633). The Pope asked the Queen to persuade her husband to accept the Christian faith, and sent her a gift of a silver mirror and a gold and ivory comb.

What a strange present - suggestive of wealth and female vanity - from a leader of the Church, devoted, one would suppose, to humility and poverty, to a follower whose husband would, he hoped, be converted to Christianity through her influence. About thirty years later (655), Pope Vitalian wrote to King Oswiu of Bernicia, later of all Northumbria, that he was sending him relics of the apostles and martyrs, and "to our spiritual daughter, your Queen, a cross made from the fetters of the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, with a golden key." (Ibid, Book III, Chap 29, 199). This gift might perhaps seem more appropriate than that sent to Queen Æthelburh.

It would be interesting to discover if there are any other precedents for a mirror and comb having a special "female" significance. It can hardly be a pagan symbol, given its connection with the Pope. Is it possible that the symbol refers, not to women in general, but to Queen Æthelburh herself, and perhaps to the subsequent conversion of her husband King Edwin, and consequently of his kingdom of Northumbria (see Bede, Book II, Chaps 12-14)? If this were so, one might deduce that the horse-woman elegantly riding side-saddle on two of the Pictish cross-slabs (Meigle 1 and Hilton of Cadboll), is the Queen. Of course, this is a very far-fetched speculation, but the lady seems to appear, as in our own time statues of Queen Victoria still do, in various important places. Easter Ross is a long way from Northumbria, but is it possible that Northumbrian influence on C7th Pictland was much greater than we have believed?

Personally, I have found it difficult to accept that the mirror and comb is a specifically "female" symbol, and I have previously suggested that the circle with an apparent handle may not be a mirror at all; similarly the comb (see PAS Journal 1, 16). Pope Boniface's letter to Queen Æthelburh may prove me wrong, and yet there still seems to be a missing link between the historical data and the symbol stones. Is there a solution for this strange problem?

E C I Fortescue.

What's in a name?

In The Problem of the Picts, F T Wainwright posed two questions: "Is the name *Picti* no more than the Romans' name for a 'painted people'? Or does it represent a Latinised version of a native name, perhaps the Picts own name for themselves?"

From the time of Julius Caesar onwards there are continuous references to natives of these islands painting themselves, although the first references to tattooing are made by Isidore of Seville, who Wainwright accepted was not a totally reliable source. There can be little doubt that some form of body painting was common if not universal in the pagan and Early Christian periods, which gives some credence to the idea that *Picti* was a name invented by the Romans for the tribal confederation of the northern area of the islands.

However, in the works of one of the Roman writers who mention the *Picti* - Ammianus Marcellinus, writing just after the middle of the C4th - there occur three separate references, and one of these is in the form *Pecti*. The names by which the Picts were referred to in languages other than Latin are as follows:

Middle Welsh *Peith-wyr*; Old English *Peohta*; Old Scots *Pecht*; Old Norse *Pettr*. Watson pointed out in The History of the Celtic Place-Names of Scotland that these are all forms which demand an original *Pect- (1926, 67-8). This tends to give support to Wainwright's second possibility - that the name was derived initially from a native word which might have been the natives' term for themselves. Although the use of *Pecht* survived in the oral and folklore traditions, these alone are not enough to make a good case for *Pecht* or similar.

In March 1990 Dr Isabel Henderson addressed the Society and suggested that there was more material to be considered on this question. She referred to Rivet and Smith's scholarly The Place Names of Roman Britain. Here, Wainwright's suggestion finds a great deal of support. The authors draw attention to the Ravenna Cosmography - a geographical miscellany put together c700 AD from a variety of sources, including military reports of the Severan campaign in North Britain at the close of the C2nd AD. On page 438 the authors state:

> It is possible that Ravenna's *Pexa* . . is for *Pecti* or, even more interestingly, *Pectia* - Pictland. The Cosmographer lists the name as that of an Antonine Wall fort, but we already know that this section contains several names that are nothing of the sort, including two that are probably *tribal names misread from a map as though they were forts* (my italics).

They go on to suggest that the original source could have been *PECTI or *PEXTI, referring to Ammianus Marcellinus' form in E. Rivet and Smith stress that, if they are right, this *PEXA would in fact be the first historical reference to the Picts. Eumenius, who has hitherto generally been accepted as the author who first referred to the *Picti*, did not write until a full century after the Severan campaign.

All of the foregoing gives support to the idea that the original name for the Picts was something like *Pecht*, but Rivet and Smith go further. Suggesting that the Latin form *Picti* is a secondary form of the original word, they put forward an intriguing suggestion as to why the form has become the norm. On page 473 they say:

> . . there are literary analogies for such naming of peoples in Latin, in texts likely to have been known to many educated Romans; Virgil has picti Agathyrsi (Aeneid IV, 146) and pictosque Gelanos (Georgics II, 115) both placed somewhere in the North.

The suggestion is clear: Eumenius and the rest of the Roman writers who mention the Picts would have known Virgil's works, and the combination of a custom of body painting or tattooing, and a similar name, would have led them to call these tribes *Picti*.

The dangers that arise from uncritical acceptance of written sources are underlined by the fact that early Irish sources give supposedly mythical traditions of the origins of the Picts, which have them coming from Scythia, being called Agathyrsi, and having sprung from one Gelon, a son of Hercules (Watson 1926, 61). A clear case of some learned monk trying to satisfy some sort of craving for respectability by deriving this Celtic, and probably partly pre-Celtic, people, from Classical sources. Unfortunately, this sort of attitude still effects us, in that much of the scholarship of the past three centuries is tainted with the idea that all civilisation stemmed from the areas adjoining the Mediterranean, and was brought to us savages on the edge of the world by the efficient Romans and the noble Early Christian missionaries. Re this point, and the basic fallacy of the Diffusion Theory, may I recommend the truly seminal Language and Archaeology by Professor Colin Renfrew (Johnathan Cape, 1987).

I would suggest that the foregoing makes it extremely likely that the answer to Wainwright's second question is yes - probably.

While there would appear to be a strong possibility that the name was something akin to *Pecht*, it would be claiming too much that the Pechts were as folklore tells us - dwarfish, red-haired and possessed of pedal extremities of such size that they walked on their hands when it rained, using their large feet as umbrellas. However, the name Pecht survived in folklore, while history preferred a name that I would suggest Rivet and Smith have proved

was a misnomer. We can, of course, never settle the question absolutely, but it is as well to remember that folklore can tell us a lot. The Norrie's Law hoard came from a site where local legend maintained that a Pictish warrior called Norroway was buried mounted on his horse, clad in a suit of silver armour. The legend of the Nine Maidens attached to the Martin Stone, near Tealing in Angus, has led to fascinating discoveries which I will expand on at a later date.

It is worth noting that Eumenius' reference to the Picts relates to a struggle between the Emperor Constantius and his rival Allectus, in which comparison is made with Julius Caesar's struggle against the Britons, who were used to fighting such enemies as the "Hiberni and Picti". Smyth (1984, 52-3) stresses this point, and suggests that it is therefore logical to accept "Caledonian" as being virtually synonymous with "Pictish" in the sense that both refer generally to the barbarian Celtic tribes north of the Forth-Clyde isthmus. He therefore suggests that the Pictish period should be accepted as extending from 80-850 AD, an idea worthy of further discussion.

However, while accepting that the name of the people known in Gaelic as *Cruithne* was akin to *Pecht*, I think it is a little late in the day to suggest that we start calling ourselves the Pechtish Arts Society.

Stuart McHardy.

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GROAM HOUSE NEWS

The New Rosemarkie High Street

Although our visitor numbers were down in May and June this year when conditions in the High Street were noisy and dusty, and limited access to the Museum, this was only partly due to the construction of our handsome new High Street. Tourist numbers were down everywhere. Our Chairman, Anthony Bryant, who looks after all the National Trust for Scotland properties in the Highlands, told me that their numbers and shop sales were down too, but that their restaurants were booming. Perhaps people tend to eat their way out of recession.

However, July and August saw a healthy increase in our numbers. One wet Sunday afternoon we had 74 visitors in two hours. Our little Museum was bursting at the seams. This highlights not only our need to expand our premises, but a need for help during the busy months.

Volunteers

If anyone would like to look after Groam House Museum on a voluntary basis, not only during our summer season, but during Saturday or Sunday afternoons during the winter months, please let me know, and I will arrange a teaching session. If you like meeting and speaking to people, you will find that the work is enjoyable. Just being in the Museum surrounded by some of the finest works of Pictish art is a joy in itself.

There are times when my assistant Susan Seright and I would like to go to meetings together, or when neither of us are available through ill-health or pressure of paperwork. As Groam House becomes more professional, so the burden on the staff increases. It would be good to have a small group of people willing and able to help out from time to time.

Museum Extension

Plans for an extension to Groam House have been drawn up and costed and we have applied for grants. At the present we are awaiting the outcome of our application, in the hopes that we can go ahead with the building in the autumn of 1993. With every week that passes I am more convinced of the necessity to have more internal space, not just for displays, but also for storage. If the Museum is beginning to look a little cluttered, it is because we have nowhere to put our boxes of shop goods, posters, photographs, files and cleaning equipment.

The Children's Week in July

A first event for Groam House, the Children's Week started tentatively and ended up a success mainly due to the leaders who gave the children so much individual attention and enjoyment. Helen Gallagher from Culbokie and Marian Tonkin from Cromarty, both Art Teachers, with the help of Steve Callaghan, Museums Assistant Officer, and Erlend Tait of Fortrose, encouraged the children to make Pictish people, mirrors, helmets and shields, nature rainbows, collages and pictures. Story-telling was another feature of the week, and Duncan Williamson visited us from Fife to enchant young and old alike with his traditional tales.

Looking Ahead to 1993

Next year the Groam House Lecture will be given by Dr Anna Ritchie, Pictish expert, on Friday April 30. The text of the Lecture for 1991, given by Aidan MacDonald, has now been published. The paper has been expanded so that the supporting sources could be included in a scholarly but most readable work. Curadán, Boniface and the early church of Rosemarkie is available for £4.30 (incl p&p) from Groam House Museum, High Street, Rosemarkie, Black Isle, Easter Ross.

* * * * * *

The Nigg Stone

Congratulations to Mr Budge and the Nigg Stone Trust for making the Old Parish Kirk safe enough for visitors to again have easy access to the Cross-slab. Many people, having visited Groam House and seen our excellent photograph of it, want to see the Stone itself. Now we are able to direct them there without having to call on Mr Budge to meet them with a key. I would like to thank Mr Budge for all his help to our visitors in the past.

The Nigg Cross-slab has a particularly intriguing pediment, illustrated here, which is worth describing.

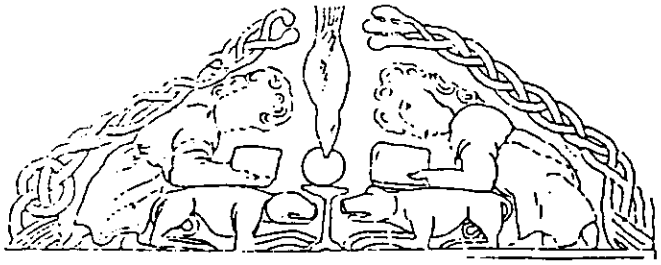
When the Picts were converted to Christianity, some became monks and learned to read Latin. A surprising number of books seem to have been available to them. A favourite was St Jerome's (c342-420) Life of St Paul the First Hermit for stories from it are carved on several Pictish stones, including Nigg.

In Helen Waddell's translation we read that Paul was 113 years old and living a life of great holiness, fed and clothed by the date palm in the Syrian desert, when a fellow hermit called Anthony, aged 90, had a vision to visit him. After many adventures he found Paul and

received a warm welcome. At that moment a crow arrived with a load of bread in its beak, and both men began to argue as to who should take it first. "You are my guest," said Paul, "you must take it". "No," said Anthony, "you are the elder".

At length they agreed that each should take hold of the loaf and pull it towards himself and keep what remained in his hand.

After other adventures, Paul died, and Anthony was sad because he had no spade to bury his friend in the midst of the wilderness. Then two lions bounded across the desert, manes flying and roaring mightily. Instead of tearing the body of the saint to pieces, they began to scratch out a grave with their paws. Then they came up to Anthony with drooping ears and downbent heads, licking his hands and begging for blessing.



You can see all the ingredients of this story in the pediment of the Nigg Cross-slab, including the date palm and the lions. Bearing in mind the Pictish use of symbolism, you can also see that the picture represents the Eucharist, with the bird as the Holy Spirit, and the bread above the Communion chalice offered by two priestly figures with their Gospel books.

Elizabeth Marshall.

Groam House Museum, Rosemarkie.

PERTH MUSEUM NEWS

Rock of Ages

An exhibition about stone has opened at Perth Museum and Art Gallery this October. It explains how local stone has been formed, and shows examples of carved stones dating from the Bronze Age through to the C19th.

One part of the exhibition tells the story of Clashbennie Quarry and the fossil fish which were collected there in the last century. The second part shows some of the many uses to which local stone has been put through the ages.

Included in the display are a Bronze Age cup-marked stone from near Rohallion Castle, above Birnam, and a Celtic carved stone head found at Muirton, Perth, which probably dates from the C1st AD.

Now on permanent display in the entrance hall of the Museum, and incorporated into the exhibition, is the St Madoes Pictish cross-slab, removed from St Madoes Kirkyard in 1991. Mediaeval stone objects include a C15th tomb effigy of a knight, probably a member of the Hay family, found in Errol Kirk, and massive round shot-stones found in Perth's town ditch, once used as ammunition for stone-throwing catapults or *trebuchets* in the 1300's.

A heraldic stone of 1662 bearing the arms of David Murray, a Perth apothecary, will go on display, as will the marriage stone of John Bryce from 58 High Street, Perth, and the old Tolbooth Lintel.

A further addition to the exhibition will be made in 1993, consisting of works of sculpture in stone.

Mike King.

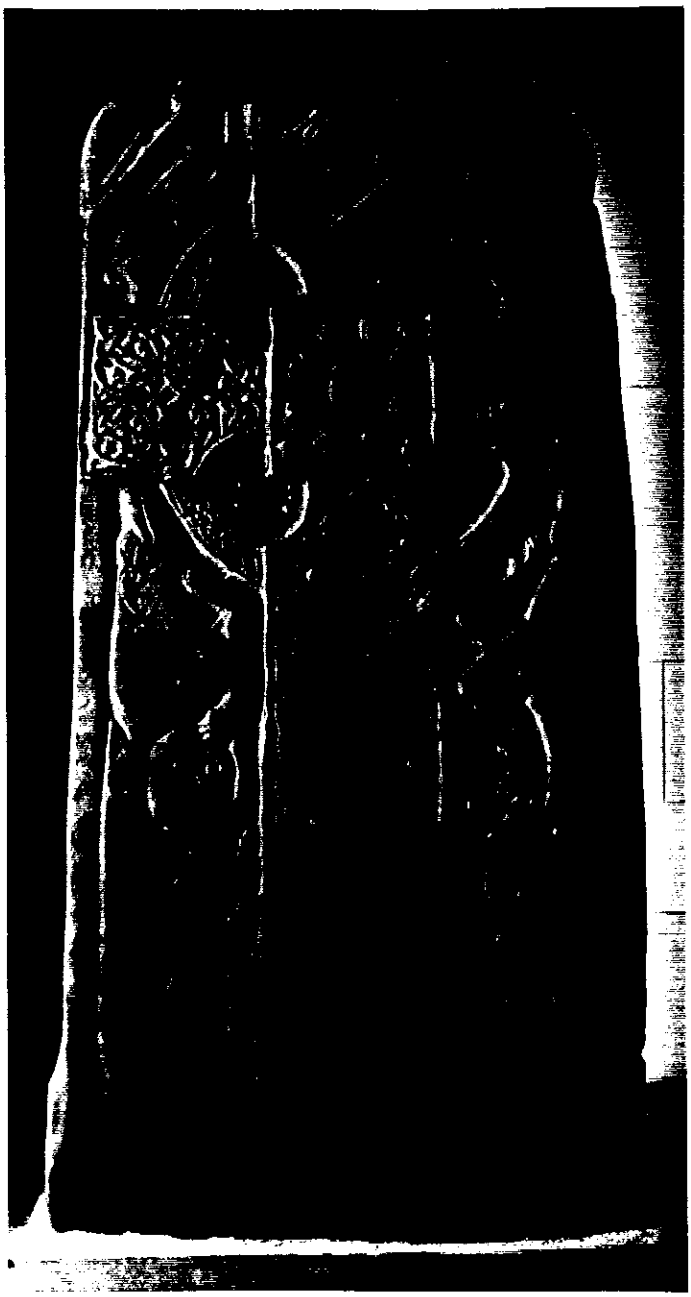
Assistant Keeper of Human History.

Perth Museum and Art Gallery is situated in George Street, Perth, and is open all year (except public holidays and Sundays), Mon-Sat 10-5. Entry is free.

The St Madoes Cross-Slab

As mentioned above, this superb C8th stone, one of the finest surviving works of Pictish sculpture, was removed from St Madoes Kirkyard, in the Carse of Gowrie, in February last year and, following conservation in Stenhouse Conservation Centre in Edinburgh, has been installed in Perth Museum (intimated in PAS Newsletter 8, Summer 1991). Because of

the slab's great weight, it has had to be displayed in the Museum's entrance hall, near to one of the walls, in a specially made steel base. Though the front (cross) side is readily visible and well lit, therefore, the less well-preserved rear face, which displays carvings of cloaked horsemen and Pictish symbols, is in darkness. A mirror has been installed on the adjacent wall so that these sculptures can be viewed. At the date of writing, the display was still in the course of arrangement, and it is to be hoped that a spotlight will be installed behind the stone at an appropriate angle to highlight its carvings.



St Madoes Cross-Slab (cross side).

Two photographs of the stone in its new position by Tom E Gray are included here. The cross-slab has suffered considerable erosion since it was first recorded, especially on the symbol-bearing side: this originally displayed (rather unusually) three Pictish symbols. A

St Madoes Cross-Slab (symbol side).

double disc and z-rod which formerly existed beside the crescent and v-rod has almost completely gone. The St Madoes Stone was first noticed in the mid C19th in the kirkyard of St Madoes, where it had no doubt lain neglected for many centuries. It was erected on a stone pedestal beside the parish kirk in 1853, and in recent years had been hidden from view in a wooden box without access.

Niall M Robertson.

REGIONS

DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY

The Eggerness Rock Carvings

In June of this year, by the kindness of Mr Vance, Eggerness Farm, and with as guide and hard-working turf remover Mrs Wendy Ronan, his sister-in-law, I had the opportunity to see and photograph the rock carvings discovered in recent years by Mrs Ronan and her son. These are not normally viewable, as they are under a layer of turf, and Mr Vance and Mrs Ronan guard them assiduously.

In addition to a large group of cup and ring marks, S-shapes and spirals, there are on two other rock-faces on the Farm carvings of particular interest to us in the Society. On one rock-face, near the first mentioned group, is a fine stag (see front cover) and two less well-preserved, while further away is an outcrop, partly quarried away, on which there are several curious ponies, all with their heads turned backwards over their shoulders. Amongst this

Pony carving, Eggerness

Hoofprint carving, Eggerness.

equine group there is a well executed carving of a pony hoofprint complete with the frog, the v-shaped horn in the sole. All the carvings are incised into the rock by pecking.

Tom E Gray.

The Eggerness carvings, which are not far from the coast of Wigtown Bay NE of Garlieston, were visited on Saturday 19 September by several members of the PAS during a field-trip to Galloway. Our thanks go to Mrs Ronan for giving us a tour of the carvings, and for her hard work in uncovering them on site. Mrs Ronan is to be congratulated for the care she has taken to ensure the preservation of these unique and mysterious antiquities. If only more people who have ancient remains on their land would take a leaf out of her book.

Other sites visited during the successful field-trip included the Anglian cross at Nith Bridge, the Whithorn Dig and St Ninian's Chapel at Isle of Whithorn. In the evening we attended an excellent lecture by Prof Charles Thomas on Whithorn's Christian Beginnings, which will soon be published as the first in the annual series of Whithorn Lectures.

Niall M Robertson.

GRAMPIAN

New Symbol Stone Identified in Forres

The Pictish grapevine works remarkably well: early this year I heard from Forres Museum via Norman Atkinson, Angus Museums Curator, that an unrecorded Pictish symbol stone had been found in Forres.

Forres Symbol Stone (Tom E Gray).

At that time the stone was built into a garden wall, so in April I paid a visit to Mr and Mrs MacArthur in St Leonards Road, who very kindly showed me the stone and allowed me to photograph it.

The Class I stone was about three feet up from the bottom of the twelve foot rubble

wall, and is incised with part of a large, elaborate and well-drawn crescent and v-rod. The material is perhaps the local Hopeman/Burghead sandstone, younger than the Old Red. It is an irregular block 54cm x 38cm x 15.5cm thick.

The stone is now in Forres Museum, where it is being conserved before going on display. Mr and Mrs MacArthur had lived in their house since 1960, and were well aware of their stone, indeed showing it to many of their visitors. However, it was only in the last couple of years, when they began to think that they might one day move house, that they decided to report it to the Museum.

I wonder how many more Pictish carvings lurk unrecorded in gardens up and down the country.

My thanks to Mr and Mrs MacArthur for their kindness, and to the staff of Forres Museum for their help and information.

Tom E Gray.

highland

Class IV Cross-Slab Found in Badenoch

I found what is probably a simple Early Christian cross-slab lying upside down over a drain at the SW corner of the parish kirk of Alvie (NH 864 094), near Aviemore, on 7 September last year. The stone is part of a larger slab of rough mica schist, and is incised with part of a cross of unusual form. Simple cross-slabs are known elsewhere which have an incised cross with a square surround at right angles to it (eg at St Fergus, Dyce), but I have never seen one of this form, placed diagonally to the cross and with gaps at the mid point, making an "arrow-head" motif. The maximum dimensions of the slab are 35cm x 39cm.

Dr Isabel Henderson has commented on the stone: "I think your Alvie find represents a cross with wooden struts, ie what many believe to be the prototype of the ringed cross - and potentially a rather interesting find." (pers comm, Jan 1992).

The kirk of Alvie is dedicated to the Pictish saint Drosten. There was a chapel dedicated to the saint at Dunachton, near Kincraig in the same parish, where a Class I stone carved with the deer's head symbol is also to be found. The place-name Dunachton no doubt has the same derivation as Dunnichen in Angus (see PAS Journal 1, 2). The situation of the kirk suggests an Early Christian foundation, set as it is on a mound on a peninsula overlooking Loch Alvie. The plain modern parish kirk was built in the late C18th. When it was restored in the 1880's, 150 skeletons without coffins were found below the floor and re-interred in the kirkyard, as a monument erected at the time records - no doubt Mediaeval or Early Christian

burials, and a testimony to the antiquity of the site.

Niall M Robertson.

Alvie Class IV cross-slab (Tom E Gray).

shetland

The Dog-Headed Man of Shetland

A mysterious carving, which is potentially the most important Pictish find in Shetland since the discovery of the St Ninian's Isle Treasure, was found at Mail Cemetery, Cunningsburgh (HU 433 279) in early August.

The slab was found by gravedigger Malcolm Smith, who was standing on the stone when he looked down and saw carving on it. Scraps of mortar clinging to the stone suggest

that it might have once been built into a wall. It appears to have been unearthed only a few weeks before being noticed. The uncarved side of the stone was mossy, suggesting it had lain face downwards for a long time. It has been removed to the Shetland Museum in Lerwick, where it will probably remain on permanent display.

The lightly incised 44.2cm high carving is exceptionally well-preserved and complete, but its authenticity has been confirmed by Dr Anna Ritchie, and by Val Turner, Shetland Archaeologist, whose drawing of the Pictish figure is reproduced here.

Though not exactly like any other Pictish carving, the dog-headed (or -masked) man has close parallels elsewhere in specific points of its iconography. Animal-headed figures appear on several Pictish stones, eg Papil (also from Shetland), Rossie Priory and Murthly, while the figure's fierce teeth and axe are reminiscent of the Rhynie Man. The elaborate robe seems related to those worn by the three Pictish warriors on the Brough of Birsay Stone.

The cemetery where the stone was found was the site of a Mediaeval church called Chapel Mail; previous finds from the site include four Ogham stones and three runestones, which suggests that the site was of importance in the Dark Ages. The Norse-derived placename Cunningsburgh "king's stronghold" might also suggest this.

Niall M Robertson.

BOOK REVIEWS

Some Customs, Folklore and Superstitions of Galloway by Alastair Penman (The Forward Press, Castle Douglas, 1992). (PB; 80 ps).

PAS member Alastair Penman has produced a popular guide to a varied body of traditional lore from SW Scotland in this short work. After an introduction to the Galloway region and the reasons for the growth and tenacity of popular beliefs, the book is split into eight chapters covering such topics as Festivals, Folk-cures, Births, Marriages and Deaths etc. There is a rich pot-pourri of customs and strange beliefs in each chapter, some of it well-known, some obscure. It is notable that in the old days in Galloway, as no doubt elsewhere, many customs were extremely localised, and folk in the neighbouring parish did things quite differently.

Alastair has not attempted much analysis of the superstitious set of mind, though he does occasionally suggest a possible origin for some beliefs. The lore is not so much laid out as heaped up. This is one of those books which one can open at any page, and find treasures, curious or amusing. A few cheerfully naive cartoons are included in the text.

The author has a habit of *emphasising* the key words on each paragraph with *italics*. I guess that this picturesque habit is derived from the Victorian antiquarian works listed in the bibliography, on which no doubt much of the present book was based.

There are two or three places where the text might be improved: I believe that Beltane is now generally reckoned to be a word of unknown meaning, and has nothing to do with Baal (14); lightning is misspelled lightening on page 46; the paragraph about throwing spilled salt over the left shoulder is unclearly written (51); italics are not continued across a change of page (54-5), and the word secular is given its exactly opposite meaning on page 55.

These minor points apart, members interested in folklore should find this an enjoyable book.

Niall M Robertson.

The book can be obtained directly from the author at this address: Alastair Penman, "Lochaber", 65 Academy Street, Castle Douglas, Stewartry of Kirkudbright, DG7 1EE, price £3.65 (£4.00 incl p & p). A second volume of Galloway lore is promised.

Scotland's Native Horse by R W Beck, MRCVS (GC Books, Wigtown, 1992). (HB; 205 ps). Price £14.95.

I would strongly recommend this book to anyone interested in Scottish history. For the student of Pictish matters it is essential reading. Buy it or order it from the library now.

The author sets out to prove that the Eriskay pony is the sole pure survivor of the once ubiquitous indigenous Scottish horse. In the course of his investigations much light is cast on the culture and ecology of the pre-Clearance Highlands.

Nearly half the book is devoted to the "horses of the Pictish monuments". Mr Beck establishes, by sound methods of comparative analysis, that two types of animal are shown in the carvings, the most numerous being a native pony, close in many respects to the Eriskay.

His comments on the Picts' advanced equitation are perhaps the most important and original part of the book.

This may be the place to point out that the lady's horse, on the Hilton of Cadboll Stone, is a pacer (legs moving in pairs), which accounts for her managing to stay on without a modern side saddle.

A particularly fascinating part of the book deals with what the author calls "type B", the larger Pictish riding horse, and its possible links backwards to the Roman military horse and forward to the Galloway and Clydesdale.

The Galloway is now an extinct breed, fast entering the realm of myth. I would like to praise the author for his efforts and wish him every success in preventing the same fate from befalling the Eriskay pony.

This book would have benefited greatly from better illustrations. I also found its structure "bitty", making parts of it hard to follow.

I am also confused by the arguments over the date of introduction of horseshoes. The museum basements of the Romanised areas of Britain have boxes of them from the early centuries AD, of both the iron hipposandal type (perhaps used as emergency spares) and the nail on variety still in use. Both the horseshoe and the iron tyred wheel with separate felloes are often credited as Celtic inventions. The Picts, not having paved roads, may not have found shoes as essential as did the Romans, but I would be surprised if they were ignorant of the technology.

Davin W Hood.

The Battle of Dunnichen by Graeme Cruickshank (The Pinkfoot Press, Balgavies, 1991). (PB; 44ps). £3.50.

May 20 has become a major feature in the modern Pictophile's calendar, largely as a result of Graeme Cruickshank's own efforts to promote the importance of the battle between the Picts and the Northumbrians which took place on that day in AD 685. The publication of this account in 1991 took on an additional significance in view of the threat from quarrying to West Dunnichen Hill, a candidate for the site of Dun Nechtain, and The Pinkfoot Press is to be applauded both for its timely publication and for a most attractive and well-printed product, using recycled paper to considerable advantage.

This is a lively and stimulating examination of the battle itself and the circumstances that led up to it, and the author wears his scholarship lightly. After setting the historical scene from around AD 600, there follows a persuasive reconstruction of the route taken by the Northumbrian army into Pictland and of the tactics employed by the Picts to win victory: approaching from the north-west and skirting the south side of West Dunnichen Hill, the Northumbrians were trapped between the hill and the boggy mire of Nechtansmere. Assessing the victory, Graeme suggests that the Pictish king had achieved 90% success: revenge for the terrible defeat of the Picts by the Northumbrians some thirteen years earlier, a check to Northumbrian territorial expansion into Pictland, liberation of the southern part of Pictland which had been under Northumbrian control for thirty years, and the establishment of a secure boundary along the River Forth between the Pictish kingdom and Anglian Lothian.

In a section entitled "Relics of the Battle", Graeme discusses a verse from a document known as the Fragmentary Irish Annals, which celebrates the battle, and examines the battle-scene on the Aberlemno Kirkyard stone which he has identified very plausibly as a likely representation of this particular battle. He also considers three visions of the battle, two contemporary with it, and one which took place in 1950. Looking at the modern topography of Dunnichen, he concludes that Nechton's *dún* could have been either on West Dunnichen Hill or on Castle Hill (the latter having implications for his reconstruction of the battle), and that Nechton's mire survives today as a "small parcel of marshy ground" east of the modern kirk (a neat play on the Pictish word *pit*).

A section on the "Historiography of the Battle" examines written sources from Adomnán to the C20th, leading on to a final plea for the Battle of Dunnichen to be accorded its proper status in history as one of the "great and decisive battles of Scotland". The work ends with an appendix on the Pictish symbol stone known as the Dunnichen Stone.

This eloquent essay is a revised version of Graeme's Nechtansmere 1300: A Commemoration, published in 1985 as part of the celebrations marking the thirteenth centenary of one of Scotland's most significant battles. In 1985 we were promised a fuller version with references; six years later that expanded account is still a promise, and it begs the question: for whom was this version written? It is more detailed and assumes more knowledge on the part of the reader than would be appropriate for a purely popular account, yet it fails to back up the argument with the references needed by the reader already hooked on Pictish studies. For example, we are twice informed that the battle took place at around 3 pm on that fateful day in May 685 (4, 17), but nowhere is this extraordinarily precise detail explained or substantiated.

It is perhaps unfair, but inevitable, that the 1991 version should be compared with the original 1985 publication to discover what has been altered or added. The author's feelings about the name of the battle have hardened: rather than bear the English name of Nechtansmere, it should be known as the Battle of Dunnichen. It is perhaps surprising that he chose to prefer the Irish name rather than the Battle of Lin Garan, the name used in the early C9th by Nennius, as this is likely to have been the Pictish name; Lin Garan, meaning "the pool of the herons", was aptly described by Kenneth Jackson as a "remote and insignificant puddle" until it was made famous by the battle (Jackson, 1955, 78). Nevertheless, the Battle of Dunnichen has a more comprehensible ring about it than either Nechtansmere or Lin Garan for modern pilgrims to the site.

This change on the author's part is explained, but another important change is neither explained nor justified. Thus far the reviewer has avoided using the names of the Pictish or Northumbrian kings involved in the battle; the English king was Ecgfrith, and the Pictish king had one name spelled several different ways, of which Graeme uses Brudei in his 1985 publication and Bruide in the 1991 revision. Neither version is commonly used, and both should have been explained. There are in fact a number of spellings of this name in the primary sources: the king lists, the Irish annals and Adomnán, of which the most commonly used by modern scholars are Bridei and Brude. Graeme is presumably now using Bruide because that is the spelling used in the verse quoted on pages 22-3, despite the fact that this is an Irish rather than a Pictish or even Latin spelling. It should be noted that there is a revised translation of this verse in the 1991 publication.

The account of the battle closest in date and most detailed is given by Bede, and yet the original passage is not quoted here, except for one phrase concerning the outcome of the battle in which there is an unfortunate error in the Latin: "*fluere ac recto sublapsa referri*" (30) should read "*fluere ac retro sublapsa referri*".

Discussing the historical background, the author remarks of the Gododdin supporters who set out around AD 600 to confront the English at the Battle of Catterick, that "'army' seems too grand a term for a mere three hundred warriors" (6); Kenneth Jackson argued very plausibly that each of the three hundred or so warrior chiefs mentioned in the poem would have been accompanied by his own warband, and that the total could have been in the region of three thousand (1969, 14-5). After the death of the Northumbrian king Æthelfrith in 616, his sons sought refuge in Pictland, at which the author expresses surprise (7), but they were safer with the enemy of their father's successor than in his kingdom.

When we come to Bridei son of Bili (here called Bruide), Graeme discusses the blood relationship between Bridei and the Northumbrian king Ecgfrith, concluding that Bridei was the second-grand-nephew of Ecgfrith (10-2, fig 1). This is based on the assumption, for which there is no direct evidence, that Bridei had a Pictish mother and lays aside Nennius' statement that the two men were cousins. What he does not mention is that Bili, Bridei's father, was son of the king of Strathclyde and, as Smyth argued (1984, 62-4), the relationship between Bridei and Ecgfrith could as plausibly have lain entirely in a shared British ancestry. An alternative explanation was argued by Kirby (1976, 289): they were both related to the Pictish king Talorcan, Bridei as nephew and Ecgfrith as cousin, thereby making them first cousins once removed. Clearly Pictish genealogy is fraught with difficulties!

We shall look forward to the author's promised interpretation of the battle-scene on the Aberlemno Kirkyard cross-slab (25); his identification of this unique scene as a probable commemoration of the Battle of Dunnichen has won general (and acknowledged) acceptance. It is not enough, however, to claim here that a "persuasive argument can be made for dating the execution of the battle-scene very close to 685" without detailing any of the argument. The stone is usually dated on art-historical grounds to a century later than the battle.

It is worth considering why, if it commemorates the Battle of Dunnichen, this stone should be located at Aberlemno. Despite Graeme's dismissal of the idea (1990, 6), it seems to this reviewer that there is evidence to suggest that the ridge between the valleys of the South Esk and the Lunan was an area of special importance in Pictish times (Ritchie, 1989, 22). Was this Ecgfrith's target?

Graeme's desire to believe that the Aberlemno Kirkyard stone can be dated close to the time of the battle obliges him to suggest a date in the C5th or C6th for the symbol stone found at Dunnichen itself, though he admits that a link with the battle is not to be "totally discounted" (43). It is, in fact, as likely that the Dunnichen Stone was carved in the C7th as that it belonged to the C5th or C6th. There is no evidence to suggest that the two vertical

lines down either side of the stone were cut in the C19th (43). Several instances are known in which symbol stones were re-used in antiquity as cover slabs for cist burials, and this may be one possible explanation for the two grooves. The author's interpretation of the symbols follows the theory argued by Charles Thomas (most recently expounded in 1984). Some may feel that Graeme's estimation of the stone as the best example of a Class I monument is over-enthusiastic (44).

If this essay was written for a popular audience, as the level of argument suggests, the use of the term Class I is unsuitable, particularly as the Aberlemno Kirkyard stone is not here labelled Class II; the terms symbol stones and symbol-bearing cross-slabs are easier for non-specialists to follow.

It is a pity in a revised edition to find that there are still a number of spelling mistakes, of which the recurrent misspelling of occurred (as "occured") is the most irritating, but this is a minor flaw in comparison with the absorbing interest of the whole.

Anna Ritchie.

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ARCHIVE REPORT

Since the publication of PAS Journal 1 in the Spring, the highlight of contributions made to the Archive was a gift from Professor Charles Thomas. The Professor generously donated one of his books, copies of one of his papers from another volume, and an interesting collection of old photographs. Particulars of the printed material are included in the Library List appended to this article. The photographs are sepia prints of various incised crosses and of some Pictish stones, a few of which bear dates like 1907 and 1913. These were found many years ago at 20 George Square, Edinburgh, in the remnants of Baldwin Brown's papers, and were given to Professor Thomas in 1964, during a clear-out of papers by the late Professor David Talbot Rice. The photographs include stones from Banchory, Durris, Miltoun of Crathes and Tullich.

Future of PAS Archive

As reported in PAS Journal 1, your Archivist is continuing to classify and file the Society's collected material which is now stored at the National Monuments Record in the new premises of the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland, in John Sinclair House, 16 Bernard Terrace, Edinburgh.

Although the PAS Archive now contains nearly 400 items, our copies of books and booklets make up a relatively small proportion of the collection. I appeal to members to continue to let me have material of this nature. Moreover, any cash donations would be gratefully received and used to make suitable purchases of books.

Since Summer 1991 I have included in my Archive Reports particulars of books/booklets held in the Archive. It is now my intention to consolidate these and produce a comprehensive list in a loose-leaf file which will be available at meetings for consultation by the membership. It is hoped to initiate this before the end of 1992 and to keep the file up to date thereafter.

The initial work of classifying and filing our existing archival material should be largely completed by the end of the year. I anticipate that my next major task will be to use the Archive as a main source for the preparation of a comprehensive list of works relating to the Picts and their culture generally. Once this is available a sub-committee will probably be convened to prepare a critical annotated Bibliography of published works relating to the Picts.

Obituary

I noticed in The Scotsman on 5 September that one of the few remaining non-professional archaeologists of international reputation, Dorothy Nairn Marshall, MBE, had died. She was 92.

Miss Marshall studied under Sir Mortimer Wheeler in London and was one of his team at Maiden Castle. During the 1950's and 1960's she worked on digs in the Near East, including seven in Jericho. She was also active in archaeological circles in Scotland, particularly on the island of Bute and in Cowal, in recognition of which she was made a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London in 1985 and in 1986 an honorary Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland.

The foregoing reminded me of Dorothy Marshall's study of the carved stone balls of Scotland (PSAS 108, 1967-77, 40-72). For me her paper provides a comprehensive survey of these artefacts and I have used it as source material for part of a series of wood sculptures on the theme of Archaeology into Art. The references at the end of the paper are also interesting, drawing attention to earlier studies by Smith and Mann in 1874 and 1914 of these ornamented balls and their possible function.

Eric H Nicoll.

Library List

Beck, Robert W	-	Scotland's Native Horse (GC Books, 1992).
Collingwood, W G	-	The Early Crosses of Galloway (The Whithorn Trust, 1988). Reprinted from TDGNHAS 10, 1925.
Cruickshank, G	-	The Battle of Dunnichen (Pinkfoot Press, 1991).
Laing, Lloyd & Laing, Jennifer	-	Art of the Celts (Thames and Hudson, 1992).
Penman, Alastair	-	Some Customs, Folklore and Superstitions of Galloway (The Forward Press, 1992).
Ritchie, Anna	-	Scotland BC (HMSO, 1988).
Small, Alan & Thoms, L M	-	The Picts in Tayside (Dundee Museum, 1985).
Thomas, Charles	-	The Early Christian Archaeology of North Britain (Oxford U P, 1971).
	-	The Pictish Class I Symbol Stones. Reprinted from Pictish Studies, Ed by J G P Friell & W G Watson (BAR British Series 125, 1984).

LETTERS

RCAHMS
John Sinclair House
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Edinburgh
EH8 9NX

Sir,

I am about to embark on a revision of the Handlist of Pictish Stones I prepared in 1985, which is now out of print. The list is restricted to stones bearing symbols, but has nevertheless been found to be a useful research tool. May I ask the courtesy of your pages to ask readers to let me have a note of any stones that they feel have been omitted from the Handlist, or major bibliographical entries that have not been noted.

I should be grateful for any help from readers.

J N Graham Ritchie.
Depute Curator of the National Monuments Record of Scotland.

From the PAS Chairman:

In my opinion the foregoing letter represents a very worthwhile initiative: I welcome Dr Ritchie's approach to the Society and would strongly urge members to send him any information they may have relating to stones or rocks bearing Pictish symbols, not covered by the original Handlist of 1985, as soon as possible. Dr Ritchie is also interested in relevant bibliographical references. This enterprise will result in a useful new publication, will update the NMRS database, and should encourage people to make greater use of the national record. In step with this project I am arranging to search our own PAS archive for any relevant information.

Eric H Nicoll.
(Acting) Chairman.

21 Warrender Park Terrace
Edinburgh 9

18 June 1992

Sir,

Congratulations on the first issue of the PAS Journal, which represents another significant advance in our still young Society's treatment of matters Pictish. With such a wealth and range of material, it contains much food for thought and discussion. I shall limit my comments to a few items only.

1) **"In Search of Dun Nechtain . ."**. Nick Simpson has done a useful job in drawing together a number of references (2-3) to this ancient fortified site (there are also a few others), and the sum total provides a persuasive argument for the reality of such a structure having stood on Dunnichen Hill, which is doubted by some. That probability is hugely strengthened by a published account which I stumbled upon by chance recently in the National Library of Scotland. I am still trying to ascertain its date and context, but it promises to be more valuable to this enquiry than all the previously examined items put together. Nick's conclusion that the "scant broken remains" as mentioned by F T Wainwright are probably all that exists of Nechton's Fort today may well prove to be unduly pessimistic.

2) **The Pictish beast symbol**. I know that it is not proved that the only major Class I representation of an animal which is not obviously recognisable is really a dolphin, but I feel that it is a much more justifiable term than "swimming elephant". Neither am I happy with the theory put forward by Caroline Fortesque (16) that it is a skinned sheep or dead wolf; this fails to account for the long snout, and surely the animal is imbued with vitality - in the best examples, one can even detect a twinkle in its eye! Eric Nicoll has provided an interesting literary source for the "swimming elephant" (6), though I find it too unlikely to be convincing. Such sources certainly have their uses however, and I am much more persuaded by Ida Gordon's interpretation of the purpose of the Bullion Stone, as given by Elizabeth Marshall (14-5).

3) **Boxing the stones**. There is a growing conviction that the dwindling number of Pictish stones which remain outside must be protected from the devastating effects of weather and pollution, and the favoured method nowadays is to build a shelter for each stone on or adjacent to its original or long-term site. However, the design of these shelters, while affording physical protection, does little to assist visitor appreciation, either in a practical sense (eg reflections preventing good photography), or with regard to the aesthetic. Dave Moir's

photograph of the giant glass box around Sueno's Stone (26) illustrates a very disappointing solution to the challenge it presented - and this was the winning design in an open competition. As Dr Isabel Henderson mentioned at the Dunnichen Conference, it represents an opportunity lost; better to have had some staircase and gallery system to allow the tiers of sculpture to be properly viewed, which is scarcely possible from ground level.

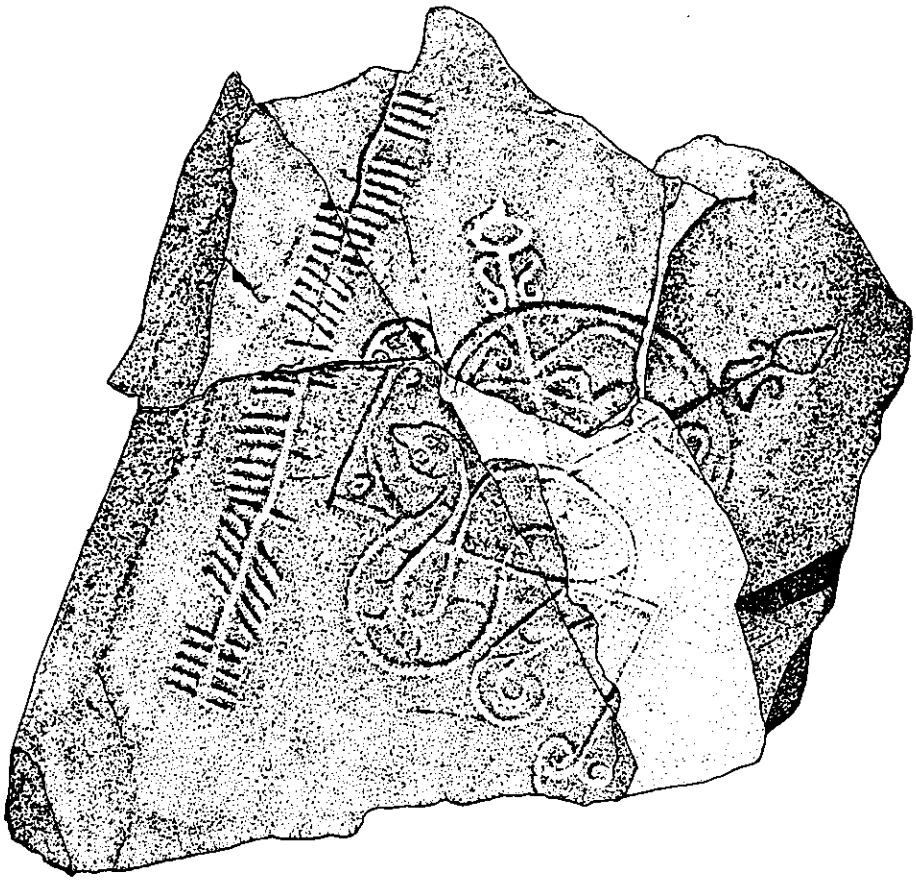
At least the Sueno box was purpose-designed, which is more than can be said for the one which was recently placed around the Shandwick Stone. This structure had already done service at the Glasgow Garden Festival, and as it proved to be lacking in height, the solution was to countersink the stone into the ground, so that the viewer looks down rather than up at this impressive monument. The stone is made shorter still by having the lower part of its designs embedded in the concrete base. Worse still, a circular fence has been built around the box at a little distance from it, apparently to keep visitors away from the glass. This forces them to walk (and probably stumble) on the rough margins of the field, and adds further to the difficulty of viewing the lower portions of the stone. It would seem from the position of the interpretation board, and the awkwardness of access for non-gymnasts, that visitors are meant to stay outside the fence - a puzzling restriction which certainly inhibits good viewing of the stone.

4) **National Museum of Scotland Gallery of Dark Age Sculpture** (28). All of us will welcome the re-opening of this gallery with its excellent collection of Pictish stones, valuable for displaying both the quality and the breadth of Pictish stone-cut art. However, its design and layout must be regarded as only temporary, for it is an inappropriate form of display for these stones. The main problem is overcrowding, so that not only is a clear chronological progression and cultural development difficult to perceive, but many of the stones cannot be properly seen - they are either too far away, are partially obscured by other stones, or have their interesting reverse sides hidden. In many ways, the old gallery layout, with three or four times more room, was preferable - it lacked any sense of feeling or atmosphere, but all the stones could be properly examined, and that is surely the crucial factor. It is to be hoped that the gallery currently being planned for the new National Museum in Chambers Street will allow visitors the degree of access which they formerly enjoyed in Queen Street.

5) **An underrated pioneer**. In her letter to the Editor (41), Dr Isabel Henderson is quite justified in calling J Romilly Allen "a splendid man", and we look forward to the "superspecial Allen celebration" that she advocates to commemorate the centenary of the publication of his great work, even if such an event is eleven years away. When discussing the publication of the corpus of Pictish stones using appropriately sized illustrations, Dr Henderson says that "nothing systematic got underway until Stuart", referring to John Stuart's huge two volume

work The Sculptured Stones of Scotland (Spalding Club, 1856, 1867). Perhaps this comment does less than justice to Patrick Chalmers, who had previously published his Sculptured Stones of the County of Angus (Bannatyne Club, 1848). This book merits praise no less than Stuart's, and perhaps more so, for two reasons. Firstly, although it is confined to one county, Angus contains a significant proportion of all the Pictish stones. Secondly, Chalmers laid down a formula which Stuart followed to a large extent, as indeed he acknowledges, even to the extensive use of the same artist, P A Jastrzebski. Alas, Chalmers book is not to be found in many libraries, and indeed I have never seen it on a library shelf, for a very good reason: although it is little more than half an inch thick, its pages measure around 22" by 30".

Graeme Cruickshank.



PAS MEMBERSHIP

It may be of interest to our PAS Journal readers to see the extent and distribution of our membership. At the present time (September 1992), we have a total of 194 members, including 27 joint memberships and 3 corporate members.

In our overseas membership we have two in Europe (one in France and one in Germany), one in Canada and five in the USA.

We have 25 members based in England and Wales (6 of whom are in Northumberland).

The distribution of the Scottish membership (161) in the various areas of the country is as follows:

Edinburgh	49
Tayside and Angus (with Perth	
7 and Dundee 3)	23
Aberdeen and North East	20
Fife	19
Glasgow, Clyde Coast and Arran	18
Lothians	12
Inverness and North	7
Argyll and Western Isles	6
Central Scotland	5
South West	2
	161

It is encouraging to see our increase in membership and we hope, with your help, that the membership will increase further and will allow the Society to flourish.

All current members please help the Society by renewing your subscription (for the Session to September 1993) as soon as you can. Thank you.

Eileen Brownlie.

Membership Secretary.

Errata and Additions to PAS Journal 1

Page 1, line 4 - for *endevoured* read *endeavoured*.

Page 6, line 14 - for *at* read *et*.

Page 13 - Jill Harden can be contacted at this address:
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