

HIGHLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL



FIELD MONUMENTS

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES AND MONUMENTS RECORD

1 SITE CODE											
H	N	C	8	6	S	W	0	0	5		
2 NGR		3 QUAL									
N	C	8	3	1	0	6	4	9	4		
6 SITE NAME											
D	A	L	A	C	H	B	A	I	T	E	*

4 DISTRICT SUTHERLAND				5 PARISH FARR				10 GENERIC TYPE CROSS SLAB			
7 AREA STATUS		8 SITE STATUS		9 REGIONAL STATUS				14 PERIOD/DATE		15 DATING METHOD	
11 CONCORDANCE OS NC 86 SW 5		12 FORM STANDING STRUCTURE		13 DIMENSIONS				EM		TYP	
16 RELATIONSHIP OF ELEMENTS				17 CONDITION INCOMPLETE				18 SHAPE			
19 THREAT AND DATE											

20 LAND USE ROUGH PASTURE				21 GEOLOGY					
22 SOILS				23 VEGETATION					
24 HYDROLOGY/DRAINAGE				25 RELIEF MODERATE HILLSLOPE		26 ASPECT E		27 ALTITUDE 69 = 76m OD	

28 EXCAVATION (EXCAVATOR: DATE: EXTENT: QUALITY)									
29 BIBLIOGRAPHY (AUTHOR: DATE: TITLE: JOURNAL OR PUBLISHER: VOLUME: DETAIL)									
1. ORDNANCE SURVEY: 1962: 6" MAP 2. MUNRO, A: 1900: PROC. SOC. ANT. SCOT: Vol. 34; p252 + illustration 3. ALLEN, J. R.: 1903: EARLY CHRISTIAN MONUMENTS OF SCOTLAND: p55 4. RCAHMS: 1911: SUTHERLAND INVENTORY: HMSO: pp88-9, No. 260									
30 GROUND PLAN NO.					31 GROUND PHOTO NO.				
32 SLIDES NO.					33 HR. AP. NO.				
34 NMR. AP. NO.					35 OTHER AP. NO.: SOURCE				
36 ARCHIVE AND LOCATION									
37 GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY					38 SAMPLES				
39 PALYNOLOGY					40 NUMERICAL DATES: RANGE: LAB NO.				
41 SMALL FINDS								42 MUSEUM/LOCATION	
43 OTHER									

44 NAME & ADDRESS OF OWNER								45 ATTITUDE OF OWNER	
46 NAME & ADDRESS OF TENANT								47 ATTITUDE OF TENANT	
48 ACCESS & RESTRICTIONS									

49 NAME & ADDRESS OF FINDER/RECORDER: DATE						50 RECORDER: DATE		51 CHECK: DATE	
						GS: 18.6.1985		SEM: 8.7.1985	

52 TEXT
"See attached photocopy for text + illustrations."

6. * "Full name: 'CNOG NA DALACH BAILE'."

(NC 83106493) Cross Slab (NR)

(1)

A recumbent slab lying in open moorland and bearing an incised cross of a type otherwise unknown in Scotland and Ireland, the only known parallels being in County Durham, Radnorshire and Carmarthenshire. It lies NE-SW and is irregularly shaped of roughly hewn local sandstone and measures 4ft 6inches by 1ft 9 inches by 8 inches thick and is sculptured on one face only. The latin cross has rounded ends to shaft and arms with circular depressions in the middle of each. Parallel incised lines are cut down the sides of the shaft and arms.

(2) (3) (4)

The cross-slab is as described but it covers a cist-like structure now filled with small stones.

(OSFI:WDJ:26.4.1960)

The cross-slab lies in a hollow. There is no evidence of a cist-like structure and likewise of any significant stones.

(OSFI:AA:9.11.1972)

No change to latest field report. The absence of the stones in the photograph(1960) seems explained by a small marker cairn just by the cross-slab.

(OSFI:JM:23.6.1977)



(2)

Fig. 1. Rule Stone Cross - Stratly.



Authy 6

(OSFI:AA:9.11.1972)

See continuation card for text.

NOTE ON AN INCISED STONE CROSS AT STRATHY, SUTHERLANDSHIRE.
By ALEXANDER MUNRO.

About a quarter of a mile west of the Established Church at Strathy, Sutherlandshire, resting in the moorland beside the old march dyke, there has lain for centuries, neglected and unnoticed, a rude stone slab (fig. 1) bearing an incised cross of a type which, if not altogether rare, is yet absolutely unique among Scottish crosses. The slab, a rough, undressed sandstone—of the same kind as exists in the neighbourhood—is broken at certain points, but the central surface is intact. It is 54 inches in length, 8 inches in thickness, and the broadest part, from arm to arm of the cross, is 21 inches. In appearance it is somewhat coffin-shaped; but this resemblance is clearly accidental—the result of recent breakage—and not intended in the original design.

The cross from summit to base is 34 inches, and from arm to arm 18½ inches.

The summit and the base, as well as the two arms, end in circles formed by the outer lines of the cross—the lines being 2 inches broad and nearly 1 inch in depth. Inside these again are hollows or cups; the one at the bottom slightly oval, the rest more or less round. The circles and cups at the top and foot are of the same dimensions—the circles 6 inches and the cups 3 inches in diameter. Those in the arms are ½ inch less than these. In the centre of the cross are traces of a small and almost obliterated cup. On the vacant spaces in the cross—on the shaft, arms and summit—are slight lines as indicated in the drawing.

As to the origin and age of this curious cross, tradition and topography are alike silent. All that we have therefore to guide us in this direction is the cross itself and its distinctive features. At first sight the work would seem, from the rudeness of its art, and the depth and clearness of the incised lines, to be of mediæval or late Christian date. On the other hand, the cups and rings at the four extremities, and the central cup, evidently point to a much earlier period. Cup-marked stones have occasionally been found in connection with early Christian burials, and a cross, though not unquestionably the cross of Christianity, appears in conjunction with these symbols in the Lough Crew group of stones, and occasionally in Norway on the rock surfaces—both of which are usually assigned to the Bronze Age. If, then, the circles and hollows on the Strathy Cross could be supposed to have been intended to represent the 'cups and rings' of pagan times, we might, perhaps, be justified in assigning to it a very early age—an age of transition between Christianity and paganism—when the old forms were still current and exercised an influence on the rude art of the time. In any case, whether it be old or comparatively recent, whether it belongs to the 7th century or to the 13th, the cross is of much archæological interest as indicating in the Christian period the existence and use of a type of art that is peculiarly associated with paganism. (2)