

HIGHLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL



ARTEFACTS

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES AND MONUMENTS RECORD

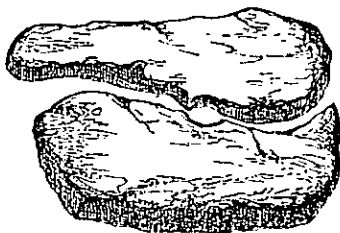
1 SITE CODE H N H 9 2 S W 0 0 5		2 NGR N H 9 4 2 2		3 QUAL LO	
4 DISTRICT BADENOCH & STRATHSPEY		5 PARISH DUTHIL & ROTHLEMURCHUS			
6 SITE NAME BIG LA S KEY STONE		7 GENERIC TYPE STONE			
8 CONCORDANCE NH 92 SW 5		9 MUSEUM/LOCATION OF FIND(S) DOCUMENTS ONLY		10 ACCESSION NO.	
11 PERIOD/DATE LM		12 DATING METHOD DOC			
13 FIND CIRCUMSTANCES UNCERTAIN		14 CONDITION NOT LOCATED		15 EXCAVATOR AND DATE	
16 EXCAVATION RECORD NO.		17 LAND USE		18 GEOLOGY	
19 SOILS		20 VEGETATION		21 HYDROLOGY/DRAINAGE	
22 RELIEF		23 ASPECT		24 ALTITUDE	
25 DETAILED DESCRIPTION/DIMENSIONS					
26 BIBLIOGRAPHY (AUTHOR: DATE: TITLE: JOURNAL OR PUBLISHER: VOLUME: DETAIL)					
1. MITCHELL, A: 1875: PROC. SOC. ANT. SCOT.: VOL. 10: pp675-6					
2. :1835: NEW STATISTICAL ACCOUNT: 13: 133					
27 GROUND PLAN NO.			28 GROUND PHOTO NO.		
29 SLIDES NO.			30 HR. AP. NO.		
31 NMR. AP. NO.			32 OTHER AP. NO. : SOURCE		
33 ARCHIVE AND LOCATION					
34 GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY			35 SAMPLES		
36 PALYNOLOGY			37 NUMERICAL DATES: RANGE: LAB NO.		
38 OTHER					
39 NAME & ADDRESS OF OWNER				40 ATTITUDE OF OWNER	
41 NAME & ADDRESS OF TENANT				42 ATTITUDE OF TENANT	
43 ACCESS & RESTRICTIONS					
44 NAME & ADDRESS OF FINDER/RECORDER: DATE				45 RECORDER: DATE GS: 25.9.1986	
				46 CHECK: DATE FRS: 2/10/1986	
47 TEXT					

"Unable to locate this stone, area now covered by a dense plantation." (OSFI:RL:2.11.1966)
 "(Query: Is this a quernstone?)."
 "See continuation card for further text and illustration."

4. **BIGLA'S KEY STONE.**—After her father's death, about the year 1434 Bigla married Sir John Grant—"the fremyt Freuchie," as Gibbon More called him, and the race of Glenchearnach came thus to an end. It is said that she built the church at Duthil, and that she rode regularly over the Garten Hills to worship there. Somewhere on her route, as the story goes, she had a hiding-place for her keys, below or beside a great stone. Not one, of the many from whom I heard of this, gave a better reason for the hiding of her keys than that she carried them till she was tired and then hid them. The story had little interest, till one day, when walking through the woods which now cover the Garten Hills, my companion pointing to a stone, suddenly said, "There is the Clach-an-tuill-Pitlac, or The Stone of Bigla's Keys." I heard it often afterwards called Bigla's Key Stone, but the Gaelic name really means Bigla's Stone of the Hole. It is about 3 feet long and 2½ feet broad, and is lying flat on the ground, broken lengthways into two. Near the centre there is a hole about 4 inches in diameter, not drilled straight through, but bored conically from both sides towards the centre. Fifteen years ago it is said to have been whole

(1)

Fig. 27.



and standing. Fig. 27 gives a rough representation of the stone. Why it was placed there, and why the hole was bored through it, I cannot tell; but if we had found it in Orkney, we should have been ready to conclude that the oath of Odin had at some time been sworn by those whose hands were clasped in the hole. Whatever its history may be, I think we may safely say

that only by accident does it now get the name of Bigla's Key Stone. And this suggests the question whether the present names of some other stones may not in like manner reveal some accident in their history rather than their true history or purpose.