

HIGHLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL



ARTEFACTS

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES AND MONUMENTS RECORD

1 SITE CODE									
H	N	H	9	8	S	W	0	1	6

2 NGR		3 QUAL	
NH	916	840	CE

6 SITE NAME									
T	A	R	B	A	T				*

7 GENERIC TYPE									
CROSS-SLAB									

8 CONCORDANCE					9 MUSEUM/LOCATION OF FIND(S)					10 ACCESSION NO.				
OSNH 98 SW 16					R.M.S. (QUEEN ST.)					IB 286				

11 PERIOD/DATE					12 DATING METHOD				
EM					TYP				

15 EXCAVATOR AND DATE									
16 EXCAVATION RECORD NO.									

17 LAND USE					18 GEOLOGY				
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19 SOILS					20 VEGETATION				
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21 HYDROLOGY/DRAINAGE					22 RELIEF					23 ASPECT					24 ALTITUDE				
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25 DETAILED DESCRIPTION/DIMENSIONS									
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26 BIBLIOGRAPHY (AUTHOR: DATE: TITLE: JOURNAL OR PUBLISHER: VOLUME: DETAIL)									
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1. ALLEN, J.R: 1903: EARLY CHRISTIAN MONUMENTS OF SCOTLAND: p:94-5
2. KNIGHT, G.A.F: 1933: ARCH LIGHT ON THE EARLY CHRISTIANIZING OF SCOTLAND: J. CLARKE & CO: : VOL. 2; p279
3. CURLE, C.L: 1940: PROC. SOC. ANT. SCOT: VOL. 74: p103-4
4. SOC. ANT. SCOT: 1979: ARCH. SITES & MONS. OF EASTER ROSS: RCAHMS: p28, No. 242.

27 GROUND PLAN NO.					28 GROUND PHOTO NO.				
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29 SLIDES NO.					30 HR. AP. NO.				
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31 NMR. AP. NO.					32 OTHER AP. NO. SOURCE				
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33 ARCHIVE AND LOCATION									
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34 GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY					35 SAMPLES				
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36 PALYNOLOGY					37 NUMERICAL DATES: RANGE: LAB NO.				
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38 OTHER									
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39 NAME & ADDRESS OF OWNER										40 ATTITUDE OF OWNER				
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41 NAME & ADDRESS OF TENANT										42 ATTITUDE OF TENANT				
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43 ACCESS & RESTRICTIONS														
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44 NAME & ADDRESS OF FINDER/RECORDER: DATE										45 RECORDER: DATE					46 CHECK: DATE				
										FS: 8.10.1986					GS: 21.10.1986.				

47 TEXT														
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"Area: NH 916 840 This stone was first noticed by the Rev. J..M.. Joass built into the wall of the manse garden at Tarbat. It is the rectangular portion of an upright cross-slab (?) 1'7" (482.6mm) by 1' (304.8mm) wide. It bears an inscription in Hiberno-Saxon capitals of the 8th or 9th c. The letters being in relief instead of incised is a unique feature." (1)

"E.W.R. Nicholson has suggested REOTETII as the probable reading of the partially illegible name of the person commemorated and identifies him with the REOTHAIDE or REODALDE whose death is recorded in 762 in the Annals of Ulster, and in 763 in the Annals of Tigernach. In both, he is called "Ab. Ferna" which, however, is understood to be Ferns in Ireland, and the difficulty of connecting him with Tarbat remains."

6. " * Situated in "the manse gardens at Tarbat"

In the north of Scotland, an ancient worn stone from the garden wall of a manse has preserved the name of one of them. It is a fragment of a Celtic Cross, inscribed with semi-uncials of the type associated with the eighth century, which originally stood in the graveyard at Tarbat, Cromarty. The inscription as read by Dr. Joass is:—"In the name | of Jesus Christ | A Cross of Christ | In memory of | Reodatus | may he rest | in Christ." | ⁷ It is the tombstone

<p>IN NOMINE. InU XRI CRUX XRI IN COMMEMORATIONE REO(D)ATII Q(U)IESCA(T)</p>

of the saint who is mentioned in *The Four Masters* as "The age of Christ 758, RHEODDAIDHE, Abbot of Fearnach died."⁸ He was the ruler of Nova Farina, the monastery founded by St. Ninian at Tarbat,

showing that during all the intervening centuries since the first apostle visited the district, the light of the Gospel had maintained its brightness in this northern region.

(2)

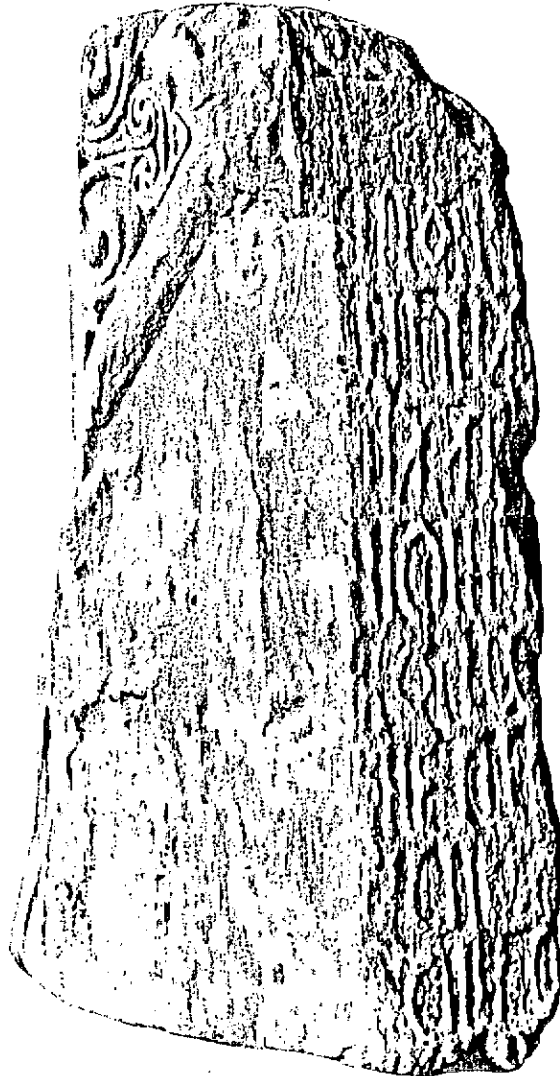
"213

47. "The stone is listed as Class III, Tarbat no 10."
 "The stone is now in the N.M.A.S. (Acc No: IB 276)"
 "See continuation card for text (2) and (3)"
 "See HNH 98 SW 004 for church & graveyard."

There are other fragments of slabs at Tarbat, in Ross-shire, showing the *ronde bosse* style of carving of the Iona crosses.⁴ There is also a particularly interesting fragment of a thick slab,⁵ about 1½ feet high, carved on one side with a design of spirals of the Irish chip-carving type (inspired by late metal-work) of the Ahenny cross,⁶ and on the other with an inscription in Hiberno-Saxon capitals (Pl. XLV, a). The lettering is carved in relief and is very close to that on the Ardagh Chalice⁷ in the National Museum at Dublin. The lines are short and the letters at either end have been partly broken away. Romilly Allen gives the probable reading as:

IN NOMINE
IHESU CHRISTI
CRUX CHRISTI
IN COMMEMORATIONE
REO (TE) TII
REQUIESC (IT)

The church of Tarbat was dedicated to St Colman, and the parish of Tarbat originally included that of Fearn, where was situated the monastery of Nova Ferna. "Reotetii" has been suggested as the partially illegible name commemorated on the monument. The death of "Rethaide" or "Reodaide" is recorded under the year 726 in the Annals of Ulster, and under the year 763 in the Annals of Tigernach, in both of which he is called "Ab. Ferna." The inscription and the spirals, resembling those on the Ahenny cross, show an interesting connection with the south of Ireland, for Ahenny was near the monastery of Ferns in Ireland, of which it may be assumed that Nova Ferna in Scotland was an offshoot. The south of Ireland had accepted the Roman usage even before the Synod of Whitby and by 710 King Nechtan of the Picts had also accepted it, whereas the monks of Iona refused to conform until 716,¹ so it is probable that at the beginning of the eighth century Pictish Scotland would be in close communication with southern Ireland.



(3)