

KNIGHT TEMPLAR STONE

Found at Temple (Balantrodach) Midlothian - Scotland - October 2009

Mr Crispin Philips who owns the old church Manse is rebuilding the boundary wall between the old church and the old Manse, during his work on the wall he has discovered two stones under the foundations, earlier the wall was in a near state of collapse.

Two historians gave their verdicts on the stone, one has stated that it is a crude carving and primitive, the other thinking it could be a fake, this is a load of nonsense when they clearly know the history of the site, in its day this stone was beautiful and not crude.

One stone has a cross carved on it but this one is the real eye catcher, there is no visible cross on it just four circles, but in saying that the cross is in the middle of the four circles, the giveaway is on the right and left of the circles, also top and bottom and in the centre.

There is the usual stem coming down the centre of the lower two circles ending in the Calvary steps, the difference here is, there are usually three steps depicting " Faith, Hope and Charity, this one only has two, the circles and the stem are usually known as the " Baculus " which is the symbol of power, this was carried by the Preceptor and was a badge of office.

Just below the two lower circles is a bulbous part, within this section there seems to be nine little segments blocks, could this be depicting the nine Knights that started the Order.

At the side is the carving of a Knights Sword, when the Knight died his sword would be put on the stone and the Mason who was making the stone would trace a line around the sword then do his carving of it.

The guard on the sword handle is straight, this means the stone was carved before Scotland was excommunicated (1305), in later carvings the guard is bent depicting the era of excommunication.

This is a beautifully carved stone and the original colour is still there, most of the carvings can still be made out on it (See Dressed Stone Photo).

The stone seems to be between four to five inches thick, on looking at the stone the Knight was not very tall by today's Standards, he would be roughly around 5 foot eight or nine inches in height, though at that time he would be considered very tall.

In the centre of the circles you can see where the Mason who carved it has made his " Centre Mark " made by his dividers or compass to draw the circles out onto the stone.

On looking at the circles, you can see clearly on the photograph especially on the circles on the right, there are notches carved in them, starting from top left we have 11 O'clock, the one at the top right 1 O'clock and the one under it at 5 O'clock, the last on the left at 7 O'clock.

Just within the outer diameter there seems to be around twenty eight little segments, so what do these signify. Could this be something to do with the Temple of Jerusalem, the centre of the circle being the Temple Dome and the large notch being the entrance to the Temple. Or is it telling us about the local Temple church, at one time it had a large round tower.

In Gematrva the system of Hebrew Numerology, the number 28 corresponds to the word *koakh*, meaning "power," or "energy", it is also the amount of letters in the Arabic alphabet. Or if we look at it another way it could mean " Blood and Honour " 2 = B and 8 = H being the second and eighth letters in the alphabet.

Or could it be the " Laberum " an ancient Christian symbol that dates back more than 1500 years

The Templars never had their names carved on their grave slabs, in fact there was no form of inscription whatsoever, the theory I have is, I believe that the large notches are in fact a date, reading from left to right we have the 11, so using one digit from the " 11 " making it a 1 then next being a 1 next the 5 then the 7. Do the large notches in the circle indicate when he joined the Order or when he took office as Preceptor, the date being (1157).

If my theory is correct then this Knight may have been the first Preceptor at Balanrodach, we have Robert of the Temple as being at Balanrodach in 1160, so the man we have that this stone is dedicated to, may well have been the man who saw the start of the building at Balanrodach, they believe it was completed around 1150.

At the bottom of the stone are what the Archaeologist David Connolly says could be Hawking Bells, this type of bell as depicted on the stone was in production until the end of the 13th century, this would mean that the Knight was a man who loved Hawking with a bird of prey. One can just imagine this man mounted on his gallant steed, dressed in all his splendour, head held high and riding around Temple (Balanrodach)with his Hawk sitting upon his leather gauntlet.

A report has stated that the stone could be Viking, the Vikings were certainly in the area as just down the road there is a place called " Shank ", this is known in Norse to be Tongue, they were also at Swanston Village in Edinburgh, in this case though this is definitely a Knight Templar Stone.

It is just over three years since Chev. Archie Young. KCTpl. FSA Scot aided by advice from Chev. Robert Hunter. KOTpl discovered the top part of a Knight Templar Stone lying within the ruined church, the stone now being kept in Rosslyn Chapel.

This new finding is thought to be either 12th century or at least 13th to 14th century, these dates would definitely make it a Knight Templar stone and not Hospitaller, the Hospitallers did not gain access to Templar lands until around 1323, even then if a Knight Hospitaller " Knight of St. John " died he would normally be buried at Torphichen in West Lothian, this place being their headquarters and their chapel was also there.

When the Reformation was in place in 1560 it would affect Temple (Balanrodach) as well, remember we are dealing with the original village where the old church stands, Temple was Parochial around 1450, the upper village as we know of today was not in existence then. Anything dealing with Rome was either demolished or changed to suit the new form of worship, any Knights Templar stones that were seen lying about would have been smashed to rubble or used for building material. Here we have a Templar stone found under the boundary wall and used as part of the foundations to support it, here is a stone that has been under this wall for around 400 years

No matter what, this is a fantastic find along with the earlier one in 2006, it now shows that there was a real presence of Knights Templar at Temple (Balanrodach) and a true meaning of the latter " Stead of the Warrior "

We wonder how many more are buried within the grounds of the Old Manse, this area is believed to have been part of the burial ground at one time, the then Minister wanted the wall built to stop people from venturing into his grounds.

No doubt there will be many speculations as to what the various signs are on the stone, someone somewhere will have the answer.

The Grand Priory gives its thanks to Mr. Crispin Philips for finding this treasure and his promise to keep it safe for all to see.

However, this stone has to be protected, if it is left open to the elements of today it could rot away and crumble to dust, it should have some kind of enclosure built around it.

Report by.