CHURCH OF THE HOLY RUDE, STIRLING



REPORT ON THE SURVEY OF MASONS' MARKS UNDERTAKEN WITHIN THE EAST AND WEST CHURCH

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Mason's Mark Project

A survey of the stonemasons' marks on the walls of the Church of the Holy Rude was undertaken 3 days a month over 6 months, from October 2015 till April 2016, by the Mason's Mark Project with the help of volunteers.
The total number of marks recorded was 2070 from which 92 different masons could be identified.
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The Project

From what was once a strong Medieval Guild very little documentary evidence survives regarding the stonemasons who built the great castles, cathedrals and churches all over Scotland and beyond, and left such a built legacy. Many questions have been asked over the years as to the purpose of masons' marks, with different views given depending on which aspect a person has been studying.

Even today masons' marks are often either ignored, or not thought of much importance when surveys of buildings have been undertaken. They are just noted as being present. However, systematically recording the locations of marks can help to identify different phases of construction, especially in buildings which have been constructed over several centuries.

Some Background to Stonemasons

The most obvious marks generally noticed are the actual marks of an individual mason cut into the stone. This is generally thought to be a mark that a mason chose after finishing his long apprenticeship of seven years without pay, followed by two further years when he got 'board and fee', before then becoming a full mason in his own right. There were also Journeymen, men who had finished their apprenticeship and were then free to travel if they wished and could pick up work on building projects around the country.

A mason who was at the top of his trade was a master mason. The title Master Mason was also used for the person in overall charge of a building site and other master masons would work under him. Any master mason coming to work on the site could be tested by this Master Mason or other master masons already working on the site to ensure that quality was maintained (1).

There is of course another thought that a mason may have been given a set mark when he joined a site to work. Since there is no direct documentary evidence for the way that medieval marks were allocated we can only speculate. However, it is thought that many marks on the earlier buildings before the 17^{th} century were 'Bankers marks'. Piece-work was frequently the normal method for payment and it is this that accounts for the use of banker-masons' marks. Masons marked their stone to let the paymaster know how much work they had done (2).

Occasionally the method of payment was arranged differently, when a contract was drawn up for a certain piece of work, such as the plain work of walling stone or, the masons were paid a set wage, and therefore the need to mark all the stones was not necessary.

Many people are unaware that, apart from the first rough cutting of a block of stone at the quarry, there are a number of marks made on a stone. The first is generally the 'Quarry mark', which can indicate which building the stone is destined for. These rarely survive as the later dressing of the stone removes them. Then there are what are called 'Assembly Marks', basically marks or lines cut on the block to help indicate where, or how joints have to be made or aligned. These can help greatly especially when some blocks look very similar, such as the segments, or voussoirs, of an arch. These marks can often still be seen up the middle of an arch.

Church of the Holy Rude

The Church of the Holy Rude stands on a slope at c67m ASL, to the SSE of Stirling Castle at NS7920 9371. The church was built in two main phases, with the nave and lower part of the west tower built largely in the 1450s to 1470s. The choir, or East Church, and probably the upper part of the tower, belong to later works of 1507 to about 1523, which appears never

to have been fully completed. The church was later divided in to two separate buildings in c1656 by a wall dividing the nave and the choir. Later major works were carried out in 1803, 1818, 1869, 1911-14 and 1936-40.

Historical Background

The earliest recorded churches in Stirling appear to have been built in the early 12th century, as two churches were confirmed by King David I, and later these two churches, one possibly associated with the castle and the other called the Holy Rude, were confirmed to Dunfermline by King Malcolm IV in 1154 (3). Nothing appears to survive of this earlier church. However, a later church was certainly built, although the date of its construction is not known, but probably in the 13th century. We do know that a major fire was recorded on 5 March 1407, which caused extensive damage to the church, as well as a considerable part of the town (4). There have been some suggestions that the Holy Rude was repaired by 1414, but an Exchequer Roll (5) records continuing payments being made in support of rebuilding works after this date, so rebuilding must have taken place over an extended period, possibly between 1407 and 1451. Most of the work undertaken in the 15th century appeared to be on this West Church. Further damage was said to have been inflicted on the building in 1452. James II granted the Burgh the right of patronage of the hospital of St James of Stirling toward the costs of rebuilding of the church on 24 June 1456 (6); this being what is now known as the West Church. The original main entrance to the church was through a doorway in the west wall of the tower.

By the early 16th century work started to move towards the East Church, with a record of work in progress on 27 April 1523, with mention being made of a Robert Arnot, Master of Kirk Work (7).

On 22 August 1529 an indenture was made between the provost and council of Stirling and John Kowth or Coutts, mason, who was 'to work and labour his craft of masonry and geometry on all matters pertaining to the common work'. Coutts was to be at the command of the Master of Works for his lifetime, receiving payment of 50 merks a year (8).

It was not until 18 December 1555, however, that John Hamilton, Archbishop of St Andrews, was notified of the completion of the East Church (9).

However, in about 1656 problems arose within the congregation, due to the appointment of a second minister. This led to a division, and a decision was made to divide the building into two separate churches by erecting a dividing wall between the nave and the choir. They then became known as the West Church and the East Church respectively.

Of the number of altars, chapels and aisles built over the years only three appear to have survived into later centuries. St Andrew's Chapel, off the north aisle was said to have been built for Mathew Forestar sometime before 1483. Slightly further west, off the NW corner of the north aisle, was St Mary's Aisle, said to have been erected by Adam Cosour about 1484 (10). The other aisle was called Bowye's Aisle, which stood off the south aisle of the nave. St Andrew's Aisle is the only one now remaining as, during the restoration of the West Church by James Gillespie Graham in 1818, the old south porch of the nave, together with Bowye's Aisle and the greater part of St. Mary's Aisle were removed. He then converted the arched entrances into windows. Graham also lowered the roof of the west church, building a false ceiling which covered the original medieval wooden roof beams. He built up the west door and enlarged the existing window above it. Fortunately some of this later work was removed to once again reveal the wonderful medieval wooden roof of the West Church. The dividing wall was also removed to restore the church back to its earlier form.

In the 19th and first half of the 20th century the transept was built between the two churches with a new doorway built in the south transept and the organ loft in the north transept.

The Survey

After receiving permission to work in the church a survey was undertaken over 3 days a month over 6 months, from October 2015 until April 2016, to record the surviving stonemasons' marks. This was undertaken by the Mason's Mark Project, along with the assistance of volunteers from the Friends of The Church of the Holy Rude, but mainly with Brian Morrison and another individual volunteer, Jim Roche.

Method of Recording

All internal and external walls, pillars, arches and ribbed vaulting on the interiors of both the West and East churches, the two upper floors and spiral stair within the tower at the west end of the West Church, were carefully checked for marks. All visible marks were recorded by photography with an L-scale for size where suitable, and sketches and notes taken of their locations. Each mark was given an individual number to identify its location on plans and schematic drawings which were undertaken later. The marks were subsequently checked and identified to individual masons.

The Results

A total of 2070 marks were recorded over the whole building, which were identified as belonging to 92 different masons. However, due to some close similarities it is possible that one or two marks may belong to the same mason, but because of the slight difference they were given their own number. Also some stone spalling was evident in some areas and

therefore not all marks were clearly visible enough to give a definitive allocation to a specific mason, although the location was still recorded.

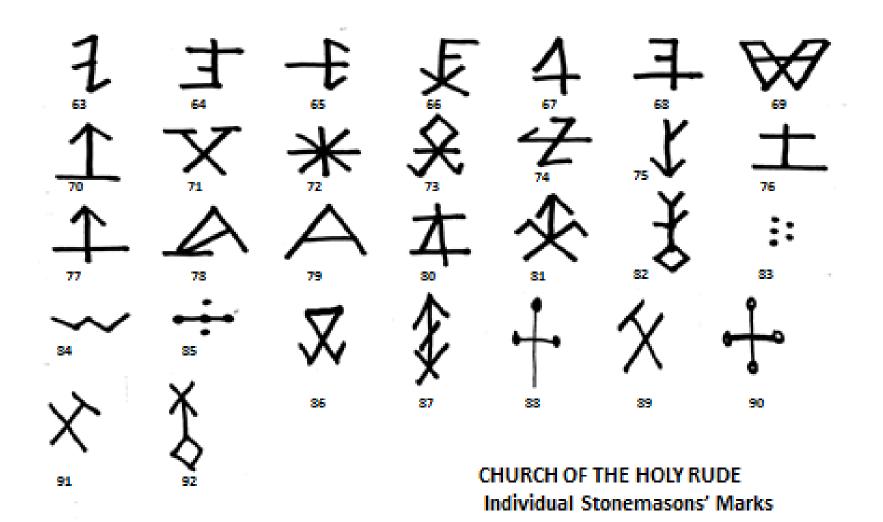
All photographs were catalogued with the site identifier code COHR (Church of the Holy Rude) and the individual mason's allocated number, along with the mark number, so that its location could be identified on the schematic plans (eg COHR mason mark 0049-0306).

A number of marks were recorded but, due to either damage or stone erosion, it was not possible to identify the whole mark and allocate it to a specific mason. This is in reference to the following records: 0117, 0148, 0151, 0202, 0307, 0400, 0849, 0857, 0860, 0930, -978, 1146, 1236, 1816, 1829, 1857, 1974, 2019 & 2053 (all in the West Church)

1372, 1387, 1389, 1398, 1405, 1408, 1410, 1440, 1450, 1451, 1507, 1522, 1529, 1532, 1544, 1546, 1578, 1579, 1590, 1720, 1746, 1753 & 1756 (all in East Church).

After careful checking a number of records were also later discarded as marks; records 0200, 2008, 1524, 1548, 1715 & 1739.

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Masons with their marks

NB The masons below, with their numbered marks, are not set out numerically but are grouped together reflecting a similarity in the marks. Some may actually be the same mason but a possible difference in spacing may mean it has been allocated a different number. There are also a number of masons (34) with only one of their marks visible. This does not necessarily mean that they only cut one block. There is a possibility that other marks of these masons may have been built inwards so that the mark is not visible. There are also small groups of masons whose marks are mirror images of the other and these have also been grouped together.

The first group of masons based their marks on dots, the majority a 'five dot cross' i.e. five small bored holes, possibly based on the Stations of the Cross. This group of seven masons were Mason 3, Mason 5, Mason 19, Mason 83, Mason 85, Mason 88 and Mason 90 with some adding a line or an extra dot. Also what was interesting is that a 20th century mason, Mason M3, who undertook repairs in the church, also used the same mark as Mason 3. This may be the result of replacing blocks of stone which bore the original mark of Mason 5, a 'like for like' situation, and therefore this may not actually be his own personal mark.

Mason 3

By far the most prolific mason was **Mason 3**, with 399 of his marks recorded in the West Church, both inside and on the exterior walls of the church and tower. He used five small holes in the shape of a cross, a five dot cross.



Mason 3- record 0160





Mason 3 – record 1972

Mason 3 – record 1835

Some marks show evidence of severe weather erosion on the exterior.

It is evident from the different areas that Mason 3 worked in that he was a very accomplished and experienced mason, who could turn his hand to anything. Apart from ashlar blocks his mark was found on the carved stones of pillars and arches, as well as the foliated friezes on some capitals.



Mason 3- record 0156 on an arch



Mason 3 – record 0120 on frieze



Mason 3 – record 0181 on a pillar



Mason 3 – record 0268 on a frieze

Some other marks recorded would appear to be possibly Mason 3, but the placing of the 'dots' was much more widely spaced and not so neat and closely clustered as in general. There is a slight possibility that an experienced apprentice might have been allowed to cut these marks. It may have been a kind of 'cheating' but, as we don't know what was

allowed and what was not, this is speculation. This has however, been noticed in a number of buildings surveyed by the Project.





Mason 3? – record 0170

Mason 3? -record 1917

Mason M3, a 20th century mason using the same mark, with 48 of his marks recorded inside the West Church only. It is understood that he was called William Scott, who undertook repair work in the mid-20th century.



Mason M3 - record 0161

Mason 5 had a very similar mark but joined the 'dots' with two lines forming a cross, with 74 examples of his mark found in the West Church. Again, as with Mason 3, a number of similar marks, on a slightly bigger scale, were observed, which may have been undertaken by an apprentice.



Mason 5 - record 0297

Two of the other examples of this mark showing wider spacing of the dots and longer lines.





Mason 5? - record 0094

Mason 5? - record 0026

A mark also very close to this mark of Mason 5 is that of **Mason 85**, who used the five dot cross but with a single bar across the centre joining the 3 dots. He only worked in St Mary's Chapel, where 4 of his marks were recorded.



Mason 85 – record 1979

Two other marks belonging to this group were noted as **Mason 19** and **Mason 83**. However, only one example of each was found, so it is not possible to speculate further on these two marks. It may have been a simple miscalculation when cutting but they are different enough to note under a separate number.

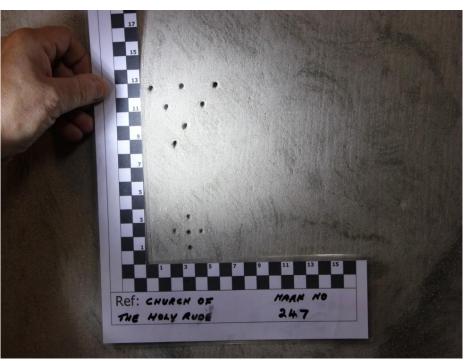


One other mason was recorded using dots as his mark and this was **Mason M18**, another 20th century mason working with Mason M3. Only one example of his mark was found on Pillar 11. However, on the same block of stone **Mason M3** had also placed his mark. This could indicate that **Mason M3** was approving the work of **Mason M18**, as earlier master masons did (see above). It could also suggest that **Mason M18** may have been a former apprentice of **Mason M3** and this was

Mason M3 approving the work of his former apprentice. This finding of two marks on one block has been recorded on other buildings of medieval date during the Project recording. Here we may have a 20th century mason perhaps carrying on this tradition.

Example of Mason M18 and the block with the two marks on it.





Mason M18 - record 0246

Masons M3 & M18 - record 0247

The marks of **Mason 88** and **Mason 90** of this group were found only within the 1st floor of the tower or Bell-ringers Chamber. Eight examples of **Mason 88** were recorded but only one of **Mason 90**. These marks are of a different date from the majority of others of this group, apart from the modern 20th - century masons, and probably belong to the 16th century.

Mason 88 had a cross as his mark with a 'dot' at the top and sides of the horizontal bar, whereas **Mason 90** had 'dots' at all four ends of the cross. **Mason 90** is also similar to Mason 5 but without a central dot.







Mason 90 – record 2051

The letter M or W was used as the basis for the marks of Masons 2, 4, 61, 69 and 84

Mason 2 was recorded in the West Church where 7 of his marks were on pillars on the south side only. This mark is very similar to Mason 4 but appears not to have closed legs, although it is possible that this may be the same mark but the closing bars are just not visible as they are so faint. **Mason 4** worked on the exterior and the interior on the pillars, arches and walls of the west church but his mark wasn't found on the upper walls of the Nave above the stringcourse. The number of marks recorded was 136 in total.







Mason 2 – record 0021

Mason 4 – record 0103

Mason 4 was another who could undertake all work, with his mark being found on ashlar blocks as well as pillars, arches and foliated friezes.







Mason 4 – record 0067

Masons 61 and 69 both worked in the East Church only. Again there is a very close similarity between Mason 61 and Mason 2 but nearly a century lies between them, however the outer legs of the M or W of Mason 61 are slightly shorter. Only 6 marks were recorded of Mason 61. Mason 69 has a thin, faint line joining the two legs. Only 1 mark was recorded on an arch.

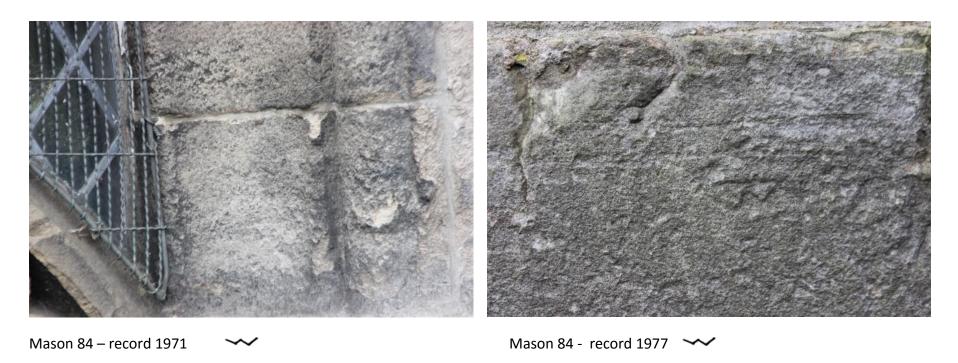


Mason 61 – record 1407



Mason 69- record 1449

Only 2 marks of **Mason 84** were recorded, both on the exterior of the arch of St Mary's Aisle or chapel in the West Church. This is of a squat, elongated W, with one of the marks quite faint and difficult to distinguish.



The next group of masons used a St Andrew's cross as the basis of their marks. This included Masons 6, 13, 17, 25, 27, 55, 57, 58, 59, 71, 73, 81, 86, 89 & 91.

Mason 6 used a simple St Andrew's cross with no additions and only worked in the West Church, where 46 of his marks were recorded in all areas of the interior, apart from St Mary's Chapel entrance. They were also found on the north and south exterior walls of the tower below the stringcourse only.



Mason 71 used a simple St Andrew's cross, but placed a short bar across two of the legs. He only worked in the Apse and NE aisle of the East Church where 4 of his marks were recorded.

Mason 71



Mason 71- record 1491 X

Very similar to this mark is **Mason 17**, but who added feet to the cross instead of bars like Mason 71. A total of 215 of his marks were recorded on the interior of the West Church (apart from St Mary's Chapel), and on the north and south

exterior walls and on the lower spiral stair within the tower. He worked on ashlar blocks as well as pillars, arches and the carved spiral stair steps.

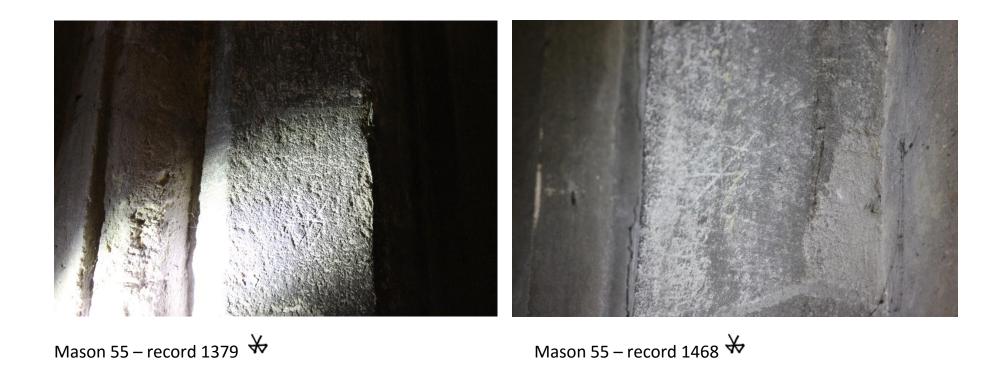


Mason 59 is also close to Mason 17's mark but with an added bar across the centre of the cross. He worked in most areas of the East Church, where 110 of his marks were recorded, whereas Mason 17 had only worked on the West Church.

Mason 59



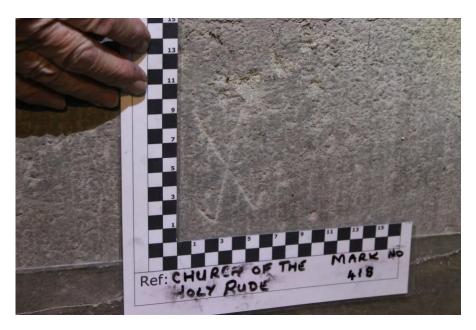
Also similar to Mason 59 is **Mason 55**, who worked in the East Church where 8 of his marks were recorded. He used the St Andrews Cross with a 'kick' on two legs, then a bar across joining the feet.



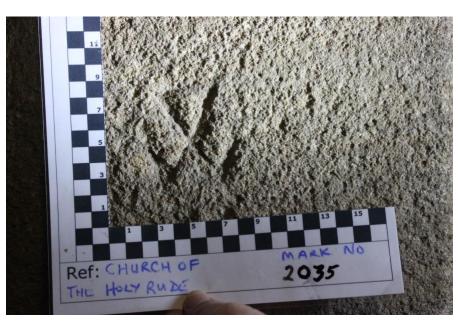
Mason 25, similar to Masons 17 & 59, (without the bar of 59), added not only feet to the cross but closed the two arms by a bar to form a small triangle. **Mason 25** only worked in the St Andrew's Chapel and on the exterior of the tower below the string course. Seven of his marks were recorded in total.

This was also the mark used by **Mason 86**, but his is of a squatter form and was almost a century later. He worked only within the 1st floor chamber of the tower where 17 of his marks were recorded.

Mason 25



Mason 8



Mason 86 - record 2035

Similar to these two was the mark of **Mason 27** with only 3 of his marks recorded, 1 in St Andrew's Chapel and the others on the tower. His mark is again rather squat, and unfortunately faint, but he has the cross and a rather squashed traingle but without the 'feet'.



Mason 27 – record 0417

Mason 58 also used a St Andrew's cross but closed both ends with bars across to form an 'hourglass' shape.

He worked in the NE Aisle and Apse of the East Church, where 14 of his marks were recorded. Mark 1492 is unfortunately half covered by paint but the other half can be seen faintly through it.





Mason 58- record 1394 X Mason 58 – record 1492 X

Masons 13 and 57 used a St Andrew's cross with a central shaft and a bar across it. In the case of Mason 13 his mark was more a combination of a St Andrew's cross and a St George cross. He worked in the West Church where 26 of his marks

were recorded. **Mason 57's** mark was very similar but the bar was at the top forming a T, and he worked in the East Church where 43 of his marks were recorded.





Mason 13 – record 0110 X+

Mason 57 — record 1488

Two other masons used this cross with one added bar on one leg. These are **Mason 89** (4 marks recorded) and **Mason 91** (2 marks recorded), who worked at the 1st floor level in the tower, so of later date period.

Their marks are mirror images of each other so they may have been related in some way, possibly brothers, or father and son working together, or trained by the same master mason.



The two remaining masons from this group are slightly different with other additions to the cross. There are **Mason 73** and **Mason 81**, although **Mason 73's** mark is fairly similar to **Mason 59**. **Mason 73** had only 1 mark recorded in the Apse of the East Church with his mark having a diamond within two of the legs. Due to the way his mark was cut he may be a later mason. **Mason 81** worked on the Chancel arches of the East Church where only 2 of his marks were recorded.

Mason 73 and Mason 81



Nine masons based their marks on the letter Z or N. These were **Masons 7, 8, 10, 12, 38, 40, 53, 63 and 74. Mason 7 and 8** worked only on the Pillars on the south side of the West Church, where 2 each of their marks were recorded. Their mark was a simple Z or N; again mirror images of each other, so there may have been some sort of relationship between them as mentioned above. **Mason 7** was an accomplished carver as his mark is on one of the pillar friezes.

Mirror images were also the case of **Masons 12 and 38**, who used the Z with a bar across the centre. They were much more productive in their work, with **Mason 12** having 59 marks recorded in several areas of the West Church, and **Mason 38** with 118 marks recorded over several areas of the West Church, as well as on the stairs of the lower part of the tower.



Mason 7 – record 0119



Mason 12 – record 0774



Mason 8 – record 0107



Mason 38 – record 0766



Mason 10 is rather similar to Mason 38 but with a slight extension. Only 2 of his marks were recorded in the West Church. However it is just possible that this is the same mason but just didn't cut the mark quite as clearly. Whereas **Mason 40** was very like **Mason 38**, but had two parallel bars across the centre rather than one. Again only 2 marks were recorded in the West Church.



Mason 10 − record 0689 🚶

Mason 40 – record 0769

Nine marks were recorded of **Mason 63** whose mark was rather similar to **Mason 38**, but his central bar stopped at the main upright and didn't cut across it. He worked in the East Church chancel, aisles and apse.



Mason 63- record 1518 **1**

Two other masons whose marks were fairly similar to each other were **Masons 53** (2 marks recorded) and **Mason 74** (3 marks), both working in the East Church. Unfortunately there is not a clear photo of Mason 53's mark and the mark of **Mason 74** is very faint (in the centre of the photo below).



Mason 74 – record 1514 4

The 'arrowhead' was the next motif used by a group of 11 masons, although 4 were only 'loosely' based on this arrow (35, 82, 87 & 92). The other masons 9, 43, 48, 49, 70, 75 & 77 used a more regular type of 3-line arrowhead, some with additions to the shaft.

Mason 9 used a simple arrowhead of 3-lines of roughly the same length, with only 2 marks recorded on the West Church.



Mason 9 – record 1897 \wedge

Mason 43 and Mason 77 used a very similar mark with an extended central shaft with a bar across although that of Mason 43 (6 marks recorded on West Church) was shorter than that of Mason 77 (2 marks recorded in East Church), who was almost a century later.



Also very similar was **Mason 70** with 3 marks being found in the East Church. His cross bar did not cut the shaft but ran across the base of it.



Mason 70 − record 1521 →

Masons 48 and 49 were mirror images of a simple arrow with shaft and a kick to the side from the base of the shaft. Again there is a possible family, or lodge connection due to the closeness of style. Both worked on the upper walls of the nave of the West Church and inside the tower at the original entrance to the church (11 marks of Mason 48 and 18 of Mason 49 were found).





Mason 75 looks much the same, but his kick came from higher up the shaft. Unfortunately the only mark of his was not very clear and was recorded higher up in the Apse of the East Church.



Mason 75 – record 1523

The other four **Masons 35, 82, 87 and 92** all had only one mark recorded of each. Three, 35, 82 & 92, used a diamond as the 'arrowhead', while 87 had the usual 3-bar head. Unfortunately the marks of **Mason 82 and 87** are not clear marks. The one mark of **Mason 82** was fairly high up on the outer edge of a narrow outer rib of the Transept arch, so a clear photo could not be obtained. The single mark of **Mason 87** was found in the 1st floor chamber of the tower and is not a clearly chipped mark, so may be slightly different than interpreted. **Mason 35 & Mason 92** are later marks, although date uncertain.









Mason 35 - record 0644

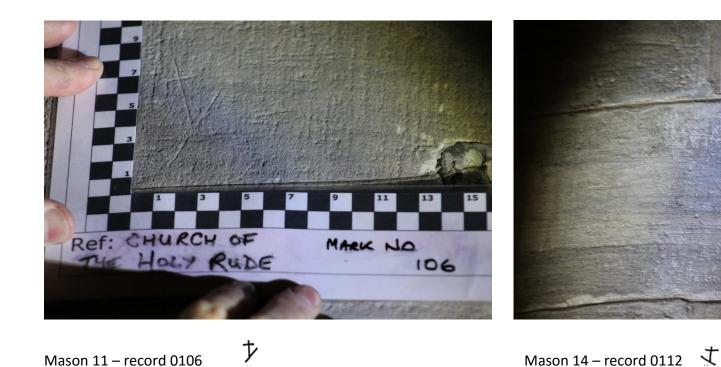
Eighteen masons based their marks on a St George cross, most with additions to it, or with an extended shaft. These are Masons 11, 14, 16, 20, 22, 23, 24, 29, 30, 34, 36, 37, 39, 41, 50, 54, 67 & 80.

Mason 29 was the only one to use a simple cross, with 14 of his marks found in the West Church. However, two similar marks were also found in the East Church, so there is a slight possibility that some of these may actually have another meaning rather than a mason's mark – such as a dedication cross of some type.

While also using a St George cross **Mason 36** enclosed it within a square. Only 1 of his marks was noted on the north wall of the West Church.



Mason 11 and **Mason 14** have mirror images of each other, with both having a cross with extended shaft and an angled bar at the end, each in a different direction. Both had only 1 mark on a pillar in the West Church.



Very similar, but with the added bar only extending from the base to one side, was another group of five masons 37, 41, 50, 54 & 67. Masons 37 and 50 worked in the West Church, while Masons 54 and 67 worked in the East Church.

Four marks of **Mason 37** were recorded and 5 marks of **Mason 50**. Each was a mirror image of the other.





Mason 37 – record 0686 1

Mason 50 – record 1786 $\,^{\,\,\,\,\,\,\,}$

Mason 54 had 94 marks recorded in the East Church while **Mason 67** had 17 of his marks recorded. The similarity of these two masons to Mason 37 and 50 is quite marked, although there is almost a century between them, and they are of a slightly smaller size. Again each is a mirror image of the other.



Two other masons with mirror images of their marks are **Mason 23** and **Mason 30**. Again both used a cross with an extended shaft and a bar projecting from the shaft. Both worked in St Andrews Chapel as well as the main West Church, where 51 marks of Mason 23 were recorded and 5 of Mason 30.

Mason 23 & 30



Mason 23 – record 0419 大

Mason 30 – record 0492 $\vec{\lambda}$

Also similar to the two above is **Mason 39**, who added an extra bar, thus incorporating both of the marks of the other two. He also worked in the West Church where 18 of his marks were found. (Below Mason 39 – record 0743)



>+

Mason 41 worked in the West Church where 9 of his marks were recorded. His mark was very like Mason 39 but with an extra kick up added to one leg.



Mason 41 – record 0805 +

Mason 20 & 24 were again rather similar and with mirror images of each other. They have the cross with extended leg and a bar to the side but with the addition of another line forming a T-shape, with 3 marks of Mason 20 and 2 of Mason 24 found on the West Church.



Mason 20 – record 0356 🟃



Mason 24 - record 0387 え

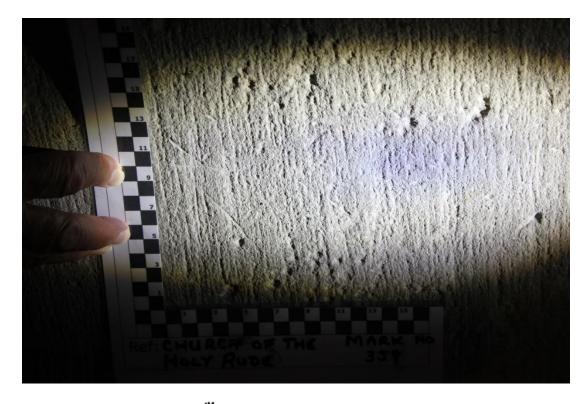
The remaining group of masons basing their marks on a cross are more indivdual. These are Masons 16, 22, 34 and 80.

Mason 16 used a cross with a leg on either side forming an N shape. He worked in the West Church and on the lower stair of the tower, with a total of 68 of his marks recorded.



Mason 16 – record 0226

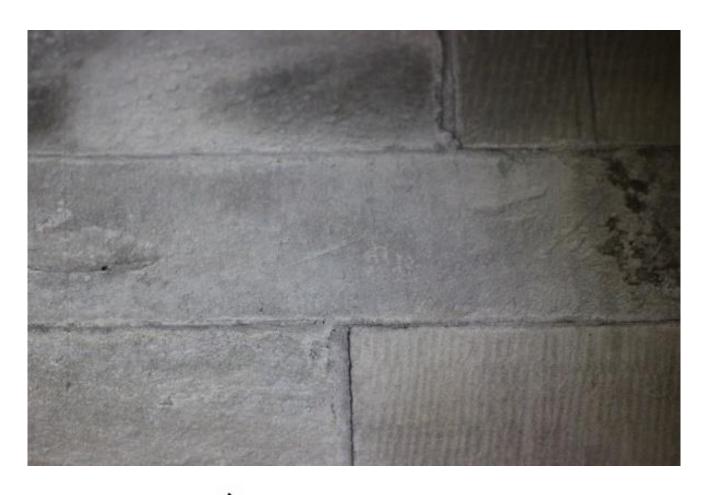
Only 1 mark of **Mason 22** was found, this in St Andrew's Chapel. His mark was a cross with an elongated shaft and a V shape at the top. Unfortunately it was quite a faint mark and so not quite as clear and sharp as some others.



Mason 22 – record 0359 **

Two marks of **Mason 34** were found in the West Church but again quite faint and higher up, so not clear. It was rather similar to a St Andrew's cross but one shaft was shorter than the other.

Mason 34



Mason 34 – record 0566

Mason 80 was again slightly different with an almost double cross with a cross bar leading from the centre of one to the outer leg of the other. He worked in the East Church where 3 of his marks were recorded.



Mason 80 – record 1588 $\frac{1}{4}$

The next group of masons used the letter E or F for their mark, some with a few additions - Mason 21, 28, 51, 64, 65, 66 and 68.

Mason 21 was the most prolific with 158 of his marks found in the West Church. His mark was a reverse F or 7, which is a mirror image of **Mason 28**, who also worked in the West Church, where 37 of his marks were recorded.





4

Mason 21 - record 0384

Mason 28 – record 0639

Only one mark of **Mason 51** was recorded and unfortunately not a clear mark or photo (not included). It was shaped like the letter E with the central bar extending across the upright. **Mason 64**, who worked in the East Church, also used the

letter E with an extension to the upright and the lower bar. Again there was only one mark recorded and not a clear mark either.

Mason 66 & Mason 68 both worked in the East Church where only one each of their marks was recorded. Mason 66 used the letter F with a cross at its base, while Mason 68 had a mark similar to Mason 64 but in reverse. Both are faint.



Two marks of Mason 65 were recorded in the East Church, with his mark based on an E but with short in-turning top and

base and a long central line cutting across the upright. As with the other of this group his marks were again quite faint and not easy to see.



Mason 65 – record 1423

A group of seven masons, **15**, **31**, **32**, **42**, **44**, **56** and **60**, used the letter V as their mark, again with some additions, but only **Mason 60** used it in a simple form. He worked in the East Church where only one of his marks was recorded. **Mason 44** also used a simple form of V with one side double lined. Only one of his marks was recorded on the arch of St Mary's Chapel in the West Church.





Mason 60 – record 1406

Mason 44 – record 0854

Mason 42 also only had one mark recorded on the arch of St Mary's Chapel. His mark was slightly different in that he used two Vs one inverted within the other with the addition of two legs. Also using a V but overlying it with a triangle was **Mason 56**, who worked in the East Church, where one mark was recorded on a window recess in the SE Aisle.





Mason 42 – record 0852

Mason 56 – record 1382

Two other masons only had one mark recorded, **Mason 31 and Mason 32**, who both worked in St Andrew's Chapel in the West Church. **Mason 31** closed his V off with a bar across which extended on one side forming a triangle, whereas **Mason 32** used a V but added a short bar across each leg. His only mark was found at the base of the pedestal of the door arch.





Mason 31 – record 0518

Mason 32 – record 0522

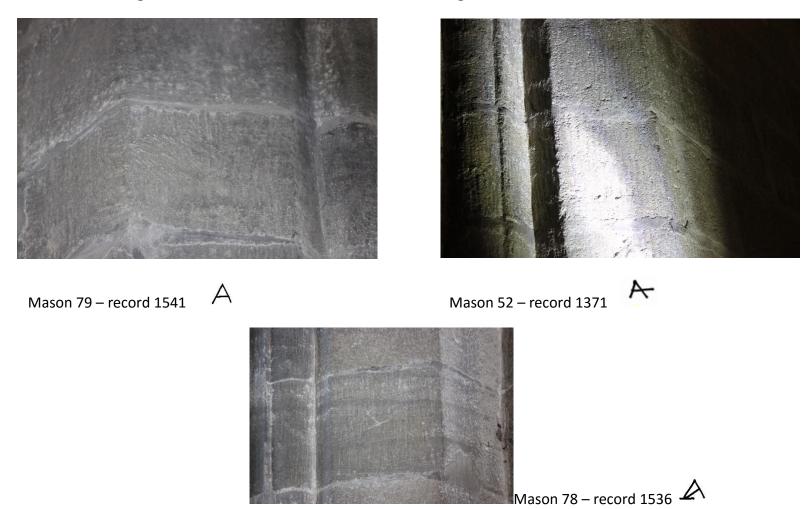
The other mason using a mark roughly based on a triangle was **Mason 15** who worked in the West Church. His mark was quite distinctive with three small inverted Vs with a bar joining them all forming 3 small triangles. He worked on both the interior and exterior of the church with 27 of his marks recorded.



Mason 15 – record 0703

Three Masons used the letter A for their mark, **Mason 52, 78 and 79**, all with only one mark recorded in the East Church, the latter two in the Apse. Unfortunately all are very difficult to distinguish and are very faint on the photos.

Mason 79 used a straight forward A, while Mason 52 added a slight extension, and Mason 78 added two extra lines.



Three mason used a type of H for their mark, one with an added line, **Mason 47.** Two of his marks were found in the West Church at the west end under the tower. **Mason 26** and **Mason 76** both used 3 lines but extended one across the other. **Mason 26** worked in the West Church where 35 of his marks were recorded. **Mason 76** worked in the East Church where only 4 of his marks were recorded.

The slashes across the mark of **Mason 26** sometimes changed direction but this may be accidental. Some are also longer than others, so again there is a slight possibility that perhaps an apprentice had cut some.



#



Mason 26 – record 0507

Mason 26 – record 0401

While the mark of Mason 47 is fairly clear, that of Mason 76 is much fainter and more difficult to see.



Three masons used a type of asterisk as their marks, **Masons 33**, **62** and **72**. **Mason 33** worked in the West Church, where 35 of his marks were recorded. His mark consisted of 3 lines crossing each other slightly off-centre. One of his marks was found on the lower part of the East wall of the 1st floor chamber in the tower. **Mason 62** worked in the East Church where 26 of his marks were recorded. His mark was very similar to **Mason 33** but a century later.

The general shape of Mason 33's mark often altered in length and general shape, so again some may be cut by an apprentice.



Mason 33 – record 0546



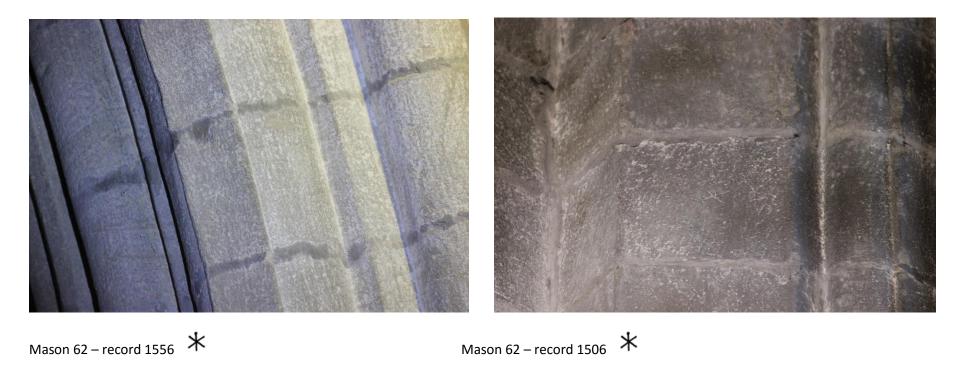
Mason 33 - record 0531



Mason 33 – record 1787



Mason 62 also had marks that appeared to alter slightly in size. Again many of his marks were quite faint, as were other marks in the East Church for some unknown reason.



The remaining mason in this small group is **Mason 72** whose single mark recorded was found on the south side of the Apse of the East Church. His mark consisted of a combination of a St Andrew's cross and St George cross.

Mason 72



Mason 72 – record 1495

The first mark to be recorded during the survey was that of 'Mason 1' on the base of Pillar 1 at the west end of the West Church. Only one mark was recorded and because of the location there is a slight possibility that this is not a mark, more a score on the stone. However, there is also a slight possibility that this was a stone taken from the earlier church due to the simplicity of the mark, a Y shape. This is of course conjecture.



Mason 1 – record 0001

The final two masons had very distinctive marks, which were only found on the arch to St Mary's Chapel in the West Church. **Mason 45** and **Mason 46** are a mirror image of each other, so there is again a possible relationship of some type. Only one mark was found of **Mason 46** but 3 of **Mason 45**, one of which was on the exterior of the arch.



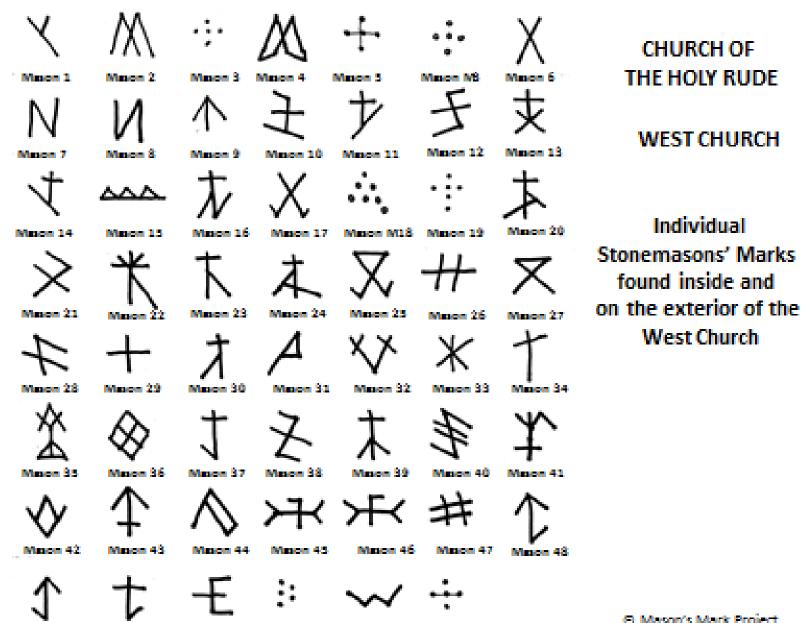
DISCUSSION

Over the years masons' marks have raised some interest in a variety of fields, but generally dismissed as of little use by many archaeologists. In Scotland, up until now, there has been no systematic recording of marks to try to understand them better, and actually make use of them. Thus the reason the Mason's Mark Project was born. Much information has been gathered and developed since the Project began and slowly the issue of how they can be used to identify different phases of a building is being proven. Naming an actual mason along with his mark and the date he worked is slightly more problematic, although sometimes possible.

Attempting to date a building by using masons' marks alone however, is fraught with problems, as the same shape or design of a mark can be found over a very wide time period, as well as over a very wide geographical area. Fortunately at the Church of the Holy Rude there are at least a few surviving documents that have helped to give dates of the building of both the West and East Church, as well as naming a Master of Works, Robert Arnot for the East Church. We can therefore say that one main group of our numbered masons worked on building the West Church between 1407 and 1451, while another group built the East Church between 1523 and 1555. That cannot be in question at all, but there are a few other interesting facts that have come out of the survey that may not have been known before.

The West Church

From the survey undertaken in the West Church we can now say that 60 masons worked on the building of the main structure. From the number and locations of the marks we can also say that they were paid for 'piece work', in other words by the number of blocks they cut and carved. Each mason cut his own personal identification mark into the blocks he had dressed for the purposes of quality control, as well as calculation of payments.



Major 84 Major 85

Musicin 49

Musica 50

Manon 51 Manon 83

By far the most prolific mason was Mason 3, with 399 of his marks recorded in all areas, apart from St Andrew's Chapel and St Mary's Chapel, or the ground to 1st floor chamber spiral stair within the tower. He was a very accomplished stone mason who could carve anything, as his mark is visible on both round and carved pillars, arches and on the foliated friezes around the top of some pillars (see page 10 above). His mark was a very precise five dot cross, usually very regular in shape. However, what was also noticeable was that occasionally some of the marks associated with him were cut much less precisely and the dots more widely spaced or slightly irregularly aligned, which could suggest that he did not cut them himself. It is therefore highly possible that he allowed an almost time-served apprentice to cut these marks (see page 11). This was also noticeable with some of the marks of Mason 5 and Mason 16.

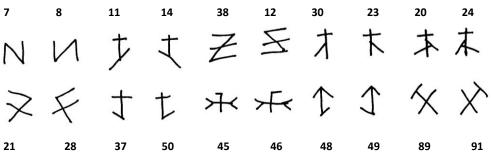
An apprentice who had almost served his seven years' apprenticeship would certainly be capable by then of dressing the blocks. It is also possible that he had more than one apprentice working under him in the 15th century. Regulations to change the number of apprentices a mason could have did not come in until the 16th century. A statute of 1551 confirmed that no craftsman could have more than one apprentice at a time, or take on an apprentice for a shorter period than seven years. This would therefore suggest that pre 1551 masons had more than one apprentice training under him.

During other Project surveys it has also been noted that a mason's mark sometimes looked cut by another hand. This appeared to happen on a regular basis in buildings pre 16th century. The use of an apprentice would have helped to produce more work and therefore bring in better payment. This may be pure speculation of course, but could explain the reason for the difference in the way the marks were cut, even taking into account rushing to cut his mark.

Apart from the use of apprentices there appears to be another link with Mason 3 and Mason 5, as their marks are very similar with the five dot cross, apart from Mason 5 adding two lines to join them up. This may mean a family connection, perhaps a son working with his father, or two brothers working together. Another possible explanation is that they worked under the same master mason when apprentices, or with the same Yard or 'Lodge'.

Mirror images

Another noted feature is the number of other masons, 12 groups of two masons (10 groups below), who also appear to be working along with a family member, or who may also have served their time under the same master mason. Their marks are mirror images of each other, which certainly would appear to have some meaning such as suggested. This applies to both churches.



Locations masons worked

From the mark chart one can gain a picture of the areas where each mason worked. There are a few who only appeared to cut and work with the more simple ashlar blocks, while others only worked on the curved pillar blocks, and again others who only worked on the carved voussoirs of arches. This could suggest that a number were more accomplished masons than others. There is also a small group of 5 masons who worked on the spiral stair, which would have again been a more specialised type of work. A note of interest is that marks were only recorded on the roof vaulting of St Andrew's Chapel and the vaulting under the tower, but none were noted on the vaulting of the North or South Aisles of the Nave or the Chancel.









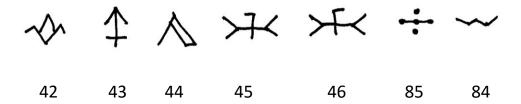
St Andrew's Chapel

South Aisle

Tower vaulted roof

Five masons (3, 5, 6, 13 and 17) worked in almost all areas of the West Church, and of these five, two also worked on St Andrew's Chapel, Mason 6 and 17. In his excellent detailed work for A Corpus of Scottish Medieval Parish Churches – Stirling Holy Rude Parish Church (12, p6/15) Fawcett suggests that St Andrew's Aisle or chapel is 'unlikely to post-date the church significantly' due to its having the same base course as the nave. From the survey it would therefore confirm that this chapel would appear to have been built at the same time as the church.

Fawcett then goes on to describe St Mary's Aisle as also being built as part of the main nave building, basing it on the similarity of the jamb mouldings of the arch and the chapel base course. However, what does stand out quite significantly from the survey is that no marks were recorded on the pillars or frieze on the capital and that the masons' marks recorded on the arch, five in number Masons 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, and two others on the exterior, Masons 84 & 85, only worked on St Mary's Chapel.



Their marks were not found anywhere else in the building. This does therefore suggest that the chapel was not built at the same time as the main body of the West Church, but at a later date. As mentioned above it was said to have been erected by Adam Cosour about 1484 (10), which itself does post- date the primary building phase. If it was built at the same time, as suggested by Fawcett, why not use the masons, such as Mason 3, 5, 6, 13 & 17, who were more than capable of the work, having already carved pillars, arches and decorated friezes? One simple defence of the theory is that the donator of funds perhaps wanted his own masons to work on the Chapel, but probably unlikely.

Two other interesting aspects of the marks found in St Mary's Chapel should be noted. First is that four marks of Mason 85, one of the masons working only on the Chapel, were found in what was originally the interior of the Chapel, now outside the church as part of a retaining wall. His mark is very similar to Mason 3 or Mason 5, as he used the 5-dot cross but placed a single bar across the middle, joining three of the dots. This could suggest a relationship and therefore mean that a later generation of the same family was still working in the area, which is quite possible.

Although 3 marks of Mason 3 and one of Mason 4 were found on the exterior north wall of the church, which would have been within St Mary's Chapel, they are on blocks to the west of the arch, and would therefore have been there when the wall was originally built before any insertion of a later arch.

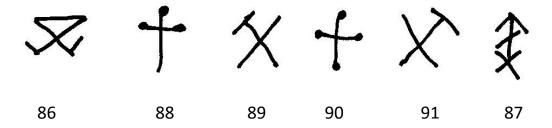
The other aspect, which should be looked into further, is that one of the marks found on the arch of St Mary's Chapel, Mason 46, is also recorded in Mar's Lodging or Wark, adjacent to the church, which is of a later build, c1570. Then again it is possible that the masons were connected through family, and that the mason who built the chapel may have been a grandfather to the mason who worked on Mar's Lodging, but took the mark over after the death of his grandfather.

The Tower

While recording the marks on the exterior of the tower it was noted that no marks were visible above the lowest stringcourse, but all marks below the stringcourse belonged to masons who also worked inside the church. This also applied to the masons who worked on the spiral stair up to the 1st floor chamber of the tower, Masons 16, 17, 26, 33 & 38. Their marks were all recorded on either the newel, or on the back of a step, none were recorded on the wall, apart from an obviously later mark, Mason 92, above the 4th step up.

In the 1st floor chamber only the East wall had a bottom row of dressed ashlar blocks, all the others being built of random rubble, apart from the areas around the windows and doors. Only one mark was recorded on this East wall, which would appear to date to the same as the main building of the church and the lower stairway. The mark of Mason 33 was recorded on the left side of a small cupboard on the floor level.

All other marks within the Chamber (Bell-ringers) itself were different to marks found in the church, or on the exterior of the tower, or lower stair inside leading to the chamber. These would certainly indicate a different date of building for the main part of the chamber, as suggested again by Fawcett, post 1507. Only Mason 87 might be of an even later date, although this mark was not a clear one.



Also noted in the 1st floor chamber is that, while a few marks were recorded on the relieving arch in the South wall, none were noted on the North relieving arch. The arches also look slightly different so the North arch may have been added later to help carry the weight of the bells.





South arch North arch

No marks were found above the 74th step, which was below the level to the 2nd floor chamber, or Bell-Chamber, where again no marks were recorded, as walls were built of random rubble, apart from around reccesses.

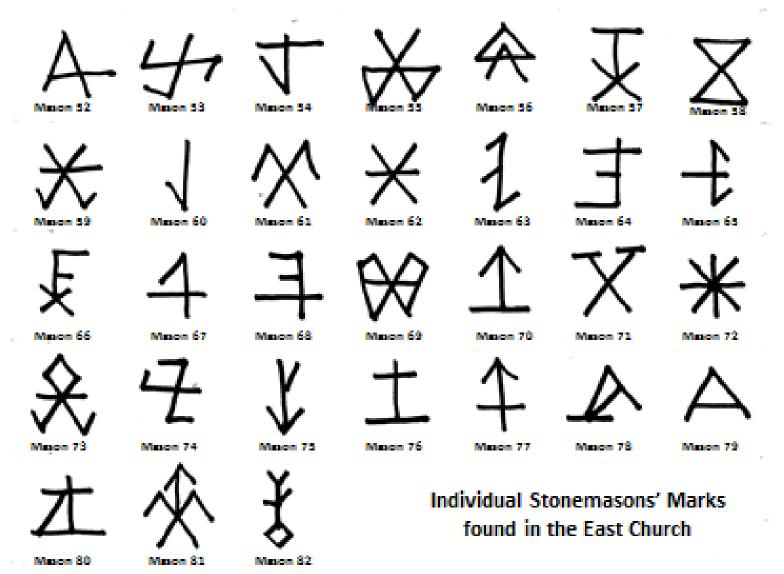


Bell-chamber

The East Church

The East Church results showed a slight difference in the building system. Here 32 different masons were recorded as working in this area. The marks were all mainly recorded on the voussoirs of the arches and around the window recesses. No marks were recorded on any of the pillars, which was slightly surprising, given that they are carved in a similar style to Pillars 5 & 8 in the West Church, although of an obviously later date, c1520-1555. A few marks were recorded on the walls of the North-East Aisle and within the Apse but very few on any other wall. This was particularly noticeable on the upper walls of the Chancel. A very few marks were recorded below the stringcourse, but none above. This was in marked contrast to the walls above the Nave of the West Church. No marks were recorded on the exterior of the East Church either.

CHURCH OF THE HOLY RUDE: EAST CHURCH









Upper wall of East Church Chancel

This therefore points to a different system of payment being made for the work. Part would appear to have been paid for Piece Work and the remainder under contract work, where there was a set rate of payment being made. This would explain that the more detailed work of cutting and shaping the voussoirs was being paid for by 'Piece work' and thus the need to mark the stones, while the ashlar blocks on the majority of walls were not.

Conclusions

From the survey of masons' marks undertaken of both the West Church and East Church of the Holy Rude, we can say that 92 different masons, along with their apprentices, worked on the building of both structures. Of this total number of 92, 60 of the masons worked on the West Church, 5 of who also worked on the lowest stage of the tower. A group of 7 others only worked on the St Mary's Chapel or Aisle, while yet another group of 6 masons only worked in the 1st floor chamber of the tower of a later date. While we don't know the names of the earlier 15th century masons we do have the name of the

20th century mason, who worked on repairs with replacement blocks using the mark of Mason 3, a William Scott. However, we don't know for certain if he used this mark as his own, or was simply replacing a block that has Mason 3's mark on it.

Of the total of 92 masons, 32 worked on the East Church. We also see a marked contrast from the way payments appear to have been made between the West Church and the East Church, with the majority of ashlar blocks in the East Church being unmarked, thus suggesting that much of the work was done under contract, rather than being paid 'Piece Work', although this type of payment appeared to continue with the carving of the arch voussoirs and window recesses. We also know the name of the Master of Works as Robert Arnot in 1523, and of another mason, John Coutts, of the same period. We don't unfortunately know their marks.

We can also see probable family groups of masons working together, or from the same Yards or 'Lodges', with the similarity of some marks, especially the small groups of two masons with mirror images recorded.

We can confirm that the survey indicated that the tower was most likely built in three different stages. We can also say that St Mary's Aisle was probably built at a slightly later date than St Andrew's Chapel and the rest of the West Church. However, only possible deeper research might prove or disprove this latter theory, but it is interesting to note that a similar mark to one on the arch, Mason 46, was also recorded on Mar's Wark.

Moira Greig





Recording marks on the West Church.



Acknowledgements

I would like to thank first of all the Minister and Church Session, for giving us permission to work in the Church of the Holy Rude, and for allowing use of the heating on some very cold days; thanks especially to Session Clerk, Iain White, for also showing me around all the roof areas; next, my thanks to Murray Cook for bringing the church to my attention and Brian Morrison for being there almost on a daily basis, helping with the recording sessions and for enlisting members from the Friends of the Church of the Holy Rude. My thanks to the following Friends: Bob Blewitt, Stuart Campbell, David Cooke, Tricia Cooke, Janet Craig, Ann Crawford, Sandy Davidson, Anne Finnie, Michael Giannandrea, Malcolm MacRae, Robin McKinlay, Janet McNair and Ian Richardson. Special thanks to Jim Roche, who is not a member of the Friends but who came almost every recording day, and became my second pair of eyes. My thanks to one and all again, and I hope you found it an experience. Brian Morrison can now say he knows the Church stone by stone!

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WEST	СН	JRCH		ARE	AS	MAS	ONS	WORKED											
mason No	mark	Pilla N :		arcl		north wall	south wall	upper north wall of Nave	upper south wall of Nave	St Andrew chapel Int ext	St Mary's Chapel Int ext	Tower		Exterior North	Exterior south	Exterior west	Stairs ground to 1 st floor	1 st floor of tower	No of marks
1			*																1
2			*																7
3		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*			*	*	*	*	*			399
M3		*	*			*	*					*							48
4		*	*	*	*	*	*					*	*	*	*				136
5		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*			*							74
6		*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*						46
7			*	*															2
8			*																2
9				*												*			2
10			*				*												2
11			*																1
12			*				*	*	*			*			*				59

mason	mark	Pillars N S	arches	north wall	south wall	upper north wall of Knave	upper south wall of Knave	St Andi chap		St Mary's Chapel Int ext	Towe		Exterior North	Exterior south	Exterior west	Stairs ground to 1 st floor	1 st floor of tower	No of marks
13		* *	*	*	*	*	Kilave		EXI	iiit ext	*	EXC	*			11001		26
14		*																1
15		*			*		*				*	*		*				27
16		*	*			*	*	*			*	*		*		*		68
17		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*		*		215
M18		*																1
19			*															1
20								*			*		*					3
21				*	*	*		*	*		*		*	*				158
22								*										1
23				*	*	*		*			*							51
24								*										1
25								*				*						7

mason	mark	Pillars N S	arches	north walls	south walls	upper north wall of Knave	upper south wall of Knave	St Andrew chapel	St Mary's Chapel	Tower		Exterior North	Exterior south	Exterior west	Tower stairs ground to 1st floor	1 st floor of tower	No of marks
26			*	*	*	*	*	*		*					*		35
27								*		*	*						3
28				*	*	*		*		*		*	*				37
29			*		*			*		*							14
30					*			*									5
31								*									1
32								*									1
33						*	*	*		*	*				*	*	35
34				*													2
35				*													1
36				*													1
37					*	*	*			*							4
38				*	*	*	*			*	*		*		*		118

mason No	mark	Pillars N S	arches	north wall	south wall	upper north wall of Knave	upper south wall of Knave	St Andrew chapel	St Mary's Chapel Int ext	Tower	Exterior North	Exterior south	Exterior west	Tower stairs ground to 1 st floor	1 st floor of tower	No of marks
39				*	*							*				18
40					*											2
41					*											9
42									*							1
43							?*		* *			?*				6
44									*							1
45									* *							3
46									*							1
47										*						2
48						*	*			*						11
49						*	*			*						18
50						*	*			* *						5
51										*						1
83												*				1

mason No	mark	Pillars N S	arches	north wall	south wall	upper north wall of Knave	upper south wall of Knave	St Andrew chapel	St Mary's Chapel Int ext	Tower	Exterior North	Exterior south	Exterior west	Tower stairs ground to 1st floor	1 st floor of tower	No of marks
84									*							2
85									*							4
86															*	17
87															*	1
88															*	8
89															*	4
90															*	1
91															*	2
92														*		1

AREAS	MASON	worked	in	EAST	CHURCH									
Mark	Mark	SE	SE aisle	NE	NE Aisle	North	South	Chance	I	Apse	Transept	Apse	also seen in	No of
no		Aisle	arch at	Aisle	arch at W	Chancel	Chancel	wall			arch	arch	West church	marks
			W end		end	arches	arches	N S	S					
29		*								*			*	2
52		*												1
53		*												2
54		*	*	*		*	*		*	*				94
55		*		*						*				8
56		*												1
57		*	*			*	*		*	*		*		43
58		*		*						*				14
59		*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*		*		110
60		*												1
61		*		*						*				6
62		*		*		*				*				26
63		*		*	*				*	*				9
64		*												1

		Churc	h of Holy Ru	de					East Ch	nurch			
Mark no	Mark	SE Aisle	SE aisle arch at W end	NE Aisle	NE Aisle arch at W end	North Chancel arches	South Chancel arches	Chancel wall N S	Apse	Apse arch	Transept arch	also seen in West church	No of marks
65			11 0110	*									2
66				*									1
67		*	*	*	*	*	*				*		17
68				*									1
69				*									1
70				*		*			*				3
71				*					*				4
72									*				1
73									*				1
74		*			*				*				3
75									*				1
76					*	*			*				4
77								*	*				2
78									*				1

Mark no	Mark	SE Aisle	SE aisle arch at W end	NE Aisle	NE Aisle arch at W end	North Chancel arches	South Chancel arches	Chancel wall N S	Apse	Apse arch	Transept arch	also seen in West church	No of marks
79									*				1
80						*							3
81							*						2
82											*		1
6?									*			*	1

1-Z. H. X. 4. ** \$. +* \$.

