



10.

The Madonna
fragment

Date: 15th century

A HISTORY OF ST ANDREW'S IN 100 OBJECTS

William Smith, architect of the church restoration of 1880, wrote this:

'In the corner of the porch a stoup was discovered, but in so dilapidated a condition that no attempt has been made to restore it. In the bowl of this stoup (part of a Madonna) was found...'

This fragment was part of the image of the Virgin Mary with Child that would probably have stood (perhaps 5 feet tall) on or behind the Lady Chapel altar (near to where it is displayed today). It would have been an object of considerable veneration, surrounded by many votive candles. Upon the fragment you can see not only Mary's hand but parts of the hands and feet of the infant Jesus—though his head has been chopped off, probably deliberately. This faceless part of the statue was rescued from complete destruction and was preserved by building it into the stoup (which also fell victim to Reformation distaste). It remained hidden for over 300 years.