# The Decipherment of Scholastic Ogham

**By**

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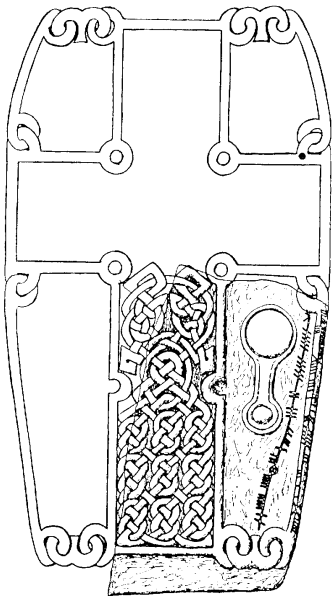
## Introduction

## Abbreviations

## Inscriptions

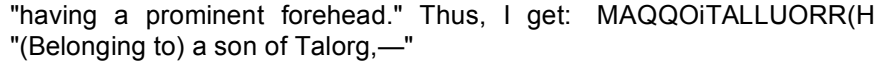


**Datab. No.:** 6000
**Site**: Formaston in Aboyne Parish, Aberdeenshire, Scotland
**Type:** Sepulchral
**Description:** A fragment of a broken cross, 29.5" tall by 13.5" at top, 16.5" at foot; 2" thick. The inscription is partly on and partly near the edge of a cross-slab found in the ruins of the mediæval church of Aboyne at Formaston, a mile east of the present village (according to Diack) in Aberdeenshire, Scotland. In 1892 it was located in Aboyne Castle. The stone is sculptured with a complicated plaited pattern and a mirror. The fragment is the bottom right half of a Christian Cross. When complete, it probably resembled the Glamis, Golspie and Scoonie stones, having an elaborately interlaced cross on one side and, perhaps, symbol-figures on the other. MacAlister considered the inscription a later addition to the stone, not made when the cross was carved, but after the fragment broke off. There are two lines of Ogham on the slab.

**Ogham Line 1:** ᚋᚫᚇᚇᚑᚌᚑᚃᚫᚃᚃᚑᚏᚑᚏᚏᚑᚏᚏᚑᚏ

post-dates the decoration on the stone, for it bends to avoid the "mirror" design. It is my contention that the Scottish oghams were not necessarily Pictish, but added later to some Pictish stones. This seems a clear case in point. We note in *Gaelic Personal Names* by Donnchadh O'Corrain (p. 168, 1981) the name *Tailech (Tuileach)* (pronounced *tal'-ach*) meaning (perhaps) "having a prominent forehead." Thus, I get: MAQQOiTALLUORR(H) = *Mæcg-oi Talorg* = "(Belonging to) a son of Talorg,—"

**Ogham Line 2:**



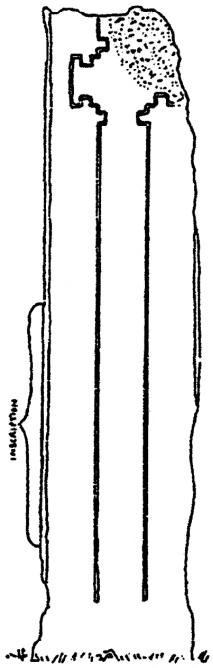
**Transliteration:** NEaHHT VROBB ACCEaNNEVV
**Cognate Lang.:** -neachd bro'b a-Ceann-amh.
**Translation:** of an ancient family which was from Kinneff.

**Comment:** The Earl of Southesk read this line in 1886 as FFENNAACC ABBORFTHHAAN = "Fineach of Aber-ftha(?) (rests here)." Note that he read this second line backwards from the rest of the scholars. He also read the "X" character as AA rather than E. Nicholson read NEHHTVROBBACCENNEVV = *n àit-Bhrobach-chennaibh* = —hearthside "Spottedheads." Brash quoted Skene who saw NEHHT (or NEaHHT) as a form of the name *Neachtan* and *Robat* (!) as the name Robait or Robaid, mentioned in the Book of Deer. Skene also suggested that *Ceaneff* = Kenneff, a church in the Mearns in SE Renfrewshire. But note Old Gælic *Ceann (cann)* = Head, point; hilt; end; Chieftain, commander; headland, promontory (Dw177A). *Céin* = distant, remote, far off; foreign (from afar) (Dw186A). Old Gælic *amh* (pronounced *àv*) = ocean, water (Dw29A). The name might apply to an ocean headland or to the headwaters of a river. Note the existence of Kennavarah Point, a promontory on the SW extremity of Tiree Island in W. Argyllshire. Diack saw NEHHT as a genitive form for an older **Nehhti*. If combined with the previous word, the name would thus becomes *Uor- neht* or *Ur-neht*. Diack regarded VROBBACENN as the same word as Old Irish *Srobcenn* (also noted by Rhys who felt that VROBBACCENNEVV = *Frobbaccennevv* = a very early form of the known Irish legendary figure *Srobcenn*). Rhys pointed out that the initial F in Early Irish appeared to be superseded by S in Old Irish. *Srob* could reflect *Srúb* = Snout, muzzle, nose, beak (RIA S378) (seen as a component in other ancient names in Old Irish documents). Padel reads NEHHTVROBBACCENNEVV and gives this as the first line of the inscription (reading bottom-to-top, right-to-left). This is not impossible. For this line Forsyth gets N(?)HHTVROBBACC(?)NNEVV.

**Vocabulary:** Gaelic *Neach* (OI *Nech*) = Person, any person; one, someone (Dw686B; RIA N17) and Old Gælic *Neachd* = Tribe, Family; Pledge (Dw686B). OGaelic *Brò* = Old, ancient, antique (Dw126A). Could there have been a form, Bhrò (pronounced *Vrò* or *Frò*)? The final BB in VROBB (FROBB) = B and could be Gælic *b' (a bu)* = who was (Dw56A) (also *b'* = past. aff. of verb is [used before an initial vowel or an Fh][Dw56A]). G *A* = Out of (from); at, to, into (D1B). G *Ceann* = Head, point, hilt, top, end, chief, commander, headland, promontory (D177A). OG *Amh* = Water, ocean (also fool, simpleton, dwarf) (Dw29A).

**Conclusion:** Bearing in mind the apparent convention that Pictish and/or Celtic H represents a C/CH/GH/G sound, this could make NE[HH]T = NE[CH]T. Since the 'A' in this line is set apart by having an underline, perhaps that indicates that it begins a separate word or word-group, giving us: -NEHHT VROB ACCENNEFF. The A is not likely to be alone or at the end of a previous word because then the next word would begin with a double consonant and that apparently was not the usual practice. If it were alone—or as a prefix to a word-group, it could then be Old Irish A = poss. adj. denoting possession, ownership, relationship, connection (of his, her, their, etc). Also obj. genitive with vnn. of transitive vbs.; dem. pn. that which, what; conj. when, while; prep. out of, from, by, with, because of, by reason of; attached to (RIA A1ff). *Ceann-amh* (pronounced "Kenn-av" or "Kin-av" = ocean headland) could be the name of a place or homestead located on a promontory on the ocean. Kinneff is a coastal place-name in Kincardine-shire not far from the pre-1974 border of Aberdeenshire. It is about 30 miles SE of Aboyne and Formaston Churchyard (the original site of the stone, about 2 miles east of Aboyne). This is the same location as Kinneff Parish which, prior to 1855 and possibly as early as 1616, was located 2 miles northeast of

Bervie (Inverbervie or Bervie Bay) in Kincardineshire. In the late 19th century, Kinneff Manse (at or near Bervie) was occupied by the Rev. Thomas Brown. It would appear that Kinneff is quite an old place-name in the area in question. Thus, the entire Aboyne inscription reads: MAQQOiTALLUORR(H)NEaHHTVROBBACCEaNNEVV = *Mæcg-oi Talorg, neachd bro'b a-Ceann-amh.* = Belonging to the son of Talorg, of an ancient family which was from Kinneff.



**Ogham-inscribed cross and detail of inscription**
**Calder/Jackson, 1957 (after Forsyth)**

**Datab. No.:** 6001
**Site:** Altyre, Morayshire, Scotland
**Type:** Sepulchral
**Description:** Forsyth calls this "A tall, thin, Class III cross slab, sculpted in relief on two faces with crosses, having one ogham inscription incised vertically up one narrow edge and possibly another up the side of one cross-shaft." She went on to say that it was of grey sandstone, "approximately 3.3m tall from the current ground level, width 2'10" (0.86m), thickness 7" (0.18m)." She reported that the stone was severely weathered and covered in lichen. The ogham in some portions are worn and doubtful –and she suggested that there may be a portion missing from the very beginning of the inscription. Although the stone presently "stands surrounded by a wooden fence in a field by the drive from Altyre House to Forres, in the parish of Rafford, Moray," that is not its original position. It was apparently brought to Altyre about 1820 from another place.

**Ogham:** ᚪ᚛᚛ᚁᚁᚁᚁᚁ᚜ᚁᚁᚁᚁᚁᚁᚁᚁᚁᚁ᚜ᚂᚂᚂ᚜ᚂᚂᚂ᚜᚛᚛ᚂᚂᚂᚂ᚜᚛᚛᚜᚛᚛᚛

HDDURABA(orM)LSUDDS... Padel saw AMMAQQ[A or T or Q]ALL[V or BL][B or L or V][L or V][M or B or A]AHHRRASSUDDS. Katherine Stuart Forsyth reported extensively on this inscription in an unpublished PhD paper in 1996. Her version of the Ogham, based on an impression by Marianna Lines, is AMMAQQ(T/C?)A(LL/N?)MvsMAHHR( /a)R(a/aa/o)sSuDDS.

**Vocabulary:** AS *A* (ON á) = to, for; upon, in, by (B1B; V35Aff). AS *Mæcg* = man, disciple, son (H224A). AS *Mæg (mag) -es* = a relative, a kinsman; male kinsman, parent, son, brother, cousin; can also be a female relation, a wife (B654A; H224B). AS *Maga* = a son, descendant, young man, man (H228A). ON *Tala* = to talk, speak, record (V625A). ON *Van* (AS *wan, wan*a) = a particle affixed to nouns and adverbs = deficient, lacking, short, under-; wanting, absent (V676A; B1164B). G *Assíd (aisíodh)* m. = a personal name (see below).

**Conclusion:** We note in *Gaelic Personal Names* by Donnchadh O'Corrain (p. 25, 1981) the name *Assíd (aisíodh)* (pronounced as'-i) = the name of the ancestors of the Meic Conmara (MacNamaras) who flourished in the 10th century AD --also borne by a king in Co. Clare who died in 1049. This suggests a date for this inscription at least as early as the 9th and as late as the 10th and 11th centuries AD. I tentatively suggest AMMAQQTALLA(!)VA(!)NA(!)MAHHR RASSUDDS. I break it down as A MAQQ TALLAVAN A MAHHRR ASSUDDS = *A mæcg Tallavan a mágr Asods* = For the son of Tallava, by a kinsman of Assíd.

**Auquhollie by Diego Meozzi**

**Datab. No.:** 6002
**Site:** Auquhollie, Kinkardineshire, Scotland
**Type:** Sepulchral
**Description:** Forsyth says: "A natural rectangular monolith, undressed and unshaped. The only carving is the ogham inscription up the south-east arris." She reports that it is "a quartzose gneiss …highly stratified with frequent beds of quartz" and says that it is in good condition with some wear at the arris (carving sharpened in modern times). It is 2.35m tall, measuring 0.43 x 0.66 x 0.7m at the base. It stands 380m northwest of Nether Auquhollie farmstead in the parish of Fetteresso, 5 miles northwest of Stonehaven, Kinkardineshire. (Forsyth)

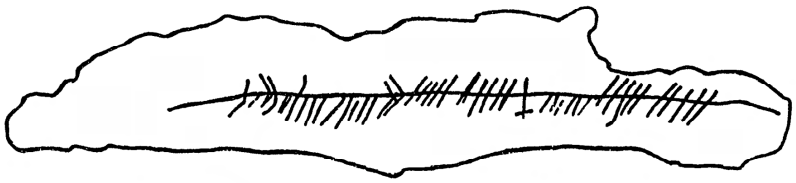
**Ogham:** ᚁᚁᚁᚐᚐᚐᚐᚐᚁᚁᚁᚁᚁᚐᚐᚁᚁᚁᚁᚁ[ᚐᚐᚐᚐᚐ]ᚂᚂᚂᚐᚐᚐᚐᚂᚂᚐᚐᚁᚁᚁᚐᚐ[ᚐ][ᚁᚁᚁᚁ]...
**Transliteration:** VINON[I]TE DOV U [L!]...
**Cognate Lang.:** Winnanide dove—U(I)(aid?)
**Translation:** Winnanide sleeps—an U(I)(sterman?)

**Comment:** Nicholson read this VINONEHT TEDOV... = Vi Non e ht Tedov... = Ui Non àit Tedaibh = "O'Non's hearthside: 'Thieves.'" The Earl of Southesk personally examined the inscription on 1 May 1886 and saw F[A]DHDONANUITEN... = Faoidh Donan ui ten... = "Rests here Donan descendant of Ten..." Jackson saw VUUNON ITEDOVOB B. He gave no translation. Allen got VUONON(I)TEDOV. MacAlister got VUENON ITEDOVOR. Rhys visited the stone in 1891. He disagreed with the Earl's reading. He suggested VI (or UO)NON I?TEDOV—with a possibility that the final V might be followed by an I. Diack gave no reading of this inscription. It was too covered with lichen when he saw it. Padel reported it as VUUN(A or O)N(I)TEDOV(O or U) B-B. Katherine Stuart Forsyth reported extensively on this inscription in an unpublished PhD paper in 1996. She got VU(u/o)nON [?auoa/a(c/t)o?] TEDOV(u/o)(n/s)(i/e/r). Katherine Stuart Forsyth reported extensively on this inscription in an unpublished PhD paper in 1996.

**Vocabulary:** AS *Wyn(n) (wynna, wynnum, wynan?)* = Delight, pleasure; the best of its class, the pride of its kind; used as a name (B1285Aff). AS *Íde* = adj. easy, pleasant (B602A). Sc *Dover (dove)* = to slumber, to sleep; to be in a state between sleeping and waking (derived from ON *dofna* = to become dead (usually used for limbs—as when your foot "goes to sleep"—but it may have had a wider original meaning) (J II 91 AB; V101A). OI *Ulaid* = Ulstermen (an Ulsterman) (Ulster) (RIA U76).

**Conclusion:** I suggest VINONITE DOV U[L!]...? = *Winnanide* (*wynan-ide* = pleasant delight) *dove U(I)(aid)* = Winnanide sleeps—an U(I)(sterman?).

BIRSAY I - Rubbing of ogham inscription [Photo. Department of the Environment (Historic Scotland) No. A 2894-2, June 1971 (Crown Copyright)]

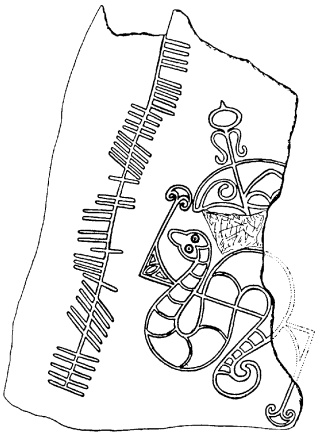


BIRSAY I - Ogham inscription [Padel 1972:56] (These after Forsyth.)

**Datab. No.:** 6003
**Site:** Birsay I, Orkney, Scotland
**Type:** Sepulchral
**Description:** This inscribed stone was apparently reused as a building stone in an 11th century structure dubbed "Thorfinn's Palace." Forsyth describes it as "A squarish flag-stone inscribed along the narrow face ('the only really flat surface' [Padel 1972: 56] with an Ogham inscription." Its dimensions are 24½" x 12" x 4½". Its condition is "fragmentary, 'much chipped' [Padel MS notes]. According to Padel the stone has been broken and the two pieces cemented together.'"

Forsyth goes on to express her belief that the inscription was “most likely carved when in situ in a wall, rather than erected specifically to bear an inscription.”

**Ogham:** ᚄᚇᚄᚄᚇᚇᚇᚇᚇᚇᚇᚇᚇᚇᚄᚄᚄ



The Brandsbutt Inscription

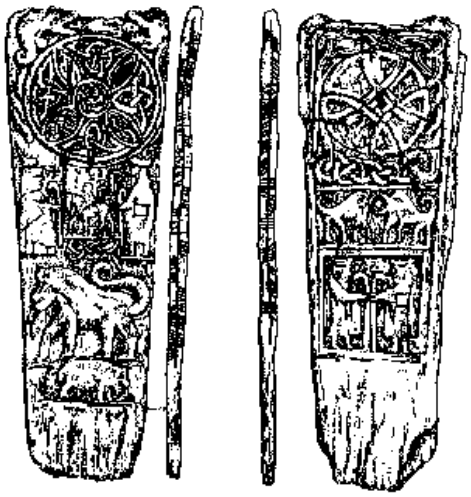
**Datab. No.:** 6004
**Site:** Brandsbutt, Aberdeenshire, Scotland
**Type:** Sepulchral
**Description:** I wholeheartedly agree with Forsyth's description of the stone as "a huge mass, of roughly triangular section, broken into several pieces. It is incised on its smoothest face with two Pictish symbols (crescent-and-V-rod, snake-and-Z-rod) and, parallel with the left edge, an ogham inscription." It is about 3'6" x 4'2" x3'. Its condition is fragmentary, but the extant carving is very well preserved. (Forsyth)

**Ogham:** ᚋᚋᚋᚋᚋ/////ᚋᚋᚋᚋᚋᚋ-ᚋᚋᚋᚋ-ᚋ/////ᚋᚋᚋᚋᚋᚋᚋᚋᚋᚋ-ᚋᚋᚋᚋ
**Transliteration:** IR AT ADDO ARENS
**Cognate Lang.:** Ire æt Ado árians
**Translation:** Grave in honor of Ada.

**Comment:** The inscription is quite clear. It has been suggested that a final letter may be missing, perhaps a letter of the H-group (since the space below the middle line is visible and definitely empty). Forsyth, Allen, Jackson, Padel and MacAlister all saw this as IRATADDOARENS— and MacAlister broke it down as IR-ATADD-OAR ENS— where OAR might be equivalent to the -VOR or -FOR of other inscriptions and ATADD-OAR might be identical with the ETETT-FOR of the St. Vigean's inscription. He suggested that IR might be *Ur*, a word which appears in the Pictish Kinglists. Although MacAlister comes to no conclusion as to the meaning of *Ur*, others have suggested that it means "successor of" or "son of" or "of the race or family of." Diack saw this as IRATADDO AREN S— = "*Irataddo*, son of *Arioo*, descendant of S—". He noted an apparent rule in Pictish Ogam inscriptions *that the initial consonant of a word is never doubled*.

**Vocabulary:** OI *Úir (úr)* = mould, earth, clay, soil; grave (RIA U69). OG *Ire* = ground, land, field, soil, earth [grave?] AS *Æt* (ON *at, að*) = prep. at, to, before, next, with, in, for, against (B20B; V25Bff). AS *Árian (árianne)* = to give honour, reverence, to honour (B50A). AS *Áre* = honour, honesty, favour, benefit (B49A). There is an AS name, *Eda* = rich, happy (Du&G114B). *Addie* is a pet form of the female name, *Adeline* or *Adelaide*—as also *Ada*. *Adelaide* was the french form of Old German *Adalheit* = nobility (found as early as the 6th century AD). *Adelaide* and another short form, *Adela*, came into England at the time of the Norman Conquest (being the name of one of William's daughters) (DuG3A & 4A).

**Conclusion:** I visited this stone in 1987 and took color photographs of it. It is my feeling from study of the stone and photographs of it that the inscription ends with the 'S.' It reads from bottom to top. With Diack I get IRATADDOARENS = *Ire æt Ado árians* = Grave in honor of Ada. Again we have a case where the name suggests a date for the inscription in the late 11th century.



The Bressay Inscription

**Datab. No.:** 6005
**Site:** Bressay, Shetland, Scotland
**Type:** Sepulchral
**Description:** This is a tall, very thin cross-slab, tapering to the bottom. It is sculpted on its broad faces with low relief decoration and incised up the length of both narrow faces with ogham letters. Its condition is given as “good, complete. Inscription intact, clear, and well preserved.” It is “c.1.15 m tall x c.0.4 – c.0.3 m wide x c.0.05 m thick.” (Forsyth)

**Ogham Line 1:**
᚛ᚁᚁᚁᚁ/////-/////ᚄᚄᚄᚄᚄᚁᚁᚁᚁ-ᚁᚁᚁᚁ᚜ᚄᚄᚄᚄᚄᚄᚁ-ᚁ-ᚁᚁᚁᚄᚄᚄ-ᚄᚄᚄᚁᚁ-ᚁᚁᚄᚁᚁ-ᚁᚁᚄᚄᚄᚄ-᚜ᚁᚁᚄᚁᚁᚁ-ᚁᚁᚁ/////-/////-᚜᚛ᚄᚄᚄᚄᚄ-ᚄᚄᚄᚄᚄ᚜

**Transliteration:** CRROSCC : NAHHTVVDDADDS : DATTRR : ANNA
**Cognate Lang.:** Crosg: Naddodds: dóttur: Anna.
**Translation:** Cross of Naddodd's daughter, Anna.

**Comment:** It is also called the Culbinsgarth Stone. Diack read CRROSCC:NAHHTVVDDACCS: DATTRR: ANNA = "Crosc, son of Nathadhach, daughter of Anna." Brash (with Graves) saw CRROSCC: NAHHTVVDDADDS: DATTRR: BNN = "The cross of the daughter of Natdod," and suggested that the Natdod referred to might be the Viking of that name (*Nathdod* or *Naddodd*) mentioned in the *Landnámabók* as one of the discoverers of Iceland, probably just after the middle of the 9th century. Ferguson saw this inscription as CRROSCC: NAHHTFFDDADDS: DATTRR: AN— (the terminal digits being uncertain). Rhys (as well as Nicholson and MacAlister) got CRROSCC: NAHHTVVDDADDS: DATTRR: ANN-. Padel and Forsyth read it as CRROSCC:NAHHTVVDDA*∂∂*S:DATTRR:ANNA.

**Vocabulary:** CROSC = Gaelic Crosg = Crasg s.f. = cross (Dw266B). NACHTUDAD (S = a Norse genitive ending) = a pers. name: *Nathdod.* DATTR = Old Norse *dóttir* (gen., dat., acc. *dóttur*) = daughter (V102A). ANNA = pers. name: Anna (Gk. & Lat. form of Hannah from the Hebrew = "Grace") (DG24B; ST57).

**Conclusion:** My study of photos obtained in 1987 result in my following Diack's reading, except that, like Padel, I read DD in place of the CC in NAHHTVVDDACCS. Those Ds are "curly" and are usually represented by the character *∂*. They appear to stand for a sound different from normal D, but still in the T/*∂*/D sound range. Applying the rules "H = C/CH/G/GH" and "double letters = single consonants" and "V and U might interchange" then we get: CROSC: NACHTUDADS: DATR: ANNA. . The inscription was found in Shetland, which had a mixed Celtic

and Norse population. As mentioned above, *Nathdod* is believed identical with *Naddodd*, one of the discoverers of Iceland (circa ±860). The language is Old Norse, but affected by Celtic (note the Celtic spelling of "Cross," which in ON would be "Kross"). If this is indeed the daughter of the historic *Naddodd*, then this inscription must be dated to the latter part of the 9th century or the early part of the 10th century AD.

**Ogham Line 2:**
ᚁᚂᚃᚄᚅᚆᚇᚈᚉᚊᚋᚌᚍᚎᚏᚐᚑᚒᚓᚔᚕᚖᚗᚘᚙᚚ᚛᚜᚝᚞᚟ᚠᚡᚢᚣᚤᚥᚦᚧᚨᚩᚪᚫᚬᚭᚮᚯᚰᚱᚲᚳᚴᚵᚶᚷᚸᚹᚺᚻᚼᚽᚾᚿᛀᛁᛂᛃᛄᛅᛆᛇᛈᛉᛊᛋᛌᛍᛎᛏᛐᛑᛒᛓᛔᛕᛖᛗᛘᛙᛚᛛᛜᛝᛞᛟᛠᛡᛢᛣᛤᛥᛦᛧᛨᛩᛪ᛫᛬᛭ᛮᛯᛰᛱᛲᛳᛴᛵᛶᛷᛸ᛹᛺᛻᛼᛽᛾᛿

**Transliteration:** BENNRRES : MEQQ DD[RR!]OiANN
**Cognate Lang.:** Bænar's : Mæcg Treówan.
**Translation:** Belonging to Benir, the son of Droan.

**Comment:** Diack saw this as BERRISESt: MEQQ DDRROANN (he reads the Ogam C as an ST) = "Berrisest son of Mac Droan." Rhys saw this as BENNISES: MEQQDDRROANN = Wife of Mac Droan. Nicholson differed from Rhys on the second line. He got: BERNISES MEQQDDRDOANN = "-in Bernises (Battle-headland) of Mac Droian." MacAlister got: BENNIS: ES: MEQQ DDR{?}OANN. Together with the previous line, MacAlister read the full inscription as: "The cross of Dro, son of (the woman) Bennis, daughter of (the woman) Nahhtvvddadd." Ferguson saw BENNR[P]ES: MEQQDDRROI ANN = bennres meqq ddroi ann. He pointed out that Nathdod (Naddodd) had a grandson, Benir. Dr. Graves and Brash both got BENNRRES:MEQQ DDRROiANN: (but Dr. Graves placed a colon after the Oi) = Benres of the sons of the Druid here." Padel read BENNISES: MEQQDDRROANN. Forsyth got BENiSESMEQQ DDROANN(-).

**Vocabulary:** ON *Bæn (bón*; pl. *bænar*; AS *bén*) = prayer, request, boon, entreaty (B83A; V91B). AS *Mæcg* = man, disciple, son (H224A). AS *Mæg (mag) -es* = a relative, a kinsman; male kinsman, parent, son, brother, cousin; can also be a female relation, a wife (B654A; H224B). AS *Maga* = a son, descendant, young man, man (H228A). AS *Treówan* (ON *Trúa*) = v. believe, trust; trow; to prove oneself true (n. faith, belief, trust) (B1014A; V642A).

**Conclusion:** From my study of the photo and Brash's drawing, I arrived at BENNRRES: MEQQ DDRROiANN = *Bænar's: Mæcg Treówan* = "Belonging to *Benir*, the son of *Droan*." As Ferguson points out, *Naddodd* is known to have had a grandson, *Benir*. Perhaps he was the child of *Anna* and *Droan*. Here again we have a Teutonic personal name with an ON possessive included in the same breath with what seems to be a Celtic form: MEQQ = *Mac* = son of. But is MEQQ Celtic? Note AS *Mæcg*, above. If this *Benir* is identical with *Naddod*'s grandson, then this inscription should be dated to some time in the 10th century AD. Thus, for the entire inscription on this stone I get: CRROSCC : NAHHTVVDDADDS : DATTRR: ANNA BENNRRES : MEQQ DD[RR!]OiANN = *Crosg: Naddodds: dóttur: Anna. Bænar's: Mæcg Treówan.* = Cross of Naddodd's daughter, Anna. Belonging to Benir, the son of Droan.

“Rodney Stone,” front and back Brodie Castle (from the Internet)

**Datab. No.:** 6006
**Site:** Brodie, Morayshire, Scotland
**Type:** Sepulchral
**Description:** A large class II symbol-inscribed cross-slab, sculptured in relief on both sides with ogham incised up three of the vertical edges. Of grey sandstone, it measures 1.8m (left) 1.905m (right); Width: 0.95m (top) 1.05m (bottom); Thickness: 0.1m. It is broken at the bottom with a portion missing. There is minor defacement due to modern re-use. Its face is badly weathered, but the carving on the reverse is well-preserved. The ogham is severely damaged and legible only in short snatches. (Forsyth)

**Ogham Line 1:**
**ᚋᚋᚋᚋᚇᚇᚇᚋᚇᚋ/////ᚋ/////ᚋᚋᚋᚋ

calendars of saints mention a St. ETHERNAN. This may be the anglicized form of EADHARNAN, but more likely from the stem ETR- seen in the Keiss Bay name ETRI.] In the present case the word is still further extended by the addition of the diminutive suffix -ON. Primitive **Idarnognos* would pass through *Idarnon*, *Edarnon* to modern **Eadharnan*." Padel got EDDARRNONN... (TT or UU)I... GNG... Padel regards MacAlister's reading as on the whole too fanciful to be worth considering seriously (but he quoted it anyhow for the sake of completeness). Incidentally, Padel reads this line last. Ferguson saw EDDARRNONNmeQ INgeNRRUNURBORH, equating it with *Eddarnonn meq ingen Rrunurborh* = *Eddarnon*, son of the daughter [lady] *Runurborh*. The Earl of Southesk saw EDDARRNON(N)(MAQ not seen, but supplied in a blank area by the Earl)QI... His readings of the remainder of the Brodie inscription were quite incomplete. Forsyth saw EDDARRNON, but had no confidence in anything she could see thereafter. The inscription had apparently deteriorated too greatly by the time she saw it.

**Vocabulary:** OI *Eidir* = *Eighre (oigre, eiger, eigir, oigir, eidre)* = heir, inheritor, successor, descendant (RIA E79). AS *Eald-cyð (eald-cyðð u)* = the old country (B227B). AS *For* (ON *fyrir, fyr, for, før*) = for, on account of, because of, with, by (before, in front of; at the head of; above; because of, for) (B301A; V180A). ON *Vitra* = wit, wisdom, sagacity (V713B).

**Conclusion:** I suggest that EDDARRNONILCIUDOVORRVITEOR could break down as follows EDAR-NON IL-CIUDO VOR VITEOR = *Eidir-noin eald-cyðð u for Vitra* = Eidir-noin (of the old country?) for Vitra.

**Ogham Line 2:** ᚋᚋᚋᚋᚋᚁᚋᚁᚁᚁ

**Conclusion:** Following Padel and Rhys, I suggest RAMIN[AO!]CCQODTOSO[Ng!]S, breaking it down as RAM INA OCC QOD TO SONgS = *Ram inna ok quod to sangs* = He fought in battle and also sang songs.

**Ogham Line 3:** ᚋᚁᚋᚋᚁᚁᚁᚁᚁᚁᚁᚁᚁᚁᚋᚋᚋ

**Datab. No.:** 6007
**Site:** Buckquoy, Orkney, Scotland
**Type:** Sepulchral
**Description:** A chalk spindle-whorl incised on one face with ogham arranged around a circular stem. ‘A fine-grained cream coloured sandy limestone, with quartz grains up fo 0.5mm in diameter’ [Collins 1977:222]. It is 36mm in diameter and 10mm thick. It is intact and in good condition. The inscription is well preserved. (Forsyth)

**Ogham:** ᚁᚁᚁᚁᚁᚂᚂᚁᚂᚁᚁᚁᚁᚂᚁᚁᚁᚁᚂᚁᚁᚁᚁᚁᚂᚁᚁᚁᚁᚂᚁᚁᚁᚁᚂ

The Burrian Stone (from the Internet)

**Datab. No.:** 6008
**Site:** Burrian, Orkney, Scotland
**Type:** Sepulchral
**Description:** A small, smooth rectangular slab, incised on one face with the outline of a cross and, parallel to the left margin, an ogham inscription. A clay slate, it measures 0.7m x 0.39-0.29m x 0.05m. The slab is complete, but its surface is severely laminated and much has been lost, including some of the carving. The ogham is, however, largely intact and clear. (Forsyth)

**Ogham:**
[᚜᚝᚜᚝᚜᚝

Alexander Gray), Pitcaple being the Post-town (Smith Gaz. 30; Findlay's Directory 59). Of course, CEROCCS could be a mis-spelling of CROSC = G Crosg = Crasg s.f. = cross (Dw266B).

**Conclusion:** I tend to follow Rhys's reading for the most part. Perhaps the full inscription was something like: [NAALL?] UORR ANN UURR ACTEa EVV CEa[RR!]OCCS = *[N?.al] for an ware ahta af cea[r]igs* = "[Njáll] for all eight inhabitants of Garioch." Perhaps seamen from the parish of Garioch in Aberdeen were wrecked and died on North Ronaldsay.

The Golspie Stone
(after Forsyth)

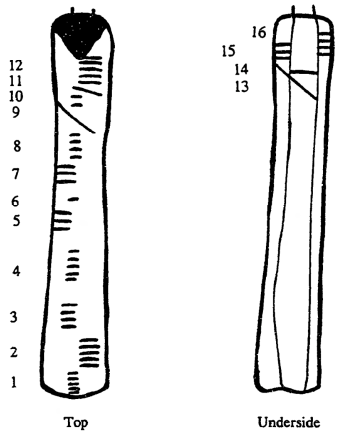
**Datab. No.:** 6009
**Site:** Golspie, Sutherlandshire, Scotland
**Type:** Sepulchral
**Description:** A large class II Pictish cross-slab sculptured partly in relief, partly incised. Of purple (Old Red) sandstone, 1.83 x 0.82 x 0.17m (to plinth) (Allen's measurements are 6' tall, 2'8" wide at base, tapering to 2' at the top, and 6" thick. The cross face has been defaced by a modern inscription and is badly weathered. The reverse is in generally very good condition. A small portion of the carved surface has laminated off around the beast symbol. The ogham is clear except for two short sections where the surface is very worn. The rectangular slab is carved on all four sides. The ogham occupies a roll-moulding on the right-hand edge of the reverse face. It starts at the bottom, reads up the long edge, turns the top corner and continues across the upper edge. (Forsyth)

**Ogham:**
**ᚇᚁᚁᚁᚄᚁᚁᚁᚄᚁᚁᚁ

Plate on page 300 of The Scholar's Primer: *Auraicept na n-éces*, edited by George Carter). Bannerman got: iADDLADDORROLL ANSACITIRISIN = "Idols which abounded in this land." Unfortunately, Bannerman read it upside down. The Earl of Southesk got: ALLDALLDQQAADD MQQNUUFFHRRIANN = Alldall Degad, son of Nur, (rests) here. In Brash's book it is given as HLLDMLLDQT(Ea or P)DDDMC(A?)CNQLFQ (ORS*NN?). No attempt at translation is given in Brash. The initial character, which appears to be an H in some photos, was determined by the Earl to be a barred A. John Rhys read ALLHH(or D)ALLORREDDM(A)QQNUUVVA(or H)RREIRNg = Alhalor ed Mac Nuvar Irf = "Alhalor (raised the cross) for Mac Nuvar Irf." Nicholson saw: ALLHHALLORREDDM'QQNUUVVARRECCH = Alhallr, áit Mc Nu Uabharaich = "Alhallr, hearth of Mc Nu the Bold (or Proud)." Diack made a careful inspection of the stone and arrived at: ALLHHALLORREDDMEQQNUUVVANNE ...NN = Allcallorredd, son of MacNu" - "Uvan son of E...nn." MacAlister got: ALLHALLORREDDARRNAI VALARRENN. Padel read it as follows: ALLHHALLORREDDM(A or E)QQN(UU or I)V(Vor AL)(H or A)(R or N)RE(RR or NN). Forsyth got ALLHALLORREDDMeQQNiaVarrc(e?)rr.

**Vocabulary:** ALL-HALLORR = a personal name. ALL = ON *Al* (AS *Eal-* ) = all, al-; perfectly, completely (prefix to a great many nouns and participles, answering to Latin *Omni*) (V11A) or ON *All* = very; an intensive prefix (V13B) plus HALLORR = ON *Hallr (pl. halir*) = a man, a hero—sometimes used of the dead inmates of Hel (V235B). EDD = *Ed* = ON *Ætt* = a family, a patrimony, property (V760A). MEQQ = OI *Mac* (gen. sg. *mec, meic, maicc*; AS *mæcg*) = son (a man) (B653B; RIA M5). NU = ON *Ny* (OI *nuá*, G *nuadh*) = the "new" of the moon (new, fresh, recent; a popular man's name pronounced rather like "Noah") (V459A). UVARR = *Ú-varr* (AS *un-wær*) = unwary, unaware, incautious, heedless, unprepared (B1135A; V666B). -ENN = *-en* = a termination of adjectives found in AS and ON (B250A; G312/163).

**Conclusion:** I suggest as one possibility ALLHALLORREDDMEQQNU-UVVARRENN = *All-hallr ed Mæcq Nuadha Ú-varr-en* = "All-hallr ('Perfect Hero') of the family of Mac Nuadha the Unwary." There is, however, another possibility that we must consider: The name Warren (surname and place name) stems from the French *Varenne*. It entered the British Isles with the Normans in 1066. We know that in the 13th century Reginald "of Waren" was in possession of certain lands in Scotland (see *The Surnames of Scotland* by Black). It is just possible that the family was present in Scotland at an earlier time as well. Thus, this *could* read: Allhallr of the family of Mac Nuadha of Warren. Gazeteers available to me reveal no such place name as Warren or Varenne in the British Isles, altho' Varenne in France is listed. According to the *Domesday Book*, William de Warrenne held Ditchling in lordship in Sussex shortly after 1066. If this is a reference to a family tied to Warrens it is obvious we have a mixture here: A Norse/Celt tied to a Norman family name. For this to be true, I suggest that this inscription can be no earlier than the 12th century (to give time for this kind of mixture to occur).




**Gurness**
**(After Forsyth)**

**Datab. No.:** 6010
**Site:** Gurness Broch, Orkney, Scotland
**Type:** Dedicatory
**Description:** This inscribed bone knife-handle was found in 1931 during the excavation of Gurness Broch, Aikerness, Orkney. Forsyth described the handle as 72mm long x 15mm wide x 12 mm thick. She reported that the inscription is “well-preserved and clear except for (a) small portion lost near (the) haft.” The iron blade was “88mm long x 18mm wide x 6mm thick (max). There are two lines to the inscription, the longer being on one side and the name of the owner, in the possessive, on the other.

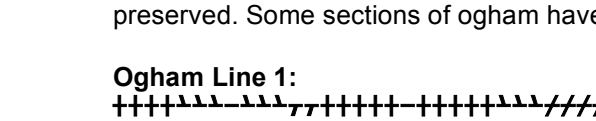
**Ogham:** ᚋᚋᚋᚋᚋᚏᚏᚏᚏᚏᚋᚋᚋᚋ᚜ᚋᚋᚋᚋᚋᚎᚎᚎᚎ᚜ᚎᚎᚎᚎᚋᚋᚋᚋᚋ᚛ᚋᚋ᚜ᚏᚏᚏᚏᚏ x ᚋᚋᚎᚎᚎᚎᚏᚏᚏᚏ
**Transliteration:** INE ICCE M[O]N MATS [or INEITTEMEN MATS]
**Cognate Lang.:** Inna eáca monni. Mat-s.
**Translation:** For the birthing of a man. Belonging to Mattie (Maud).
**Comment:** The line of Ogham above incorporates line 2. MacAlister got INEITTEMON...MATS... and restored it: INEITTEM-ON MATS[...EN?] = "Of Mats...his ineittem" (whatever that tool might have been). Anthony Jackson recorded it as INEICTSMQUU EaM?CDE. Padel read it as INEITTEM (which he considered quite clear)EN M(A or O)TS. One of four readings suggested by Forsyth was IN(e/c)IT( /a)TEM(o/om/ob/u/e/?)N( /.)MATS.

**Vocabulary:** ON *Inna* = to do, perform (V314A). AS *Inna* = the womb (B594B). AS *Eáca -an* = an addition, an eking, increase (B224A). *Eácnian* = to increase, to become pregnant, to bring forth (B224A). AS *Mann (Monn)* = man, human being of either sex (B668B). MATS = poss. of MAT = ON *Mattr* = might, strength (V419A).

**Conclusion:** I saw: INE I[CC!]E M[O]N MATS = Inna eáca monni. Mats. = For the birthing of a man. Belonging to Mattie (Maud). This knife apparently belonged to a midwife who used it to cut the cord at births. Note the pun between the ON *Inna* = to do, perform and the AS *Inna* = the womb. No doubt the ON *Inn* = within carried the same sense as AS *Inna*. The OG fem. name Mathild(is) (Mathilda) = mighty in battle (Du/G286Aff), was introduced into the British Isles in the 11th century by the wife of William the Conqueror. Note that the name MAT (in the possessive with S) is set off as important by a small "x." The normal spoken form of the name seems to have been Maud, but there could have been a form analagous to the known pet form for Matilda = Mattie. The appearance of this name suggests a date for this artifact of a time in the latter part of the 11th century. Here we have evidence that the Scots were already showing the demographics we see today: a Celtic people whose language has been strongly influenced by Anglo Saxon, Old Norse and even Norman French.

The Inchyra stone, St Maddoes, Perth and Kinross
Photo Credit: Royal Commission on the
Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland

**Datab. No.:** 6011
**Site:** Inchyra, Perthshire, Scotland
**Type:** Sepulchral
**Description:** A long, thin, tapering, rectangular slab incised on both broad faces, and three narrow faces with three pairs of Pictish symbols and three ogham inscriptions (arranged in a total of five lines). It is made of a very fine-grained local sandstone (mica-rich, containing both biotic and muscovite according to Dr. A.G. MacGregor, Geological Survey [quoted by Stevenson 1959:34]). It measures 5'3" long. Its breadth is: narrow end – 12", broad end – 1'5¾". It is 2½" – 3½" thick. Its narrow end is intact, but its broad end is broken, and a portion missing. Areas of the surface have flaked off, especially along the edges, taking with them parts of the carving, though some of the larger of these fragments have been recovered. The extant carving is generally well-preserved. Some sections of ogham have been lost, but only A (ii) is severely damaged. (Forsyth)

**Ogham Line 1:**

**Transliteration:** ETTLIETREN[AM!]IDDORS... UHTU(I)NgED
**Cognate Lang.:** Ætt leóde regna mið ors(org)..uht winnað.
**Translation:** The lands of the people are ruled with security (and) early morning labor.

**Comment:** This line runs from the middle of the left side of the stone down to the bottom. The last portion runs from the bottom of the right side up. Jackson transliterated this as ETTLIETRENOIDDORS...UHTUOAGED... His ogham, however, appears to read as follows: OOTTLOAOETREN(AA or Oi)QDDORSTHTUOAHDCD. Padel's ogham is probably closer to correct. The doubling of the initial vowel makes Jackson's transliteration highly suspect. Wainwright and Stevenson read this as their line 2: (E or Z)TTLIETRENO(I or Q)DDORS UHTUOA(G or Ng)ED. Padel reads this as ETTLIETRENOIDDORS ... UHTU(OA or I)GED ... Forsyth suggests ETTLIETRENOIDDORS ... (u—)HTu(o/i)( /a)GED ...

**Vocabulary:** ON EaTT = EaT = ET = *Ætt (átt*; AS *æhte)* = family; patrimony; property; possessions, lands, goods, riches, cattle (B13A; V760A). AS *Leód* (pl. *leóde*; ON *ljóð(i)*) = a man, a prince; in pl. men, people, people of a country (B629B; V394B). ON *Lið* = a host, a folk, a people; troops (V387A). ON *Liði* = follower; traveler; district (V387B). ON *Liðr* (gen. *liðar*; pl. *liðir*; AS *Ren* = *regn* (ON *regin*) = in compounds implies greatness, might (part of proper names) (the gods as makers and rulers of the universe) (B789Bff; V488Bff). *AS Mid = prep. with; by, through; at (B683Bff).* AS *Or-sorg* = free from care, without anxiety, secure, prosperous (B766B). AS *Uht* = the time just before daybreak; early morning (B1087B). AS *Winnan (winnað)* = to labour, toil, work (B1234A).

**Conclusion:** I tentatively suggest ETTLIETREN[AM!]IDDORS... UHTUINgED and break it up as follows: ETT LIET RENA MID ORS... UHT UINgED. I see an Ng where others have placed a G.

The use of an Ng for an N sound is unusual. It has been seen, however in manuscript ogham (notably the marginal "recipe for beer" which occurs in at least one copy of the Book of Ballymote and which appears to have been in a form of Scottish Gaelic). It is also seen in some alleged American inscriptions. It is probably a late—and rather restricted—convention. In the "Recipe" it apparently denoted a nasalization of the N-sound. Here it may reflect a similar nasalization—or simply the double N. It may have been used because of the lack of space for two normal Ns.

**Ogham Line 2:**
**᚜᚛᚜᚛᚜᚛

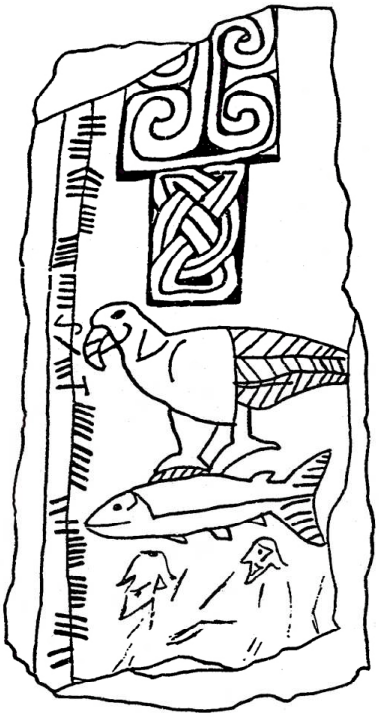
Ackergill - Photo by Royal Museum of Scotland
Department of Archaeology

**Datab. No.:** 6012
**Site:** Ackergill, Caithness, Scotland
**Type:** Sepulchral
**Description:** A slab of Caithness slate, incised on one side with the remains of a pair of Pictish symbols and an ogham inscription. The slate is grey. The stone measures 1.20m tall x .60m wide x 0.08m thick. The various fragments of this slab have been cemented back together, but the surface of the upper part is missing, taking part of a symbol and perhaps part of the ogham with it. The remaining carving is clear and well-preserved. (Forsyth)

**Ogham:** ᚾᚾᚾᚾᚾᚼᚼᚼᚼᚼᚿᚿᚿᚿᚿᚼᚼᚼᚼᚼᚾᚾᚾᚾᚾᚼᚼᚼᚼᚼ

**Vocabulary:** Old Gælic *Neachd* = Tribe, Family; Pledge (Dw686B). AS *Eador (edor, eder)* = a hedge, a fence, a place inclosed by a hedge, a fold; a dwelling, a house (enclosure) (B225B).

**Conclusion:** I also see NEHTETRI and, like Diack, break it down as NEHT ETRI = *Neachd edor-i* = "Tribal Enclosure" (where the enclosure is perhaps a cemetery area or, if translated as "house," the sense could be: "mausoleum"). The 'i' ending on *edor* may indicate a genitive.



**Latheron**
**(After Forsyth)**

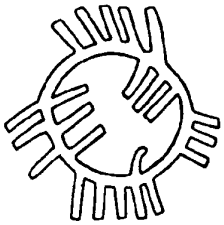
**Datab. No.:** 6013
**Site:** Latheron, Sutherlandshire, Scotland
**Type:** Sepulchral
**Description:** A cross-slab of local stone carved on one face with, one above the other, the ower part of a cross in relief, an incised bird and fish, and two incised horsemen. To the left is an incised ogham inscription. It is made of Caithness sandstone and measures 3’ x 1’5” x 4”. Its left edge is intact, all others fractured. Portions of unknown length have been lost from the top and bottom. The carving is worn, but generally clear. (Forsyth)

**Ogham:** ᚇᚑᚅᚅᚑᚌᚑᚄᚑᚋᚑᚋᚑᚄᚑᚅᚑᚌᚑᚅᚑᚌᚑᚅᚑᚌ

part of the inscription is missing. ON is probably as good a guess as OR—and so is simple R. Forsyth got DUnNODNNATMAQQNET(u). Forsyth's graphic shows a possible down-stroke below the first D indicating there may be a missing first word.

**Vocabulary:** AS *Dún (dúna, dúne)* = a mountain, a hill; a dune (mound); same meanings in Gaelic plus: fortress, castle; a fortified home or hill (B218B; Dw373B). G & OI *Od* = *ud, ut*. OI *udnacht* = a fence, a palisade —particularly one which marks an inviolable sanctuary. AS *Óðen (Wóden*; ON *Odin*) = one of the Teutonic deities (the word is found in place names) (B769A; B1261A). AS *Mæg* = relative, kinsman (male or female) (B654AB). Old Gælic *Neachd* = Tribe, Family; Pledge (Dw686B). OI *Nechtan (Neachtan)* = this is a female name in Irish legend, but note that *Nehhton* was the name of several Pictish kings; it is said to be cognate with "Neptune." (GPN144). The name *Neachtan* is probably composed of the above *Neachd* = tribe, family plus OG *On* = noble, excellent, good (Dw709B). ON *Nautr* = a mate, fellow; a person from whom a gift is received; a gift given by someone (V447A). So, *Oden-naut* = Gift of Odin. ON Óðinn (AS *Wodan*) = *Oðin* (the father of gods and men) (V470B).

**Conclusion:** I feel it could break down as: DUN ODNAT MAQQ NAHHTTO[N]. This *could* = *Dún Oðen-naut mæg Nehhton* = (Grave) mound of *Oðen-naut*, kinsman of *Neachtan* (where *Oðen-naut* is a proper name meaning "A gift from Odin" and *Neachtan* a proper name meaning "Of a Noble Family"). Here we see a mixture of Teutonic and Celtic name-forms. I must, however, point out another possibility: *Dún udnacht macc Nehhton* = Household (fenced) sanctuary (mausoleum?) of the Sons of *Neachtan*. Personally, I prefer the first version.



**Logie Elphinstone Inscription**
**Photo by Author**

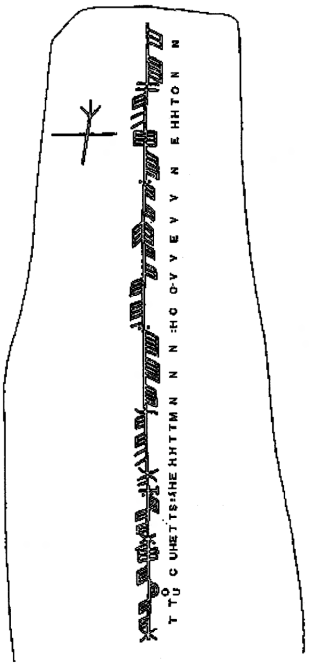
**Datab. No.:** 6014
**Site:** Logie Elphinstone, Aberdeenshire, Scotland
**Type:** Sepulchral
**Description:** A painted pillar incised on one face with a pair of Pictish symbols, traces of a third, and ogham letters cut on a circular stem. The stone is of blue granite which may have been water-worn before carving. It measures 1.37 x 0.76 x 0.45 m. Its condition is good. The carving is intact and well-preserved. (Forsyth)

**Ogham:** ᚇᚐᚃᚇᚑᚉᚑᚅᚑᚃᚑᚇᚑᚇᚑᚇ

which he held to be the adjectival formation in the nominative case on the stem *Calti-*. The ending *-bho* can be seen on the Newton Stone, according to Diack (*Cingono-vo*). He said that it meant "descended from *Caltis* (or 'The *Caltian*')." The Earl of Southesk read ATHAT BHOTO. Rhys read CALT HADBHO (or CABATHADBHO) (no translation given). Moore saw OBHEN? PETHECH. Ferguson got TOGTUCH. Nicholson saw OVOBHVAHTA. E.C.M. got CALTCAHO or CABATCAHO. Diack got CALTIBHO. MacAlister felt that this inscription was interesting as "being perhaps an example of the magical use of Ogham, but it has no assignable meaning." Padel commented that the inscription was quite clear and gave a number of possible readings. His preferred reading was DDALTQ (or QUDDALT since he elsewhere correctly pointed out that scholastic ogham tends not to use a double consonant in an initial position). Forsyth commented at length on this inscription and discussed Padel's findings (and listed others'), but gave no reading of her own.

**Vocabulary:** *AS Cwæl (cwelan)* = died (B176A). AS *Cwalu* = a quelling with weapons; torment, a violent death (B176A). AS *Cwelan* = to die (be slain, killed) (B177A). AS *Cwellan (ic cwelle; ∂u cwelest, cwelst; he cweleð, cwælð)* = to kill, slay (B177A). AS *Heaðu (heaðo)* = war (occuring only in compounds; as *höð* and as *haðu* found in some Teutonic proper names) (B523B). AS *Be* = at, in, on, near to, to; of, from, about (B69A).

**Conclusion:** Working from my own photos (made in 1987) and MacAlister's drawing, I get (like Rhys): CALTHATBHO = CALT HATBHO = AS *Cwælð Haðu-be* = "Slain in war."



**(Allen/Anderson, 1903)**
**(After CISP Database Website.)**

**Datab. No.:** 6015
**Site:** Lunnasting, Shetland, Scotland
**Type:** Sepulchral
**Description:** It has been described as a flat stone shaped somewhat like a coffin lid, 3 feet 8.5 inches long, 13 inches wide, and 1.5 inches thick. Forsyth was a bit more accurate. It

measures 1120mm long x 200-330mm wide x 40 mm thick. The material is sandstone. Its condition is good. The stone appears intact and only a very small portion of the lettering is lost. The Ogham is clear. (Forsyth)

**Ogham:**

**Transliteration:** EaTTUiCUDEaTTV: VEaHHTTANNN: HTTVVEVV: NEHHTONN
**Cognate Lang.:** Æt Wíga deád-æf: feohtan 'n: heaðu-æf: Nechtan.
**Translation:** For a warrior who died fighting, Neachtan [Neachd-on].

**Comment:** This stone was found at Lunnasting on the mainland of Shetland. According to Ferguson, it is clearly cut on a smooth flag which "retains the traces of every character." The characters are strangely cut. The characters are of the "tied" or "bound" class, reading upwards. Many seem to be box-like in design and others are the usual simple strokes. It is unclear whether the "box-like" characters are simply stroked characters with a connecting line at the top (or bottom as the case may be) or whether each "box" represents a stroke. If the latter, a simply stroked T would become a D, etc, giving EaDDUiTOHEaDDL: LEaHHDDASSS: HTTL: LULL: SUHHDASS. The Earl of Southesk read this (possibly top to bottom) in 1886 as XTTUICUHAATTS: AHAAHHTTMNNN: HCCFFEFF: NEDT ONN = "(Body) of Duichad, of Manan-land, son of Fife(?), is lodged(?) here." Ferguson saw TTUICUHEATTS: SEAHHTTANNN: HCCFFEFF: NEHHTONN. Bannerman read it backwards and got: NNOTHHEN: FFEFFCCH: NNNATHOHIa: STTOHUCUiTX = *Nothenad fef Chinnatho h-iadnasto hucuit* = "The widow of Kenneth made [these as] testimonials on her part." Rhys read P?TTO(or U)CUHETTS: AHEHHTTMNNN: HCCVVEVV: NEHHTONN = King *Nechtan* of the kin of *Ahehhtmnnn*. Padel regarded the reading as quite definite, and got ETTECUHETTS: AHEHHTANNN: HCCVVEVV: NEHHTONS. Forsyth got xTTuCUH)(TTS : AH)(HHTTSNNN : HCCVVEVV : NEHHTONs+.

**Vocabulary:**
ON *At (að*; AS *Æt)* = prep. to, before, next, with, in, for, against (B20B; V25B). ON *Víg* (AS *Wig*) = fight, battle, war, conflict (B1219B; V715A). ON *Vega* (AS *Wígan*) = to fight, slay, slaughter (B1220A; V688B). *AS Wíga = one who fights, a warrior, a hero; a noble man (B1220A).* ON *Dauði* (AS *deáð*) = n. death (B197A; V97A). ON *Dauðr* (AS *deád*) = adj. dead (B196A; V97A). ON *Af* (AS *æf*) = prep. off, of, from, out of, beyond (B9A). AS *Feohtan* = to fight, contend, make war, combat, struggle (B277A). OI *Fecht* (G *feach*) = a course, journey, expedition; a raid or hosting; time, occasion (Dw419B; RIA F54). G *Feachd* -an (Early Irish *fecht*) = army, host, forces, levy; war (Dw419B; McB167). G *'n* = cont. for art. The (Dw683A). G *'n* = cont. for An = in (Dw683A). AS *Heaðu (höð-, haðu)* = war (B523B). NEHHTONN = *Nechton*—could be OG and OI *Neachd* = Tribe, family (Dw686B) + OG *On* = Noble, good, excellent (Dw709B). It could also be the pers. name: *Nechtan (Neachtan)* (one source suggested it is cognate with Neptune and meant "Descendant of the Waters" [GPN145]). This name has been borne by both males and females. One genealogical site on the Web maintains that Neachtan (Nechtan) is the original source for the Naughton in the surname, MacNaughton. (The AS cognate of *Neachd* would be *Mægð* = family, stock, race, progenies; relatives, kindred; descendants of a common ancestor; a generation; a tribe, a subdivision of a people (B657B). Note AS *Mæg* = a relative, a kinsman (B654A).

**Conclusion:** I see EaTTUiCUDEaTTV: VEaHHTTANNN: HTTVVEVV: NEHHTONN = EaT UiCU DEaTV: VEaChTAN N: HTVEV: NEChTON = *Æt Wíga deád-æf: feohtan 'n: heaðu-æf: Nechtan* = For a warrior who died fighting the war, Neachtan. I suggest that since the name *Neachtan* is borne by both males and females it probably has a neutral meaning. I suggest further that *Neachtan* (*neachd-on*) means "(descendant) of a noble family." <u>We can derive possible sound-shift rules here: AS m = OI n; AS æ or eo (œ?) = OI ea; AS g = OI ch; AS ch = OI h. AS *ð* = OI d or t</u>.

**Newton Stone (Uncial). Photos by Author.**
**(Computer-enhanced)**

**Datab. No.:** 6016
**Site:** Newton, Aberdeenshire, Scotland
**Type:** Sepulchral
**Description:** The Earl of Southesk reported it as "an unhewn dark grey boulder of gneiss bearing on and near its left angle two lines of Oghams and on its face an inscription in debased Greek [actually Irish uncial] characters." It stands in a lawn with another stone (uninscribed) beside Newton House, a few miles from Inverurie, in Aberdeenshire. It was visited and extensively photographed by the author in 1987. Forsyth described it as follows: An irregular, ridged pillar incised at the top of one face with six lines of (?pseudo-)alphabetic characters, and down the left-hand edge with an ogham inscription. It is a grey, gneissose granite measuring c.2.09 x 0.70 x 0.40 m [ECMS] = c.2.03 x 0.84 x 0.53 m. It conditions is complete. Its carving is very well preserved. (Forsyth)

**Uncial Lines 1-3:** ⲉⲧⲧⲉ ⲉⲩⲁⲅⲁⲓⲛⲛⲓⲁⲥ ⲥⲓⲅⲟⲛⲟⲩⲟⲥⲟ
**[One character above is incorrect; computer font is corrupt: the ⲟ.]**
**Transliteration:** ETTE EUAGAINNIAS CIGONOVOCOI
**Cognate Lang.:** Æt-eówigan-as ci go Novo-coi.
**Translation:** To show mourning for Novus [Nuadha] the Protector.

**Comment:** This stone has also been called the Shevack Stone. Scholars usually say that these characters are debased Roman or Græco-Roman (even Byzantine) letters in an uncial form following the Celtic type. Francis Diack read it: ETTE EVAGAINNIAS CIGONOVOCOI. He saw *Ette* as a nom. sg. m. prop. name of the *e- (i-)* declension. He noted place names in Argyle beginning with *éit-* or *et* as well as the woman's name, *Ete*, in the Book of the Deer. He saw *Evagainnias* as the genitive of a woman's name, comparing it to names like *Evacattos* and *Evolenggi*. He saw *Cigonovo* as a form of *Cingonovo*, another name. The stem, *cing*, is prolific in old Celtic personal names. He saw *Cingono-vo* as the nom. sg. m. of a compound, the second element, *vo*, being for an older *vos* = "descendant of," seen in the genitive in an Ogam in Wales: *Cunacenni-vi*. The last word, *coi*, he saw as an adv. meaning "here" or "here lies." So, he got: "*Ette*, son of *Evagainnias*, Descendant of *Cingo*, (lies) here." Nicholson saw ÆTTÆ ÆCNUNVAUR C(um)VONOBOTO = *àite 'lc Nun Vaur cum bono voto* = "Hearthside of Mac Nun Vor". Rys saw ÆTTŒ ŒCNVNVAVR... and got *Kin Ecnun Vaur...* The Earl of Southesk saw ETTE FURYRIAGS GYOLOUOCŒ or possibly AITTAI FURUR-INGIN SUOLOUOSE and got: *Eté*, *Forar*'s daughter, of the race of the sons of *Uos*. Samuel Ferguson saw the word at the

beginning as FTTF —as a monogram; the second word as *Furtrinn Rex*; and the third, *Gito ho loco* with a sign of contraction over the *ho*. He regarded the language as Latin. His implied translation would thus be: "FTTF, King of *Fortren* (Pictland).... William Bannerman saw ETTE CUNANMAIN MAOLOUOEG. He read this as Old Gælic *Ito ad animam Moloci* = "Draw near to the soul of Moluag." This refers to St. Moluag who built a church on an island in the Firth of Lorn (mentioned, according to Bannerman, in the next portion of the inscription). Bannerman pointed out that this form of 'E' and 'C' were strikingly similar. L.A. Waddell saw this as KaZZI KaST.SiLUYRi GYaOLOWONIE = "This cross *Qas* of the *Silur* (sub-clan) of the *Khilani*..." He read the characters as Phoenician script and the language as Semitic, being bi-lingual with the Ogam which was in Celtic. Forsyth discussed the uncial inscriptions on this stone and quoted Brash, Ferguson, Diack, and Browne. She gave no reading of her own for the uncial.

**Vocabulary:** AS *Æt* = prep. To, unto, before, next (B20B). *Æt-eówian (-eówigan)* = to show, manifest, display, declare; to appear (B21A). *Æt-éwung* = f. a showing, manifesting, epiphany (B21A). AS *-As* (ON *-s*) = genitive termination on Masc. or Neut. nouns (problem here is that æt-éwung is Fem.) (M59). OG *Ci* = lamentation; to lament, wail, weep (mourn) (Dw191B). G *Go* = *gu* = to, toward; that, to the end that (Dw5309AB). G *Nuadh* (L *novus; novio-*; ON *nyr*; AS *níwe* from IE **newo-*) = new, fresh, recent, modern, unused (young, novel) (Bu957; C397B; Dw700B). G *Coimh* = OG *Comh* = to preserve, keep (protect, guard) (Dw236A). OG *Cu* = champion, hero (Dw283B).

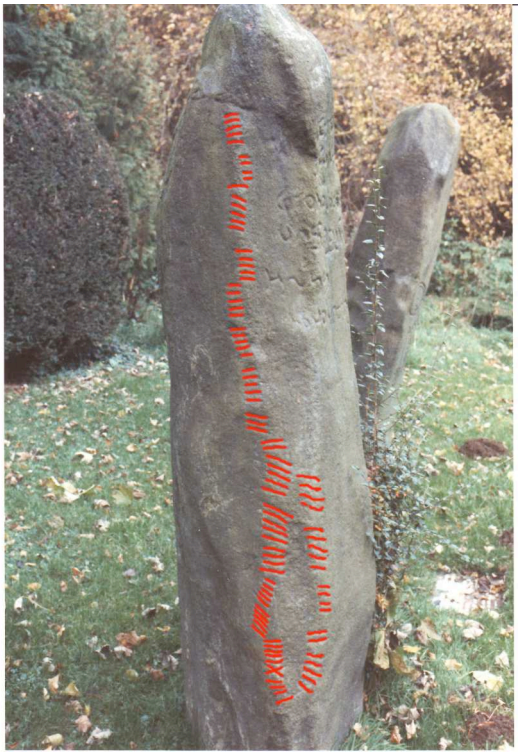
**Conclusion:** I agree that the first word is composed of a vowel-consonant-consonant-vowel combination, most probably ETTE. I suggest: ETTE EUAGAINNIAS CIGONOVOCO = *Æt-eówigan-as Ci go Novo-coi* = "To show mourning for *Novus* the Protector." In my opinion, *Novus* is the Latin form of the Celtic name, *Nuadha* (pronounced, *No-a* or *Noah*). O'Rahilly suggested that *Nuadha* means "cloud-maker," and others have their own derivations, but I believe that my derivation is correct.

**Uncial Lines 4-6:** UΓ卐ΓΞLJJJ M⁓ϟϟJ ℵOUJOTΓUTΓ
**[2 characters above are incorrect; font is corrupt: the M and the O]**
**Transliteration:** UR (Filfot) RELISI MAQQI NOVIOGRUTR
**Cognate Lang.:** Ùir *Reil-ise mæg-i Nuadha-grytr
**ation:** Grave of *Reil-ise ["she is a star"], wife [or "female relation"] of Nuadha Gryt(r) ["Novus the Great"]

**Comment:** Diack saw this as URAELISI MAQQI NOVIOGRUTA = "The grave of Elisios, son of New Grus." Ferguson's reading (as given by Forsyth) is so off the mark it doesn't bear repeating.

**Vocabulary:** G *Ùir* = mound, grave; mould, dust, earth, soil (Dw994A). G *Reil* = gen. sg. of *reul* (Dw753B). G *Reul* = star (Dw755B). G *Reulag* = little star; starry, astral. (Dw755B) G *ise* = pers. pn. emphatic of *i*: she, herself (Dw558A). AS *Mæcg* = man, disciple, son (H224A). AS *Mæg (mag) -es* = a relative, a kinsman; male kinsman, parent, son, brother, cousin; can also be a female relation, a wife (B654A; H224B). AS *Maga* = a son, descendant, young man, man (H228A). G *Nuadh* (L *novus; novio-*; ON *nyr*; AS *níwe* from IE **newo-*) = new, fresh, recent, modern, unused (young, novel) (Bu957; C397B; Dw700B). AS *Greát* (mod. Scott. *grit, gryt, gret*) = great, large, big, thick, gross, coarse, swelled, in a state of pregnancy (B487B; J455A). Lett. *Gruta* (IE **gwru*) = heavy (used in sense "heavy with child") (Buck284B; W/P 1.684ff).

**Conclusion:** I get: UR (Filfot) RELISI MAQQI NOVIOGRUTR = *Ùir *Reil-ise mæg-i Nuadha-grytr* = Grave of **Reil-ise* ["she is a star"], wife [or "female relation"] of Nuadha-Gryt(r) ["Novus the Great"]. I am of the opinion that the "filfot" or "swastika" is here a non-alphabetic symbol intended to set off an important personal name. *Novus* (Celtic *Nuadh*, AS *Niwe*) is a not unusual man's name. *Grutr* would seem to be a form of "great" (large, gross, great) similar in form to the Lett. *gruta* (heavy) (but which might be carrying a pronunciation approaching the modern Scottish *gryt*) which would seem to go back to the same IE root **gwru*.

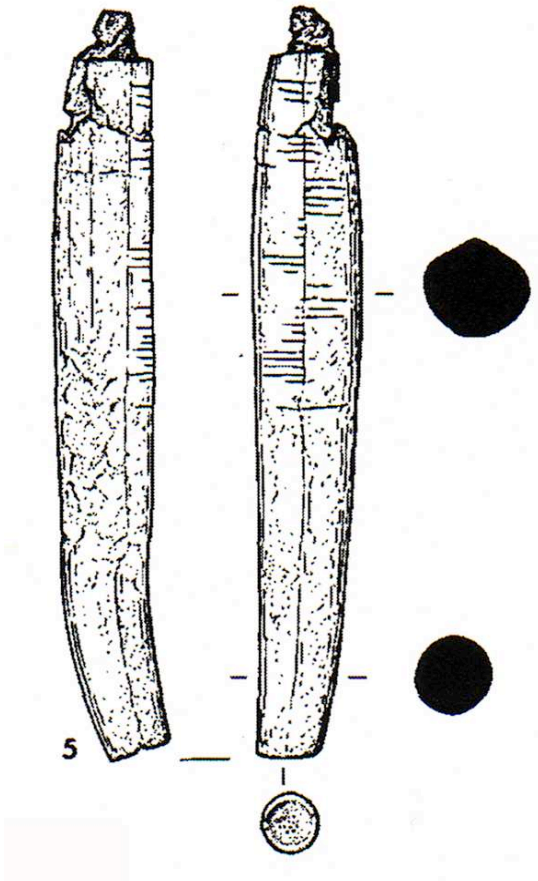


**Newton Stone (Ogham). Photo by Author (computer-enhanced)**

**Ogham Lines 7-8:**
**ᚇᚇᚇᚁᚄᚄᚄᚁᚄᚇᚇᚇᚇᚁᚄᚄᚄᚄᚁᚄᚄᚄᚄᚁᚄᚄᚄᚄᚁᚄᚄᚄᚇᚇᚁᚄᚄᚄᚄᚁᚄᚄᚄᚄ

novel) (Bu957; C397B; Dw700B). F *Reine* = Queen (Harr719Bff). F *Regn* = reign; kingdom (Harr718B) (IE **reg-* Walde P 2.362ff). AS *Reccend* = a ruler, governor (applied to the Deity; also used for earthly rulers) (B788B). ON *Regin* = the Gods (rulers—in the sense of Rulers of the universe); used with proper names to mean "holy" and "mighty;" the Saxon name *Reyn-olds* and others which came from this word show an AS pronunciation of *Reyn* or *Ren* (V488B). AS *Eua* = Eve, Eva (from the Latin) (B261B). AS *Róse* (ON *rós*) = a rose (B802B; V503A). OI *Éva, Éba, Éabha* = in Irish tradition was one of the wives of Nemed. legendary invader of Ireland (GPN90). OI *Rói*s, *Róise, Rós* = appears to derive from OGerm *hros* (horse) though at an early period it was identified with the flower of that name. It was brought into England by the Normans and reached Ireland much later.

**Conclusion:** After studying photos I took of the stone in 1987, I suggest IDDAI QNN NVORRENI Ea[UA] [R!]OSIZ = *Ætt cwén Novo [Nuadha] Regin Eva-róse is* = [This] is for the wife of mighty Nuadha, Eva-Rosa. The names are Celtic, but the use of "Rose" suggests an 11th century or later date for this inscription because that name was brought to the British isles by the Normans in 1066. It is important to note that Nuadha (Novo = Novus) is also mentioned in the uncial inscription on the same stone, wherein his wife is called by a different name. He appears to have had two wives. The memorial is for all three, perhaps in the following order: Eva-Rosa (perhaps the first wife —and the first to die), followed by Nuadha and Reil-ise (probably in that order).

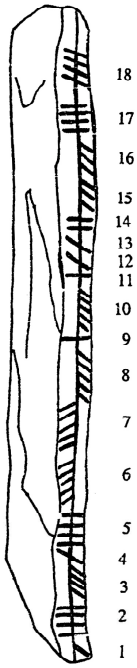



**Whale-bone Knife Handle, Bac Mhic Connain**
**(Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, 1994)**

**Datab. No.:** 6017
**Site:** Bac Mhic Connain, North Uist, Scotland
**Type:** Dedicatory

**Description:** This Ogham-inscribed whale-bone knife-handle was discovered in 1919 during the excavation of a wheelhouse on the tidal islet of Vallay, North Uist, Outer Hebrides. According to the *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* (14 December 1931, p. 56), it "measures 4 and 5/16 inches in length and ⅝ inch at the greatest diameter, tapering slightly in a gentle curve at the butt end. In the extremity of this end is a conical hollow; the opposite end is imperfect and retains the tang of an iron blade. The inner side of the handle is ridged and bears an Ogham inscription, which has been read as MAQUNM?DENCO(or U)T." In an article by Ywonne Hallen in the *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* (124, 1994, p.219-221) it is said that "the inscription lacks a stem line and has short vowel strokes." It was added that "two other antler knife handles with similar ogam inscriptions, lacking a stem line with short vowel strokes, are known (Holder 1990, 56), one from Gurness (Hedges 1987, 83, fig. 2.22 & 2.44, no 252) and one from Norfolk (Clarke 1952)." Forsyth pointed out that "all of the blade missing except a rusted tang, bone well preserved, carving clear. The bone has been planed to produce a slight ridge for one line of ogham lettering. There is no other decoration…"

**Ogham Line:** ᚃᚇᚇᚇᚇᚃᚃᚇᚇᚃᚃᚃᚃᚃᚇᚇᚇᚇᚃᚃᚃᚃᚃᚇᚇᚇᚇᚃᚃᚃᚃᚃᚇᚇ




**St. Ninians**
**(after Forsyth)**

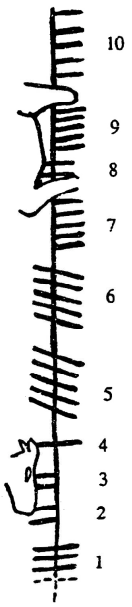
**Datab. No.:** 6018
**Site:** Parish of Dunrossness, St. Ninian's, Shetland, Scotland
**Type:** Sepulchral
**Description:** Forsyth reported: "Following a careful search in July 1876 this ogham-inscribed slab was found by the Shetland antiquarian Gilbert Goudie 'imbedded in the sand'. He presented it to the National Antiquities Museum in 1877 (NMS Cat. No. IB112)." It was reportedly found on the shore of St. Ninian's, a small islet in the Shetlands. She described it as "A carefully prepared, thin, oblong slab, undecorated except for an ogham inscription carved up the entire length of one narrow edge." Made of lightly colored sandstone, it measures 760mm long x 265mm broad x 45mm thick. The two broad faces are severely laminated and large chunks of the surface have been lost. Both the upper and lower edges are fractured. A portion of unspecified length is missing from the beginning of th edge, but the inscription is otherwise well-preserved. (Forsyth)

**Ogham Line:** ᚁᚂᚃᚄᚅᚆᚇᚈᚉᚊᚋᚌᚍᚎᚏᚐᚑᚒᚓᚔᚕᚖᚗᚘᚙᚚ᚛᚜ᚁᚂᚃᚄᚅᚆᚇᚈᚉᚊᚋᚌᚍᚎᚏᚐᚑᚒᚓᚔᚕᚖᚗᚘᚙᚚ᚛᚜ᚁᚂᚃᚄᚅᚆᚇᚈᚉᚊᚋᚌᚍᚎᚏᚐᚑᚒᚓᚔᚕᚖᚗᚘᚙᚚ᚛᚜
**Transliteration:** BESMEQQNANAMMOVVEZ
**Cognate Lang.:** Besih mæcg ná-námo wæs.
**Translation:** Behold! An un-named man was he!

**Comment:** Rhys saw B (or L or V or S or N) ESMEQQNANAMM (or G) OVVEZ (Rhys transcribed this Z as an F). Goudie, Ferguson and Brash got ...ESMEQQNA NAMMOFFEST while the Earl of Southesk got ...ESMEQQNANAGOFFEST. Nicholson arrived at LESMEQQ NANAMMOVVEST. MacAlister got LESMEQQNANAMMOVVEZ. Padel and I both got BESMEQQNANAMMOVVE Z. Forsyth got -b']ESMEQQNANNAMMOVVESr.

**Vocabulary:** AS *Be-sih* = Look! Behold! (B91A). AS *Mæcg* = man, disciple, son (H224A). AS *Ná, nó* = No, not (B705B). AS *Náma* (ON *nafn*; OSax *namo*) = m. a name (B708B). AS *Wæs* = 3rd per. sg. of *wæsan* (verb "to be) = (he/she/it) was (B1209B).

**Conclusion:** I break it down as BES MEQQ NA NAMMO VVEZ. = *Besih mæcg ná-námo wæs* = Behold! An un-named man was he!




**Scoonie**
**(after Forsyth)**

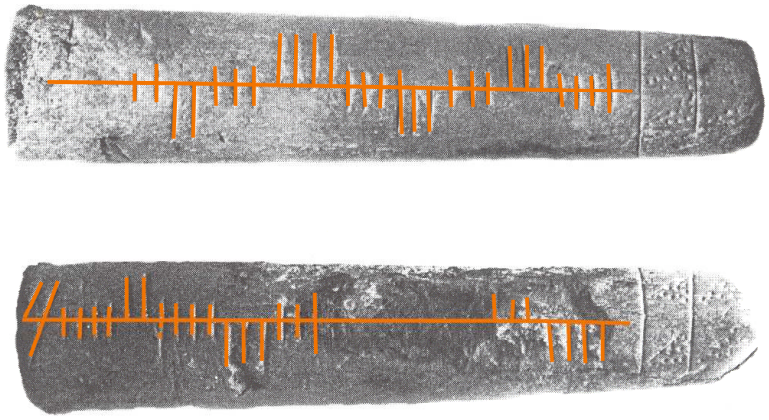
**Datab. No.:** 6019
**Site:** Scoonie, Fifeshire, Scotland
**Type:** Sepulchral
**Description:** This Class II cross-slab once bore on its front a sculptured cross (now badly worn away). On the back is a hunting scene with horsemen, stag and dogs, and the bear symbol. The ogham along the right edge consists of only the one word. According to Forsyth, the stone measures 1.06m x 0.7m x 0.1m thick. Portions are missing from the top and probably also from the bottom. … The ogham inscription is clear and possibly complete. (Forsyth)

**Ogham Line:** [++++]᚜᚛᚜᚛᚜᚛

first letter which he believes to have been an E, but which he agrees could be an I. Study of the photo leads me to believe that Rhys' reading of the HT is incorrect. It is clearly DD. MacAlister conjectured that there had been more to the inscription that is now lost due to wear and breakage. Forsyth got EDDARRNONN.

**Vocabulary:**
OI *Eidir* = *Eighre (oigre, eiger, eigir, oigir, eidre)* = heir, inheritor, successor, descendant (RIA E79). OI *nán* = small, dwarfish (RIA N13).

**Conclusion:** In the photo I took in 1987, I see UDDARRNONN, with the probability that one or two strokes are missing from the first letter, giving us EDDARRNONN (or IDDARRNONN) as suspected by others. Also, in the photograph, the first two strokes of the first N appear to cross the center line and join at the top giving us O, which would make the other three strokes equal to V, thus EDDARRVONN. On the whole, however, I prefer EDDARRNONN since that group also appears on the Brodie Stone. It is possible that it could break it down as follows: EDD-ARR-N-ONN. The letter N is normally placed between the possessive pronoun, *Ar* = Our (Dw42B) and the following noun when that noun begins with a vowel. I contend, however, that since the convention seems to be that a new word starts with a single consonant while medial consonants within a word are doubled, it should break down as EDDAR-NONN (EDAR-NON). I suggest: EDDAR-NONN = EDAR-NON = *Eadhar-nan* = *Eidir-nan*, a personal name: "small heir." The same name may be seen in a slightly different form in the Fordoun inscription (#6023).



Weeting knife-handle, computer enhanced

**Datab. No.:** 6020
**Site:** Weeting, Norfolkshire, Scotland
**Type:** Dedicatory
**Description:** At this time I have been unable to locate descriptive material pertaining to this inscription. So far as I have been able to determine, Forsyth does not discuss it (unless she knows it under another name). Jackson mentions it, but does not appear to describe it.

**Ogham Line 1:** ᚋᚋᚋᚋᚏᚏᚏ᚜ᚏᚏᚏ᚛᚛᚛ᚋᚋᚋᚏᚏᚏᚏᚋᚋᚋ᚛᚛᚛ᚋᚋᚋ
**Transliteration:** EVVTUSUDU
**Cognate Lang.:** Af Tosti (?)
**Translation:** Belonging to Tostig (?)

**Comment:** This is on one side of a knife handle made from deer antler. Both sides are inscribed. Jackson transliterated this side as ULUCUVUTE, but his ogham shows VLVEVVTTE. Clarke got (U)LUCUVUTE. Padel got ULUCUVUTE in one direction (towards the blade) and EVUTUSUDU in the other. Athy stated that the knife bore two relatively short Ogam inscriptions, but since they did not comply with the formulæ of the

Irish stones (his particular study), he did not remark on them further (the second inscription is on the next page of this database). Forsyth apparently did not comment on this inscription.

**Vocabulary:**
ON Tosti (Tostig) = Scandinavian name which came to the British Isles; as an appelation, it means "frog" (V638A). ON *Af* (AS *æf*) = prep. off, of, from, out of, beyond (B9A).

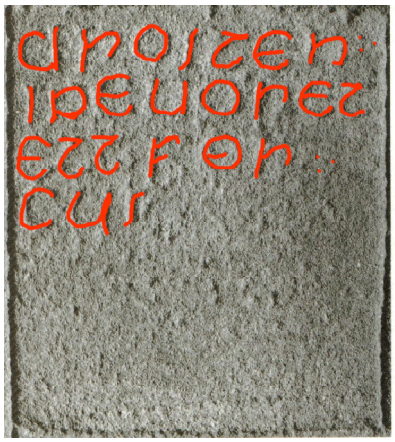
I got EVVTUSUDU reading away from the blade and ULUCUVVTE in the other direction. I give here a possible translation of the former. One problem with my reading is that one would expect the message to run towards the blade, not away from it.

**Ogham Line 2:** ᚋᚋᚁᚁᚁᚁᚄᚄᚄᚄᚁᚁᚁᚁᚁᚁᚋ[ᚋᚄᚄᚄ]ᚄᚄᚄᚄᚁᚁᚁᚁ
**Transliteration:** GEDEVIM(M?)(U)TOS
**Cognate Lang.:** Gedda af Imm-odh-s.
**Translation:** A sharp sting!

**Comment:** This is on the second side of a knife handle made from a deer antler. Jackson transliterated this as GEDEVEM...DOS, but his ogham reads GSDODVIMUTVV. Padel got GEDEV (I or E) M...DOS in one direction (towards the blade) and COL...M (I or E) LEG in the other direction.

**Vocabulary:**
ON *gaddr (gedda)* = a goad, a spike, a sting (V186B). ON *Af* (AS *æf*) = prep. off, of, from, out of, beyond (B9A). OI *imm* = used as an intensive prefix (very common in Early Modern Irish) (RIA I 107A). OG odh = point of a spear, sharp end of anything (Dw703A).

I got GEDEVIM(M?)(U)TOS = *Gedda af imm-odh-s* = A sharp sting! Literally: "A sting of extra-sharpness." It would appear that, at least in this area, *odh* seems to have been once pronounced with a harder consonant.




St. Vigean's Stone (after macdonnellofleinster.com; computer-enhanced)

**Datab. No.:** 6021
**Site:** St. Vigeans, Angusshire, Scotland
**Type:** Sepulchral
**Description:**

**Uncial Line 1:** ꝺrosten: ıpeuoret ettfœr: cus
**Transliteration:** DROSTEN IPE UORET ETT FŒRCUS
**Cognate Lang.:** Drosten, ipe Vörð et Fœrgus
**Translation:** Drosten, the son of Vörð and Fergus.

**Comment:** This also incorporates lines 2, 3, and 4. The letters are shaped differently in the inscription, but are merely a variant form of the uncial characters shown here. While this and other uncial inscriptions

included here are not in Ogham, we include them because it is clear from the Newton Stone that the carvers of the Ogham inscriptions in Scotland used Uncial as well. Thus, studying one, uncial or ogham, can elucidate the others.

Diack saw DROSTEN IPEUORET ETTFOR CUS and got: Drosten. *I(n) p(ac)e Uoret ett Forcus*. He says that *Drosten* is the diminutive of *Drost* (both names being well-known in Pictland). According to him, *Uoret* is a compound—perhas *Vor-ette* (the second part being the ETTE of the Newton Stone. He claims that FORCUS has no connection with *Fergus* in which the G is aspirated, but is *Forgus* (Irish Ogam *Vorgoso* [gen.] nom. **Vorgis*, later *Forggus, Forcus*. Diack placed the date in the 8th or 9th century AD (it must be later than the 7th, for the original v has become F in *Forcus*). MacAlister read this as DROSTEN IPEUOR ETETTFOR CUS = "A cross for Etett, nephew of Drost." He suggests that ETETTFOR might be another way of spelling the ITEDOVOR which he sees on the Auquhollie Stone. Rys saw this as DROSTEN-IPE UORET ETT FORCUS, where *Drosten* is the genitive of a man's name, *Drost*, depending on *ipe*, "which is placed after it, not before it, as one might expect had the legend been any kind of Celtic." He thinks that IPE might mean "boy" or "nephew," but hardly "son," as *Drost*, so far as we know, was only a man's name and paternity was not supposed to have been recognized in Pictish descent, but birth alone. He takes ETT to be Latin *et*, intended to be read for the native Pictish word for "and" (just as occurs in some Irish inscriptions where *et* is used in place of *ocus*) to be equated with the EDD on the Golspie Stone. Rhys suggests: "Drost's nephew, Uoret and Fergus." While *Forcus (Fergus)* is Goidelic Irish, he suggests that *Uoret* is probably native and matches the Pictish King *Wrad* who was reigning about 839-844. Forsyth does not discuss this stone, perhaps because no ogham was present.

**Vocabulary:**
Welsh *Ap (ab)* = son of (ET1A) (it is my opinion that IP or IPE might = *ip,* a form of the Welsh *Ap (ab)* = son of (E1A), a component of so many Welsh surnames (Ap Ross, etc) (see IP on the Greenloaning Stone). *Uoret* could be a form of ON *Vörð* = a woman under tutelage, a wife (V722B). George F. Black in *The Surnames of Scotland* discusses the male name, *Fergus (Feargus)*, and traces it to Old Irish. He states that the name is cognate with Cymric *Gwr-gwst*, Old Breton *Uuorgost*, and Pictish *Forcus*. He specifically states that “The Pictish form is also found on the inscribed monument at St. Vigeans in Angus.” He adds that in the list of Pictish kings it is also written *Urguist, wirguist*, and *Wrguist*. It means “super choice” from ** Ver-gustu-s*. While I still prefer my reading, I must note that the portion of the inscription that reads EVORET *could* be a form of the modern Everett (Everard, Evered) --root-word OE *eofor-raed* = “Boar Counselor” (figuratively, “Stalwart Counselor”) (some trace it to the ancient Germanic name *Eber-hard(t)* = “Wild boar and brave, hardy or strong.” It has been suggested that the name arrived from the continent at the time of the Norman conquest. Others feel it may have swallowed up an unattested Old English cognate, *Eoforheard*.

**Conclusion:** Every letter is certain except for the O in ETTFOR-. It is uncertain whether it is an O or an E. I prefer to read it Œ. I suggest that IP or IPE might be a form of the Welsh *Ap (ab)* = son of (E1A), a component of so many Welsh surnames (Ap Ross, etc) (see IP on the Greenloaning Stone). I get: DROSTEN IPEVORET ETTFŒR CUS = *Drosten, ipe Voret et Fœrgus* = Drosten, the son of Voret and Fergus. There were several Pictish kings named Drost. One, whose parents are not named in the source available to me, reigned c. 724-726 AD. Note that the king who reigned from 729 was a son of Fergus (perhaps Drost's brother?). There was a good deal of fighting over the succession to the throne in that period and it was probably brothers who were doing the squabbling. This reading, of course, demands that *Uoret* or *Voret* be a woman's name. Note that her name is given first, as would be logical in the Pictish society which traced the lines principally through the woman.

I still prefer my reading, but if the name Everett does indeed appear, then the inscription might read: DROSTEN IP EVORET ETT FOERGUS = Drosten, ip Everet, et Fergus = Drosten, the son of Everett, and Fergus. This would mean the inscription commemorates TWO persons.

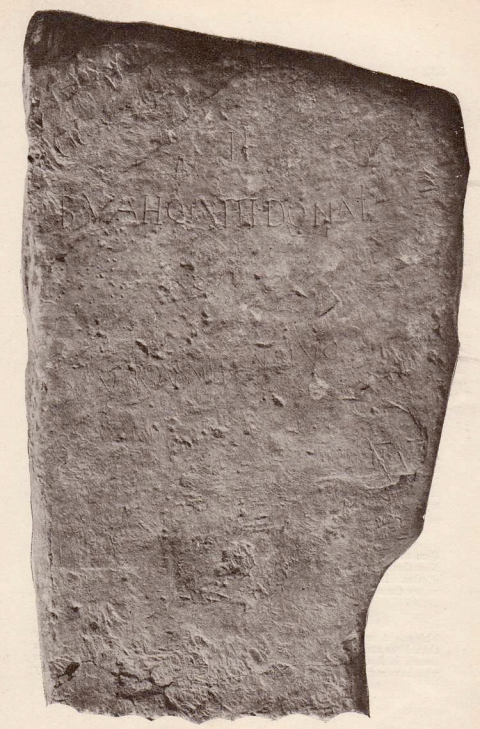


Fig. 2. The Greenloaning Stone. (*From a photograph by Messrs Crowe & Rodger, Stirling.*)

**Datab. No.:** 6022
**Site:** Greenloaning, Perthshire, Scotland
**Type:** Sepulchral
**Description:** Also known as the Roundel Stone or the Greenloaning Stone. It is a dioritic slab 4 feet high, 3 feet wide and 9 inches thick.This incorporates lines 1, 2 & 3 (line 1 only contains the IP). The lettering was uncial, in a form slightly different from the uncials shown above. The stone was found in Townhead, Greenloaning, near Ardoch, Perthshire (about 11 miles north of Stirling). In 1898 it was at the Smith Institute in Stirling.

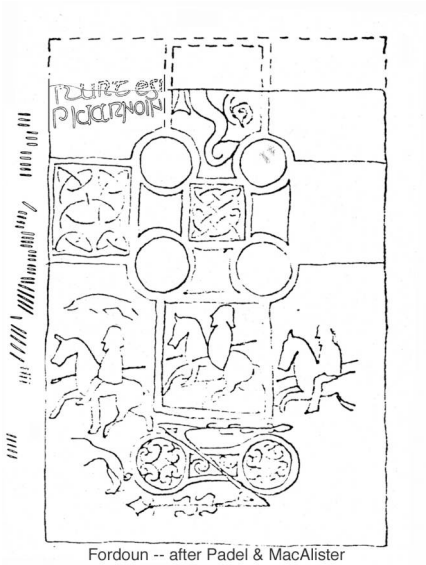
**Uncial Line:** ıp ʙvah qattı donat[ı] vergamebo no[ı]vo
**Transliteration:** IP BVAH QATTI DONATI VERGAMEBO NOTIVO
**Cognate Lang.:** Ip Buadha Catti donati—Vergamebo notivo.
**Translation:** (Stone) of the son of Buadha of the Catti, Donatus [ A Gift]—Vergameb wrote (on it).

**Comment:** Nicholson read the two lines of this inscription as BVAH QATT IDON AIT and VURCAMU BONOIT NO. Rhys disagreed. He eliminated BVAH as no part of the original—as well as the IP and other markings which could be seen outside of these lines. He felt that these were added later. He noted that the T in DONAT had a line attached at its top indicating a TI reading. Diack discounted the existence of the "IP," seeing it as "II." The other two lines he read as BVAHQATTIIDONATI VERGAMEBO NOTVO. He regarded the language as Old Celtic "of the early centuries of our era." Rhys suggested QATTI DONATI = "Cat, (son of) Donatus." The third line, located further down the stone, Rhys felt was a completely separate inscription, although possibly cut by the same hand as the one above. He read the lowest line as: VERGAMEBO NOTIVO. He translated the whole as "(The gift) of Qatt and Donat to Vergameb (and) Notiu." Rhys equated the EB in EBO with such Pictish names as *Ythernbuthib* and *Bergib* (the -O being a dative ending). MacAlister felt that this stone was not Pictish, but very early Celtic. He did not see the IP. He felt that the BUAH represented someone's initials and played no part in the inscription. He recorded the two main lines as: BVAHQATTI DONA† (Rhys's combined TI is here recorded as a cross: †) VIIRSAMIIBONO†VO (or VIIRSAMMIIBONOTVO). Other markings on the stone he interpreted as possible 'crypt-runes' and 'cabalistic' characters,' which, along with others, he

dismisses as being of doubtful antiquity. He gave no translation. So far as I have been able to determine, Forsyth does not mention the Greenloaning inscription.

**Vocabulary:** *Ip* = Welsh *Ap (ab)* = son of (E1A). OG *Buadha* = Precious (Dw133B). Latin *Donatio (-onis)* (Welsh *dawn* or OWelsh *doniad*) = a giving, a donation, a gift (C202A; E164B/194A). AS *Weorc* (ON *virki, verk*) = work, labour (B1191A; V710B). AS *Ambeht* = a servant, attendant, messenger, officer, minister (B36AB). OI ferg = anger, wrath; a warrior (RIA F). Gaelic fear-ogha = grandson (Dw425A). Latin *Notivo* is a form of L *Noto -are (notatus -a, -um)* = to mark, write (C397A).

**Conclusion:** In my study of Rhys's photo, I saw IP BVAH QATTI DONATI VIIRGAMIIBO NOTIVO and accept Rhys's conclusion that the two parallel lines denote an E. Thus, IP BVAH QATTI DONATI VERGAMEBO NOTIVO. I am not convinced that IP and BVAH should be disregarded and suggest *Ip Buadha Catti donati—Vergamebo notivo* = (Stone) of the son of Buadha of the Catti, Donatus [A Gift]—Vergameb wrote (on it). OG *Buadha* could be a woman's name. L.A. Waddell held that *Catti (Qatti, Khatti)* was a tribal name. He claimed that it designated a ruling group of early Britons which had ancient connections with the civilizations of the eastern Mediterranean (specifically, the Hittites, who called themselves *Khatti* or *Catti* [referred to as *Chatti* or *Hatti* by the Assyrians and on Egyptian inscriptions as well as in the bible]). Waddell noted the presence of coins in pre-Roman Britain (perhaps second century BC) which bore the name CATTI. I agree with Rhys that Vergameb (or Vergamiib) is probably a name, perhaps Pictish.



Fordoun -- after Padel & MacAlister

**Datab. No.:** 6023
**Site:** Fordoun, Kincardineshire, Scotland
**Type:** Sepulchral
**Description:** This slab was found leaning against the wall in the ruins of the chapel of St. Palladius in the graveyard of Fordoun parish church, Auchinblae. It measured 5 feet 3 inches by 3 feet 4 inches and 4 inches thick. It bears two inscriptions one uncial and one ogham as well as an ornamental cross, Pictish symbols and carved horsemen. The uncial inscription is carved in two lines in half-uncials of a slightly different form from those shown in the font used below (but there is no doubt about the transliteration). Below, uncial line 2 is incorporated with line 1. According to Padel, the stone is no longer in St. Palladius' chapel, but in the church of Fordoun beside it (in the village of Auchenblæ.

**Uncial Line:** rurtesi pidarnoin
**Transliteration:** RURTESI PIDARNOIN
**Cognate Lang.:** Ruir-tess ip Eidir-noin

**Translation:** Ruir-tess, the son of Eidir-noin.

**Comment:** Rhys was unable to make out line 1, therefore his reading of line 2 is suspect. MacAlister read: RURTES (I)P IDARNOIN and equated IDARNOIN with EDDARRNONN of the Scoonie Stone (see #6019). He further suggested that IP is an abbreviation of IPE. MacAlister claimed that *-es* was a feminine ending so that RURT was therefore a woman's name. By the time Padel got around to this inscription, the first line was no longer legible. Jackson and Stevenson both place this inscription in the 8th century. Padel agreed that the second line was PIDARNOIN.

**Vocabulary:** OI *Ruiri (ruire)* = king, supreme ruler; knight, champion; lord (Dw777B; RIA R117). OI *Tess* = south; in the south (RIA T157). Welsh *Ap (ab)* = son of (ET1A). OI *Eidir* = *Eighre (oigre, eiger, eigir, oigir, eidre)* = heir, inheritor, successor, descendant (RIA E79). OI *Nán (noin)* = small, dwarfish (RIA N13).

**Conclusion:** I suggest that IP or IPE might be a form of the Welsh *Ap (ab)* = “son of” (E1A), a component of so many Welsh surnames (Ap Ross, etc) (see IP on the Greenloaning Stone). I read: RURTES IP IDARNOIN = "Ruir-tess, the son of Eidir-noin." Ruir-tess would thus mean "Lord of the South" or "Southern Lord." Eidir-noin could mean "Small Heir."

**Ogham Line:** ᚏᚏᚏᚁᚁᚁᚏᚏᚏᚏᚏ[ᚁᚁᚁᚁᚁ]–ᚋᚏᚏᚏᚏᚁᚁᚁᚁᚄᚄᚄ–ᚄᚄᚄᚁᚁᚁᚁᚄᚄᚄᚄᚄ–ᚁ–ᚋᚋᚋᚋᚋᚋᚋᚋᚁᚁᚁᚁ
[ᚃᚃ–ᚃᚃᚁᚁᚁᚁ]–ᚏᚏᚏᚏ
**Transliteration:** VUN[I]MSETTORBRE[(DD?)E]N
**Cognate Lang.:** Wynnum sæta oir Bre(d?)en
**Translation:** Wynnum, a resident of Brai[d)on.

**Comment:** As MacAlister pointed out, the ogham is very difficult, being quite worn and cut in very small scores on face of the left edge (rather than the corner) of the rather coarse-grained stone. Rhys was unable to make anything out in the Ogam inscription. MacAlister got VUN[...]MSETTORBR(or N)[...E?..]N. Padel was unable to see an Ogham inscription on this stone, although he gives the uncial one. Forsyth does not list this one --at least not under the site name given here.

**Vocabulary:** AS *Wyn(n) (wynnum)* = delight, pleasure; a delight, that which causes pleasure; the best of its class, the pride of its kind (joyous); a personal name. (B1285A). AS *Sæta* = resident, inhabitant (apparently occurs only in compounds such as Dor-sett, for instance) (B812A). G *Air* = On, upon, of, concerning, for, on acount of, by with (Dw17B). Oir can also be Or.

**Conclusion:** I tend to accept MacAlister’s reading, but have inserted a possible double D in the last word of the inscription because, in studying the place names near Fordoun, I noted Braidon Bay which could possibly reflect an earlier Braidon or Brae Dun or Breden. Thus I get *Wynnum sæta oir Bre(d?)en* = Wynnum, a resident of Brai(d)on. It would seem that this originally Pictish monument has been used by later Celts to commemorate two or their own, perhaps at different times: Ruir-tess the son of Eidir-noin and Wynnum of Braidon.

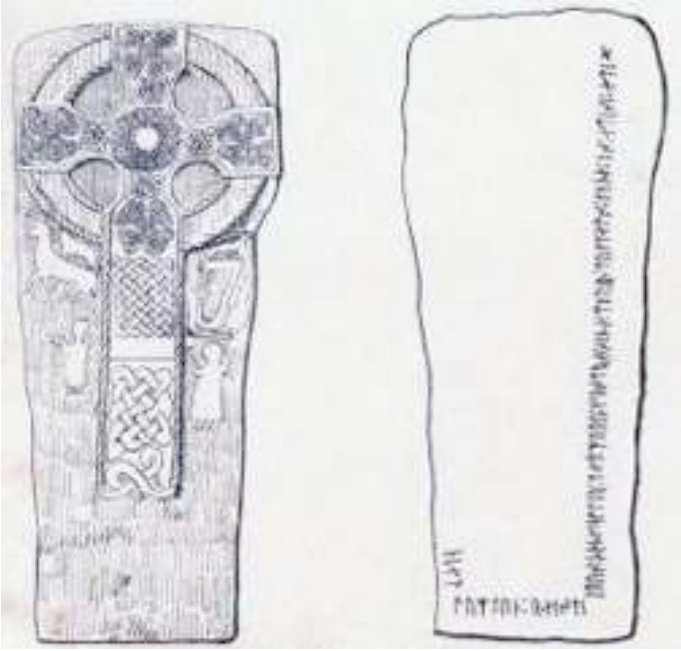


Image of  Kirk Michael III from Wikipedia

**Datab. No.:** 6024
**Site:** Kirkmichael, Isle of Man
**Type:** Sepulchral
**Description:** The following is from the *Isle of Man Guide* Website: “A large slab carved in low relief on one face, showing a shafted cross with limbs connected by a circular ring. Shaft and circle have a cable border evening below in the head and tail of a serpent. In the centre is a ring of chain cable. The limbs contain triquetras in continuous bands. Below are plaits of nine and seven.

“To the left of the shaft is a hart sized by a hound and a robed Ecclesiastic with left arm raised in prayer and the right hand resting on a crutch shaped staff. At the other side, a hart and hound and man seated playing on a harp and robed figure holding a drinking horn. This must be one of the Valkyriur making an offering to Bragi, god of poetry and inspiration. Below the harper is another Ecclesiastic with arms uplifted in blessing with his right hand holding up a crutch headed staff. Below the cross and to the right has been scored the Ogam alphabet, related to the faint inscription on the middle, back of the stone, but it cannot be deciphered.

“Runes running up one side of the back translate as, Mal, Lumkun, krus, thena, efrer, Mal, Muru, fustra, sine, totir Tufkals, kona, is, athisl, ati. Meaning Mael Loncheu raised this cross to the memory of Mal Mura his foster (mother) daughter of Dugal the wife whom Athisl had. On the left the following reading has been done in the same hand, Betra, es, laifa, fustra, kuthan, than, son, ilan. Meaning Better is it to leave a good foster son than a bad son.”

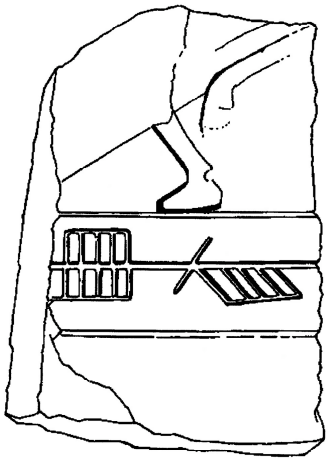
**Ogham Line:** ᚋᚋ[ᚅᚅᚅᚅ]–ᚅᚅᚅᚅᚋᚋᚋᚋᚉᚉᚉᚉᚅᚉᚉ–ᚉᚉᚅᚅᚉᚉᚉ
**Transliteration:** G[E?]ERCADDOSDEN
**Cognate Lang.:** Gearr Cáddos Dun
**Translation:** Engraved for Catto's (Grave-) Mound.

**Comment:** This artifact is sometimes called “Michael III. An Ogham alphabet is carved on the front of the cross. On the back is the badly eroded Ogham inscription shown here, along with the Runic inscription described above.

**Vocabulary:** G *Geàrr* (Early Irish *Gerr* = to cut, engrave (Dw485B; McB192). OI *Cáid (cád, cato, catto)* = holy, noble, pure (RIA C23). G *dùn (dùin*; AS *dún)* = heap, hill, mound; hill, fortified house; fortress (grave) (B218B; Dw373B; RIA D449).

**Conclusion:** I get: G[E?]ERCADDOSDEN = *Gearr Cáddos Dun* = Engraved for *Catto*'s (Grave-) Mound. This stone bears (on the other side) a runic inscription relating to one Mal-Lomcom. That inscription has been discussed previously under its other name: Michael 3. At that time I had not made the connection between the Michael 3 inscription and the badly abraded Ogham inscription known as Kirkmichael. This connection was pointed out to me by a colleague, Lawrence Athy, who had his own ideas about the translation of some of the Ogham inscriptions. Padel felt the ogham was indecipherable. The translation of the runic tells us that this stone was a cross raised by Mal-Lomcom for his foster-mother, Mal-moro. It is clear that there is little or no relationship with the Ogham inscription on the other side which was cut at a different time (probably later than the Runic, but it could be earlier). In a previous publication I suggested that the runic inscription was "as late as the 12th or even the 13th century" on the basis of the "stung E." It is noteworthy, however, that a stung E in an inscription might occur as early as 1050, thus putting it in the mid-11th century. Thus we can conjecture that the Ogham probably was not added before the late 11th or early 12th century (putting it nicely on a par with other instances of "scholastic Ogham" occuring in the British Isles.

Allen/Anderson/1903, Fig. 323 (after Forsyth)



Abernethy

**Datab. No.:** 6025
**Site:** Abernethy, Perthshire, Scotland
**Type:** Sepulchral
**Description:**

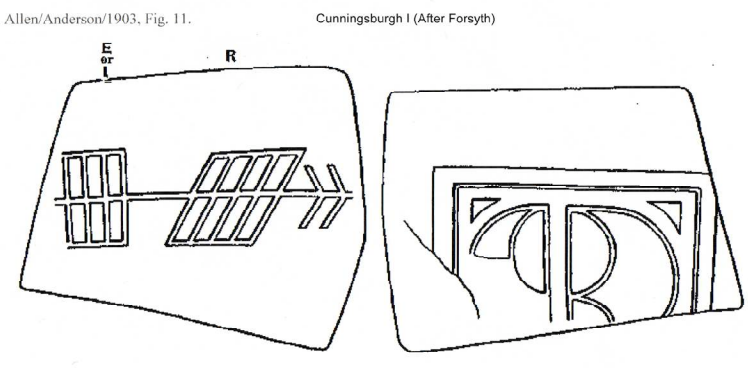
**Ogham Line:** ᚋᚋᚋᚋᚋ/ᚃᚃᚃᚃᚃ
**Transliteration:** ...(MAC?)QMI...
**Cognate Lang.:** ...(Mæ)cg (?) Mi...
**Translation:** ...(So)n (?) of Mi...

**Comment:** This is quite fragmentary and, according to Padel, too small to be of any linguistic value. The stone was discovered in 1890 by a Mr. Marr of Abernethy, Perthshire (Southesk 1895:245, cited by Forsyth). It comes from "a house in Station Road" according to Dugal Butler (as quoted by Padel). Apart from the ogham, the only other carving is the leg of a horse in relief. Rhys saw -IMN- or -QMI-. Macalister saw IMN. Padel stated that the letters are very clear and "there is no doubt about the reading although it could be in either direction." Padel noted that "the

letters are very unevenly spaced...in other respects...the carving is fairly careful" and "the presence of bind-oghams...practically unknown in Irish oghams." Finally, he remarked: "...the slope of the five stroke consonant is such that we are compelled to read the inscription from right to left (however unlikely this may seem) if it is associated with the fragment of a picture. The only alternative is to postulate that the ogham ran vertically..." Padel reads QMI ("or, if taken improbably in the other direction, IMN"). Katherine Stuart Forsyth reported extensively on this inscription in an unpublished PhD paper in 1996. Another ogham that was reported to exist in Abernethy is fairly certain to be a forgery, according to Padel.

**Vocabulary:** AS *Mæcg* = man, disciple, son (H224A). AS *Mæg (mag) -es* = a relative, a kinsman; male kinsman, parent, son, brother, cousin; can also be a female relation, a wife (B654A; H224B). AS *Maga* = a son, descendant, young man, man (H228A). OI *Maccu (moccu)* = belonging to the family (gens) of (RIA M10). OI *Mac (macc)* = a son; a male descendant (RIA M5).

**Conclusion:** QMI is correct. I read it as (MAC?)Q MI = *...(Mæ)cg (?) Mi...* = ...(So)n (?) of Mi.... Padel is correct in his statement that it is too fragmentary to be of any linguistic use. Forsyth's suggested reconstruction in her PhD dissertation is excellent (F10c).

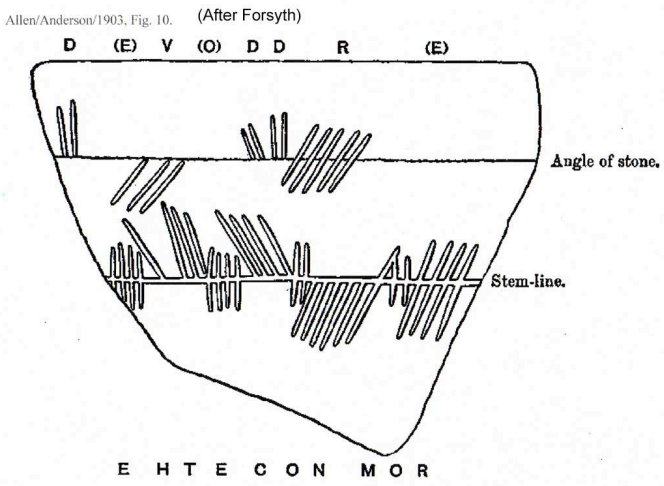



**Datab. No.:** 6026
**Site:** Cunningsburgh I, Shetland, Scotland
**Type:** Sepulchral
**Description:**

**Ogham Line:** ++++++/////[+++]
**Transliteration:** -IR(U?)-
**Cognate Lang.:**
**Translation:**

**Comment:** Rhys got IR or RI. MacAlister read IR(U?). Nicholson saw ...IRU... and suggested [T]IR U... = "Land of O..." Padel read it IRU. Forsyth saw -]I( /d/h)R(u/e)[-.

**Conclusion:** I agree with the reading IRU. It is too fragmentary to translate.




**Datab. No.:** 6027
**Site:** Cunningsburgh II, Shetland, Scotland
**Type:** Sepulchral
**Description:** Forsyth says that this stone, a triangular fragment of grey sandstone, was probably found in 1874 or 1875 'close by the burying ground' by Rev. George Clark.

**Ogham Line:** ᚇᚇᚅᚅᚉᚉᚉ[ᚅᚅ]ᚇᚇ–ᚇᚇ/////ᚉᚉᚉᚉ[ᚅᚉᚉᚉ–ᚉᚉᚉᚉ]ᚅᚅᚅᚅᚄ–ᚄᚄᚄᚅᚅᚅᚄᚄᚄᚄᚄ ᚅᚅᚉᚉᚉᚉᚉ/ᚅᚅ/////ᚉᚉᚉᚉ-᚜

**Transliteration:** DOVODDRS... (AVN?]EHTECONMORS
**Cognate Lang.:** Domh Oddr-s... (af) (n)eachd Con mors
**Translation:** Odd's House [or mausoleum]... (of) the great tribe of Conn.

**Comment:** This incorporates line 2. This is Rhys's Cunningsburgh I. He saw it in 1897 when he got: EHTECONMOR(or F)[SA(or VI)]. Rhys noticed another line of Ogam on the same stone which he read D(or QU)[U or E]V[O or U]DDRS. Nicholson got DETODDRE(V) EHTECONMORR = *d'et Oddre'v ehte Con Morr* = *d'ait Odraibh aite Con Mho(i)r* = At hearthside Grays, hearthside of Cu Mor. MacAlister read: DEV...ODRS... EHTECONMOZS. Padel read ...EHTECONMO(RS or ZN) ...D(O or U)V... (D or O)DRS... Forsyth saw EHTECONMORs. Forsyth's reading is shown in the graphic. The differences in the various readings lie in the vowels inserted by the several scholars involved.

**Vocabulary:** OG *Domh* (pronounced "*dov*"; OI *dom* from L *domus*?) = house, home (Dw351A; RIA D333). ON *Oddr* = a point of a weapon, the front; a leader (a proper name and a component of proper names) (V462B). G *Neach* (OI *Nech*) = Person, any person; one, someone (Dw686B; RIA N17) and Old Gælic *Neachd* = Tribe, Family; Pledge (Dw686B). OG *Con (conn)* = reason, sense, meaning (Dw249A; Dw250B). G *Con* = wolf, dog (Dw249A) G *Mór* = great, large, important (Dw670B).

**Conclusion:** I get DOVODDRS...(AVN?)EHTECONMORS = *Domh Oddrs...(af) (n)eachd Con mors* = Oddr's House (in the sense of mausoleum or a grave).. (of) the great tribe of Conn. I follow Padel's reading of DOV rather than DEV. It is what I noted from the drawing he shows —and, besides, it makes a great deal more sense in the context than DEV. It is also possible to read this as "Oddr slumbers (here)," since DOV has that connotation, but in this instance "domh"—also pronounced "dov"—seems to give the best reading and is supported by the fact that the proper name, *Oddr*, is rendered as a possessive. Here, again, we have an intermixture of Teutonic and Celtic words buried in a basically Anglo-Saxon grammatical structure. The reference to the tribe of Conn is interesting. We have just such a Celtic tribe noted, not only in Ireland ("—the Half of Conn"), but also in Southwest Portugal ("—a warrior of the Conn").

**Datab. No.:** 6028 **(Graphic unavailable at this time)**
**Site:** Cunningsburgh III, Shetland, Scotland
**Type:** Sepulchral
**Description:** According to Forsyth, the stone, unearthed in the churchyard at Cunningsburgh in the Spring of 1903, is a thin parallelogram fragment of micaceous sandstone incised with three

lines of ogham and otherwise undecorated. She said “So much of this slab has been lost that it is impossible to determine its original form or orientation.”

**Ogham Line:** ᚷᚦᚦᚢᚢᚢ

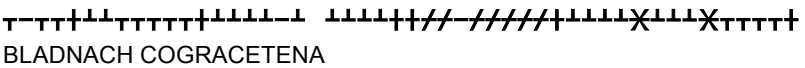
**Ogham Line:** ᚄᚃᚋᚋᚋ

extensively on this inscription in an unpublished PhD paper in 1996. She got, for the first (upper) line: (ae/i/q)S(d/o)(u/at/i/q/e/c)[---]V( /a/o)(n/lv)A( /d/o)[crack](t/ch/v). For the second (lower) line she got: FI(nn/rr)MaNA(ch/q).

**Vocabulary:**
*Æs* = money, wages, a soldier's pay, reward (LS60Cff). L *Dativus (-a,-um)* = of or belonging to giving, given, appointed (LS512C). L *Nancito*r (also *nancitur*) from *Nancio* = to get, obtain, gain (receive) (LS1185Cff). L *Vir (viri* fr. Skt. *vira* = hero) = a man, a soldier (LS1994C). L *A (ab)* = from, out of, by, at, in (LS2Aff). L *Mona (-æ)* = the name of two islands: the Isle of Man, in the Channel between Ireland and Britain, and the Isle of Anglesey, part of Wales (LS1160C).

**Conclusion:** My reading is essentially the same as Padel's, but I suggest that the D in the second line is actually intended to be an O and the final V is really a U. I propose the name "Lughaidh," (a suitably Celtic name), but of course it could have been any other male name beginning with an L (Leif, a Norse name, for instance). While *Vira* could be read as "woman," it is believed that the apparent *-a* ending is actually short for the word "*ab*" = "from" and that the person memorialized is a man, probably a soldier who served in the fort at Dunadd. If this kenning is even close to correct, one wonders if this might be a macabre joke on the part of the carver—that this is, indeed, a sepulchral monument, a soldier's ultimate wage being death.

**Datab. No.:** 6032 (No graphic is available at this time)
**Site:** Kilgubin East, Kerry Co., Ireland
**Type:** Sepulchral
**Description:** MacAlister said this (his #1086 in CIIC) was found near Ardfert in Co. Kerry, in Ireland. He described it as "a lamp in the form of a hanging bowl, made of a light-coloured brass-like alloy. . . It is now in the National Museum, Dublin." He added that ". . . the vessel is in the form of an inverted pyramid with rounded angles. The sides of the triangular mouth are each 9 [and three-quarter] inches long, and the height of the triangle which they form is a little over 8 inches. The lip of the opening is everted. The depth of the vessel is 3 [and one quarter] inches. There is a looped handle attached to the outer surface of each of the three sides, prolonged downward to a tail secured with a rivet."

**Ogham Line 1:** 
**Transliteration:** BLADNACH COGRACETENA
**Cognate Lang.:** Blæd-nac cóc ræced-ena
**Translation:** Bladnach, the Cook of the Palace

**Comment:** This is the first part of a two line inscription. The inscription "BLADNACH COGRACETENA" in scholastic Ogam with incised stemlines is on one side of the lip of the vessel. On the opposite side, on the downward prolongation of the handle, is "BLADNACH CUILEN" (see Inscription No. 6033). The vowels are expressed by long vertical scores (except for 'E' which is expressed by the X-mark). So far as I have been able to determine, Forsyth does not mention this inscription.

**Vocabulary:**
ON *Blað (AS blæd)* = blade, leaf, leaf-like objects; blade of an oar or a sword ("sword-blade" is thought of by some as being a somewhat modern usage); in AS also carries the meaning: a cup, bowl, goblet. There is a possibility for a good pun here, for in AS *blæd* can also = breath, life, spirit, mind, animus; enjoyment, prosperity, abundance, success, blessedness, gift, reward, benefit; glory, honor (V66B; B107A). AS *Naca* = boat, bark, ship, vessel (B706A). AS *-neah (ge-neah)* = sufficiency, abundance (B420B, 711A). ON *Nægð* = plenty, abundance (V460B). ON *Nægja* = to be enough, suffice (V460B). AS *Nacod* (Germ. *nackt*) = naked (B706A). AS *Neah* = nigh, near (B710B). OI *Nach* = *nech* = one, anyone, someone, a person (RIA N4f, N17f). OI *Nach* = neg. adv. 'not'; rel. particle introducing neg. 'who not' or 'who does not'; conj. introd. subordinate negative clause 'that...not' (RIA N5f). It is possible that the ON *Ne* (cognate w/German *noch* and Latin *nec*) = a negative conj. 'not' might have resumed its harsh ending

under Celtic influence. ON *Kokkr* (AS *cóc*) = a cook (V347B; B164A). AS *Ræced* (Gothic *razn*; ON *rann* (poetic)) = a house, a hall, a palace (B781B; Bu 7.12; Walde-P 1.144). AS *-en (-ena)* = m. termination of nouns; also forms many nouns in the feminine; it can also be a termination for adjectives and for the past participle of verbs (B250A).

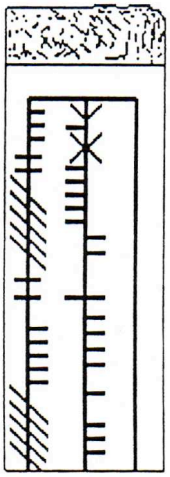
**Ogham Line 2:** ᚮᚃᚮᚮᚇᚮᚮᚮᚮᚮᚮᚇᚮᚮᚮᚮᚃᚮᚮᚮᚮᚮᚇᚮᚮᚮᚮᚮᚮ

**Description:** According to Forsyth, this stone was discovered in the summer of 1980. It had been reused in an area paved with large sandstone flags. She described it as “a parallelogram-shaped building stone.”

**Ogham Line:** ᚄ ᚄ [ᚃ[ᚉ]]ᚂᚂᚂᚂᚂ᚜ᚂᚂᚂᚂᚂ᚜ᚂᚃᚃᚉᚄ ᚄ ᚄ
**Transliteration:** - - M[A(b)]QQHO(b/l/v/s/n)
**Cognate Lang.:** - - mac ho(b?)- -
**Translation:** ...son of Ho(b?) ...

**Comment:** Although certain features of the inscription would seem to date it late in the typological sequence of ogham development, this object was found in association with comparatively early radio-carbon dates. Thus Forsyth concludes that this can be dated somewhere about mid-seventh century AD (that being the mid-point of the range of dates from mid-sixth to mid-eighth). The existence of the B stroke is highly doubtful. Therefore the true reading is probably MAQQHO(b or l or etc.) ---.

**Conclusion:** I agree with Forsyth's interpretation and her conclusion that this must read: "...son of Ho(b?)...



Transcription of the Ogham on the side of the Killaloe Stone.

**Datab. No.:** 6034
**Site:** Killaloe, Clare Co., Ireland
**Type:** Dedicatory
**Description:** The stone is one foot 6 inches borad at one end, tapering to one foot 2 inches at the other. The length of the stone was approximately two feet two inches when found, but it was clear that both ends had been broken. It is a fragment of a cross.

**Ogham Line:** ᚅᚉᚋᚉᚉᚉᚉᚂᚂᚃᚃᚂᚂᚂᚂᚂ᚜ᚂᚂᚂᚂ[ᚃ/////]
ᚂᚂᚉᚃᚃ/////ᚃᚃᚂᚂᚂᚂᚂ/////[ᚃᚃᚃᚃᚃ/]
**Transliteration:** BEaNDACHT[AR] TOROQR[IM]
**Cognate Lang.:** Beandacht [ar] Toroqr[im] or Ben dach[tar] Toroqr[im]
**Translation:** A blessing on Thor(g!)rim. (or [Let there be] a prayer for the daughter of Thor(g!)rim)

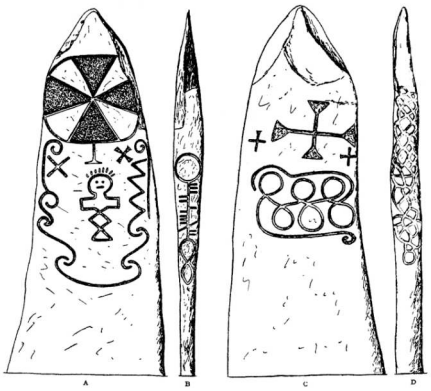
**Comment:** The stone was found built upside down into the outer face of the enclosing wall of the church at Killaloe, County Clare, Ireland. It was about one foot from the ground and midway between the main gate (leading to the west door of the church) and a wicket gate on the left.

Sometime prior to 1929 the stone was removed from the wall and placed on a concrete base just inside the narthex of the church where I saw it im May 1982. Unfortunately, several letters (in brackets, above) are now concealed in the concrete base in which it was seated, but luckily they were clearly recorded in the early reports. MacAlister saw the stone in 1915 and reported on it in 1916, 1929, and in his *Corpus Inscriptionum Insularum Celticarum* in 1949.

The High Cross form of the Killaloe stone dates it no earlier than the 9th or 10th century AD. The use of a stung rune indicates a date no earlier than the middle of the 11th century (and more likely early 12th) AD. We note that the Killaloe church was destroyed by fire seven times between 1015 and 1155. It is probable that during one of the reconstructions, this cross fragment from its attendant cemetery was used to build a wall. It is Buchanan's opinion that a date in the late 11th or early 12th century is mandated (in 1993 he suggested early 13th might be possible, but now feels that to be a bit late). J.S. Marstrander suggested a date for the Killaloe stone of sometime between 1015 and 1081, but did not elucidate his reasoning. Buchanan feels, however, that his dates are not unreasonable.

**Vocabulary:**
AS *bén* (gen. dat. *béne*; acc. *bén*) = a blessing, a praying, a prayer, petition (B83A). OI *beandacht* = a form of *bennacht*, the Old Irish version of the Latin *benedictum* or *Benediction* = "a blessing" (the Ogham X-marking represents either an "e" or an "ea" —in the Gælic it is *beannachd* and has also been seen as *beandacht, bendachta* and *bendacht* (RIA B77). AS *Dóhtar (doghtor*; ON *dóttir)* = daughter (B206A; V102A). OI *Ar (air)* = the prep. for, on (RIA A366). *Toroqrim* = a Celt (or a person of Scandinavian descent whose language has been influenced by immersion in a Celtic environment) attempting to spell *Thorgrim*. Apparently he heard more of a "k" sound than a "g" sound. The "g" is clear from the Runic inscription and Thorgrim is a known Norse name.

**Conclusion:** It is important to note that, unlike most Ogham inscriptions in Ireland, the Killaloe Ogham is engraved in the manuscript, not the lapidary, style. MacAlister notes others in the manuscript style: the cross-slab from Glenfahan, County Kerry, and the slab of Colman Bocht at Clonmacnois. Both lines of the Ogham inscription are shown here. There is also a Runic inscription reading *∂urgrim risti krus ∂ina* = Thorgrim carved this cross. Both the Runic inscription and the Ogham inscription were deciphered by me in my article: *An Enquiry into the Dating of Certain Celto-Scandinavian Inscriptions in the British Isles* which was published in *ESOP*, Vol. 22, p. 148 (1993). I originally accepted (1993) the previous translations which gave a Celtic cast to the inscription, deriving the Oghamic language from Old Irish. With new insight, however, that the presence of scholastic Ogham may mask a language with an Anglo Saxon base I suggest a possible alternate reading in Celtic-influenced Anglo-Saxon: *Ben dóhtar Toroqrim* = [Let there be] a prayer for the daughter of Thorgrim.



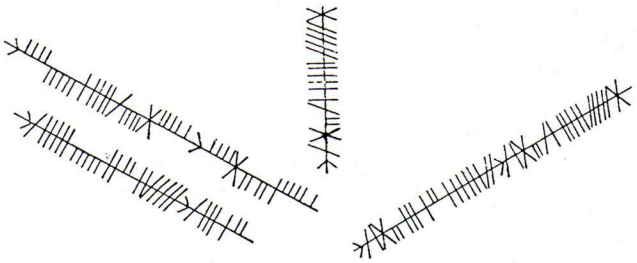
Glenfahan —After R. A. S. Macalister

**Datab. No.:** 6035
**Site:** Glenfahan, Kerry Co., Ireland
**Type:** Sepulchral?
**Description:** A slab 4’5” x 1’9” x 0’5”, found by officials of the Board of Works engaged in repair work on the ancient structure called *Caher Murphy*, one of a series of stone huts on the southern slope of Mount Eagle. (MacAlister)

**Ogham Line:**
**Transliteration:** LMCBDV (up) [TLHSMD (down) --after shift: BREOSI]
**Cognate Lang.:** Breas-i]
**Translation:** Belonging to Breas

**Comment:** Reported on in the 1893 *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* (PRIA) by the then Inspector of Ancient Monuments, Sir Thomas Deane. It is MacAlister's No. 183. A slab, 4'5"x 1'9" x 0'5" found by the officials of the Board of Works while repairing the ancient structure known as Caher Murphy, one of the large series of stone huts on the southern slope of Mount Eagle in the Barony of Corkaguiny in County Kerry. On one edge are Ogham letters on an incised stemline with a loop at one end (the top) and double infinity loops at the other (the bottom). McCallister noted that the M is sloped in the wrong direction (when reading from the bottom) and provided an excellent drawing. Reading from the bottom, he got LMCBDV. Since he regarded it as indecipherable, he believed it probably had some magical purpose.

**Conclusion:** The use of the Scholastic Ogham format and the decorations (which remind one of the so-called "Pictish" stones) suggests that the subject for whom the stone was made (or, at least, the carver) may have resided in Scotland at one time. This is a cryptic inscription. One is intended to read it from the single circle down towards the double circle. This gives us TLHSMD. This still makes no sense. There is a further step in the encipherment. Each letter represents one 13th after it (or 7th before it) in the Ogham alphabet. This gives us BREOSI, which would be a genitive form of OldGaelic *Breas (bres)* = a Celtic personal name (often born by mythological or legendary characters) which means, according to Dwelly, as a noun, "prince, king, hero, chief;" and as an adjective, "illustrious, eminent, great, mighty" (Dw 120A; GPN 35; RIA B 179). O'Corráin and Maguire, in *Gaelic Personal Names* show *Bress, Breas* (br'as) = a masculine name which could mean "shapely, beautiful" or "fight, uproar, din." It seems to be always borne by mythological or legendary characters in Irish literature. The most famous of these is Bress mac Elathan of the Tuatha dé Danann. It is probably the main element in the names *Bressal, Breasal, Bressalán*. Thus BREOSI = *Breas-i* = "Of Breas" or "Belonging to Breas." M. A. O'Brien in his *Corpus Geniologiarum Hibernae* lists at least five genealogies containing *Bress (Breisse)*, undoubtedly a form of *Breas* (I also found three such mentions among the heros in T. W. Rolleston's *Myths and Legends of the Celtic Race*). See a similar pssibly cryptic inscription from Ardywanig in Co. Kerry.



Ballyspellan, Co. Kilkenny, Ireland
(After MacAlister)

**Datab. No.:** 6036
**Site:** Ballyspellan, Kilkenny Co., Ireland
**Type:** Dedicatory
**Description:** A silver penannular brooch (c. 9th century AD), found in 1806 by a peasant digging in the ground on the hill of Ballyspellan. On the reverse sides of the triangular expansions ,which terminate the ring of the brooch, there are four lines of writing in Scholastic Ogham.

**Ogham Line:** ᚃᚅᚑᚌᚎᚃᚑᚉᚐᚋᚄᚑᚉᚐᚋᚄᚑᚉᚐᚋᚄ

generations in the early-to-mid 12th century. MacAlister, however, dated it to the 9th century on the basis of the style of the decorations on the artifact.

**Ogham Line:** ᚐᚃᚓᚏᚁᚃᚐᚃᚁᚃᚁᚃᚁ

**Ogham Line:** ᚉᚑᚃᚋᚐᚅ
᚛ᚅᚑᚃᚋᚐᚉᚆᚄᚁᚄᚁᚄᚁ

**Description:**

**Ogham Line:** ᚁᚅᚅᚄᚄᚁᚄᚄᚄᚄᚂᚂᚅᚅᚄᚁ
**Transliteration:** VUEDLA
**Cognate Lang.:** Uidlua (?)
**Translation:** Wise woman (witch) (?)

**Comment:** This Ogham inscription, like Blackfootwater 1, is located in the King's Cave at Drumadoon (*Druim an Duin* = Ridge of the Fort), in the Parish of Kilmory, Strathclyde, Arran. Forsyth read this as VUEDLA. She pointed out the similarity to *uidlua* = wise woman, witch.

**Conclusion:** I have found no record that Jackson or others ever reported on this site. I only report what Forsyth said. The only picture of the inscription I have seen is a poor one in the reproduction I have of Forsyth's Harvard dissertation. In this instance I will follow Forsyth. Hers is the version of the inscription shown above and in the accompanying graphic. I believe that her interpretation of this inscription is probably correct.