

I.

NOTES ON A STONE CIRCLE AT GREENLAND, PARISH OF KENMORE, AND A GRAVE-SLAB IN THE BURYING-GROUND OF THE MACNABS AT KILLIN. By REV. J. B. MACKENZIE, F.S.A. SCOT., KENMORE.

During the session of 1899-90 I sent to the Society some notes on a cup-and-ring marked boulder in the Heather Park near Tombuie.¹ The Stone Circle I now describe is about 2 miles further west and at about the same height above sea-level, 1200 feet. Both command very extensive views of the lake and the mountains to the W. and N.W. The only difference is that the former sees Benmore in the S.W., and the latter Ben Brackie and Ben-y-gloe to the N.W. more than the other. It is situated in a wood not far from the Acharn Burn and on the edge of a field called Greenland, because, while all the ground about is green, it is heathery and comparatively cold and barren. A modern wall passes right across it. There are various cracks and markings on the stones, and I have carefully examined them, but they seem to be all natural.

The plan (fig. 1), for which the Society is indebted to Mr John D. Macleod, architect, 108 George Street, Edinburgh, will explain the details of the Circle better than any verbal description. Six stones remain on the site, of which four are still erect and in position, and two are prostrate, one of which has apparently fallen inwards and the other outwards of the line of the Circle, the diameter of which, touching the

¹ *Proceedings*, vol. xxxiv. p. 325.

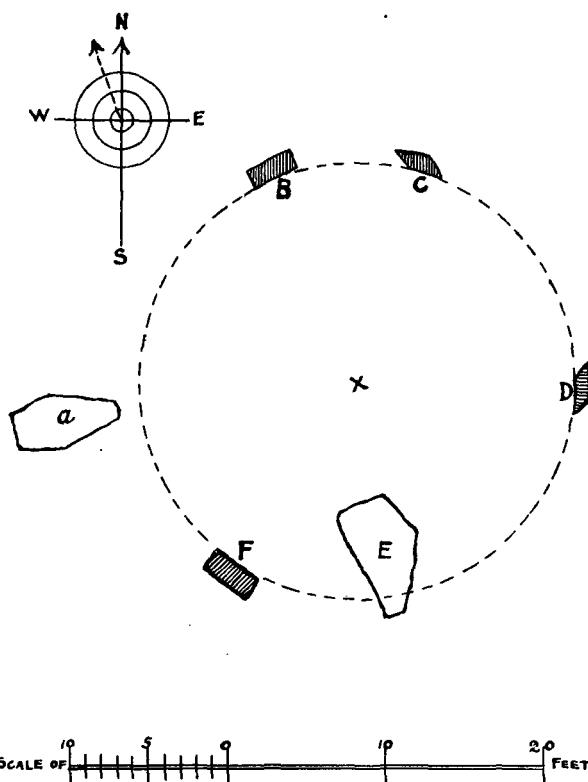


Fig. 1. Ground-plan of the Stone Circle at Greenland.

inner sides of the stones still standing, is 27 feet 9 inches. Mr Macleod has supplied the following dimensions of the several stones:—

- | | | | | |
|---------|-----------------|----------|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| A . . . | 6 feet 9 inches | \times | 3 feet 6 inches, | lying flat. |
| B . . . | 8 " " | 4 " | in circumference at ground level. | |
| | 1 foot 7 " | " | high above the ground level. | |
| C . . . | 6 feet 10 " | " | in circumference at ground level. | |
| | 4 " 0 " | " | high above ground level. | |
| D . . . | 6 " 0 " | " | in circumference at ground level. | |

D . .	4 "	3 "	high above ground level.
E . .	7 "	8 "	× 4 feet 6 inches, lying flat.
F . .	9 "	0 "	in circumference at ground level.
	5 "	8 "	high above ground level.

The photograph (fig. 2) taken by myself shows a view of the Circle.

Between this Stone Circle and the Heather Park there are several places where there are cup-marked boulders, and for 2 miles to the west of the Acharn Burn they are still more numerous, but none are in any way remarkable. They are almost all at about from 800 to 1200 feet above sea-level. On this side of the lake there are very few lower down. It is, however, possible that extended cultivation may have led to the destruction of the boulders on which they once may have been, but I think this unlikely.

Looking at the ancient monuments of this district, there seem to be three fairly marked varieties. And yet it is difficult to say exactly wherein the difference consists. There are high places, whose prominent feature may be a rock or a boulder or a plain stone circle. They never seem to be associated with burials, and the stone circles have no mounds or cairns or stones outside of the plain circle. Then there are the circles lower down, more elaborate, and having a later and more developed look about them, and associated with burials, like the one at Croftmorag. Then there are single stones, groups of two or three, and small circles apparently of different periods, and probably all of them monumental. This is the impression which they leave on my mind, and for which I can give very little proof.

In the *Book of Garth and Glenlyon* it is mentioned on page 297 that "on the first day of October 1529 a stone cross was erected at Larkmonemerkyth by Dougall Johnson, on the great stone which is otherwise called Clachur." And a note says of Larkmonemerkyth, "This is the pass or lairig between Kenmore and Glenquaich." Clachur just means "the stone," and thus the cross must have been erected either at the Heather Park or in its vicinity. I have never been able to find that cross. The only thing which may be the remnants of it are one

(or it may be two) stone gate-posts lying a few yards from this Stone Circle. They have evidently never been used and never were meant to be used as high up the hill as where they now lie. No one can tell me anything about them or when they were dressed into their present shape. Neither in the vicinity is there any stone of the same quality. The



Fig. 2. View of the Stone Circle at Greenland.

pillars are similar to some which are used for park gates in the vicinity of Taymouth and which were put in position about 80 or 90 years ago, and the stone for which was taken from a quarry about a mile to the south of the Heather Park.

Innis Buidhe, the ancient burial-place of the Macnabs of Bovain, etc., is an island on the Dochart where it passes Killin. In it there are two gravestones of some interest. One is a large, heavy slab of very coarse schist, such as is found in the bed of the river in the vicinity. It is dressed to about 6 feet by 3, and is from its texture very unsuitable

for the purposes of the artist. It has cut on it in low relief a full-length figure of a warrior, and on the pillow and at his sides there is carved a good deal of ornament. The labour of cutting out the figure and its ornaments on such a stone must have been very great, and the result is not very satisfactory.

The other (fig. 3) is a much smaller stone, about 3 feet 10 inches by



Fig. 3. Grave-slab of Finlay Macnab of Bovain.

1 foot 10 inches. It is of a coarse-grained, hard, almost black stone. Towards one end there is a hole about 3 inches in diameter drilled right through the stone. This was done for the purpose of enabling it to be more easily transported to its present position. Stones pierced in this way and for this purpose are not uncommon. In the parish of North Knapdale there is a small bridge of two spans erected by some laird of old, in expiation of some ecclesiastical offence ; each span is composed of two or three large slabs, and each of them has a hole about 6 inches in diameter drilled through near one end to enable it to be dragged into position.

The central panel on the stone is occupied by a shield which, though now quite defaced, presumably bore the arms of Macnab of Bovain, or perhaps those of Macnab impaled with those of Campbell of Glenorchy, as indicated by the initials F. M. and K. C. above and below the shield respectively, for Finlay Macnab and his wife Katherine Campbell. Below the shield are a death's head and cross-bones, the usual symbols of mortality in vogue at the period. The inscription, in the manner common to these recumbent sepulchral slabs, forms a border completely surrounding the central panel, and filling most of the space between it and the margin of the stone, which is fairly regular along both sides, but less so across the ends. Assuming that the positions of the shield and emblems differentiate the head from the foot of the stone, the beginning of the inscription is from the right-hand corner at the foot of the stone, as it faces the spectator, upwards, and so round the stone, from right to left, every letter being reversed. It reads in this manner:—

THIS · BVRIEL · APERTINES · TO · FINLAY · MACNAB · OF · BAVAIN.

Gilbert Macnab, the first laird of Bovain, acquired these lands in 1336. He was succeeded by Finlay, who was succeeded by Patrick, and he by three Finlays in succession. One of these married a Mariot Campbell, but most likely the Finlay of the monument was the seventh laird, who it is almost certain married a daughter of Sir Colin Campbell of Glenorchy about 1550. What makes it almost certain that this was our Finlay, is that there is no one later to whom it could almost possibly be ascribed. This would make the date of the stone about the end of the sixteenth century. It is very likely that he was the poet mentioned by Dean Macgregor as the author of a piece in the collection of Gaelic poetry printed in *The Book of Lismore*.

The accompanying representation of a portion of another grave-slab (fig. 4), probably of earlier date, is worthy of record. Mr Mungo Headrick has kindly supplied the photograph, and a few notes of the discovery of the stone. It was found in digging a grave in September

1908, in the north-east corner of the Churchyard of Killin, lying on its side about 2 feet below the surface. It is only the upper portion of a

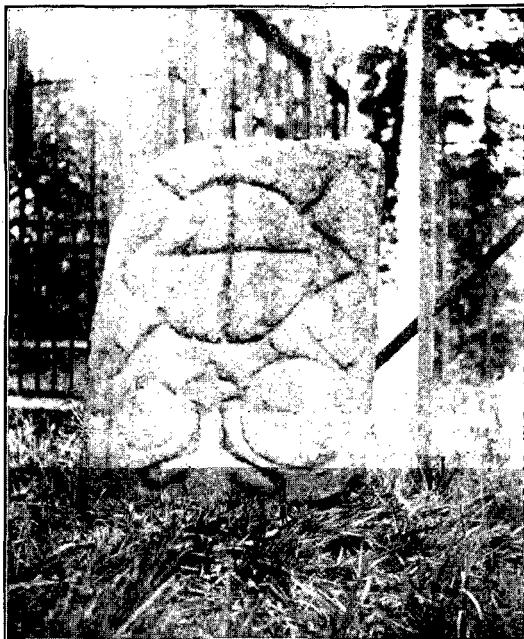


Fig. 4. Incised Grave-slab found in the Churchyard of Killin.

recumbent grave-slab, but is interesting on account of the crudeness of the workmanship, and the unusual character of the symbolism. The upper part of the sword, with reversed quillons, points to a pretty early date, and it is probably the earliest sepulchral monument yet discovered at Killin.