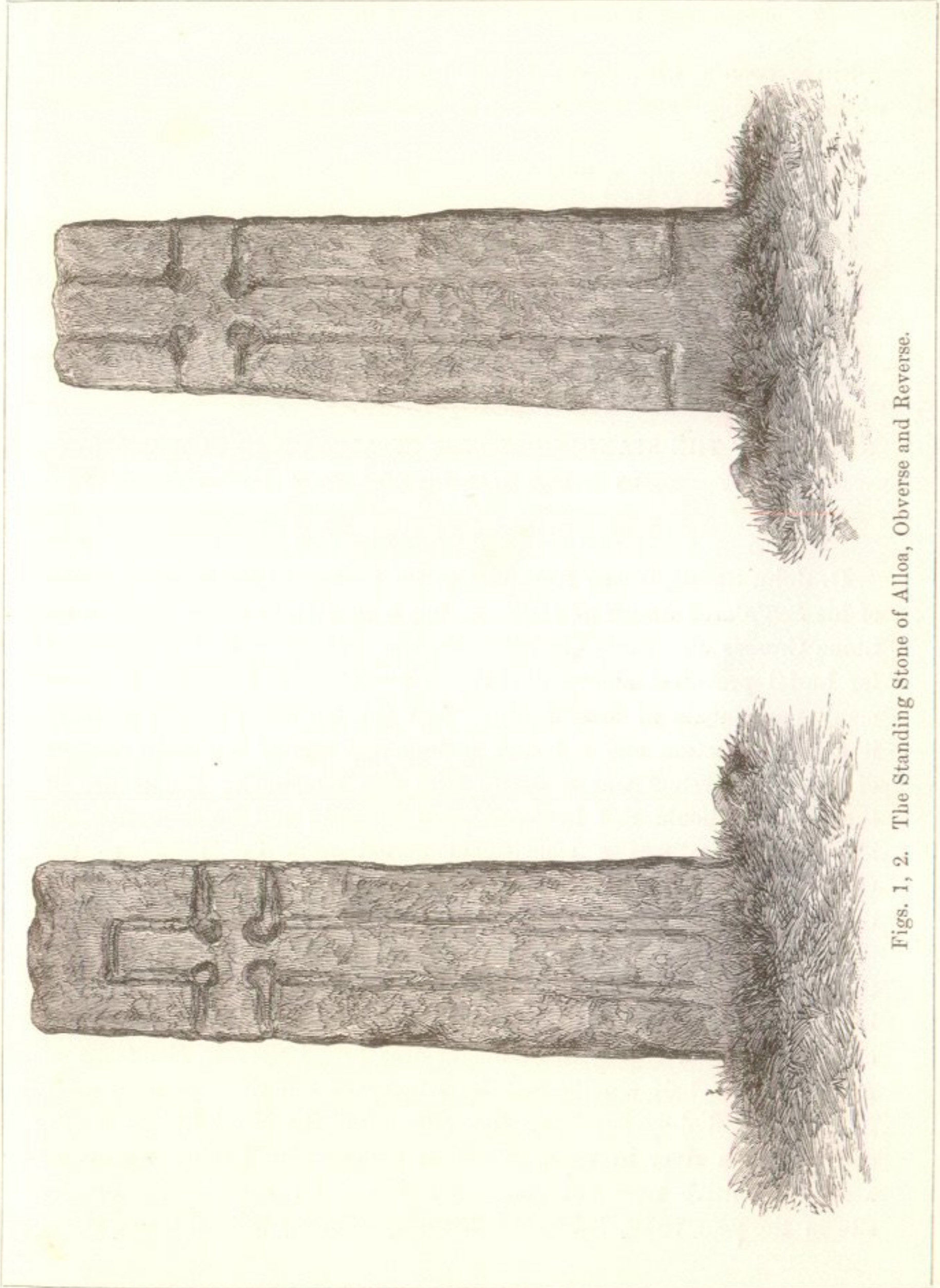


I.

NOTICES OF THE STANDING STONES OF ALLOA AND CLACKMANAN.  
By PETER MILLER, F.S.A. Scot.

*The Standing Stone at Alloa.*

Dr John Stuart, in the Appendix to the preface of the second volume of his *Sculptured Stones of Scotland*, has a most interesting chapter on Stone Crosses and Early Christian Burials. He says that a reverence for burial prevailed among our Pagan ancestors, and we yet discover many monuments of that feeling; but the Christian system gave to it a new direction and a loftier feeling, and one of the requirements of this new system was a desire that the remains of the bodies of the faithful should rest in consecrated ground; and he expresses the idea that there was a transitional period from the Pagan to the Christian era, when the body was unburned and laid at length in the old sites which our Pagan ancestors used. He further adds, "from the number of stone cists which have been found around some of the cross-slabs, it would seem probable that such a site had come to be regarded as consecrated. A very interesting example of burial of what seems a transition character was found near to the town of Alloa. About half a mile east from it, upon the ridge of a swelling ground immediately adjoining the alluvial banks of the river Forth, and with the river in view, stands a stone pillar, having a cross of a very primitive type cut on either face. An examination of the site in the year 1829, led to the discovery of many human bones, much



Figs. 1, 2. The Standing Stone of Alloa, Obverse and Reverse.

decayed, close to the stone; and at about 9 feet north of its base, of a cist 3 feet in length, formed of sandstone flags, which also contained human bones much decayed. The cist was covered with a flag, at each end of which, on the inside, was incised a small cross of the simplest form, but evidently cut with care."

The surroundings of the stone were, about the time mentioned, entirely changed, and the adjacent ground all thrown into Alloa Park, and it now stands quite erect, a solitary memorial of the past, with no legend except the vulgar one, that it marks the site of a battle with the Picts. The appearance of the "stone" now, as it is represented in the two cuts prepared in 1884, looks very different from the one given by Dr Stuart. I saw it last year, and the cuts are a faithful representation of its present appearance. It is very different from what it was over sixty years ago, when I knew it first. The lines marking the cross are now very indistinct, and the stone is more weather-worn. At the time that the old surroundings were removed in 1829, the stone was taken down and placed in an upright position. It now stands due north and south. Long ago it stood on the inside of a hedge-row, and was situated about 160 paces from the old road between Alloa and Clackmanan, and west of it a few paces was an old parish road. Its dimensions from actual measurement are—height 8 feet 3 inches, breadth 2 feet 7½ inches, and about 9 inches in thickness.

In the old Statistical Account of the Parish of Alloa, 1791, this stone is briefly described, and it is added that the old people used to speak of the figure of a man on horseback which they have seen upon it. Upwards of twenty years before that time, on digging a ditch close by the stone, many human remains were discovered. About two furlongs west of the "standing stone" there is an old farm-steading called Gabberston, which gives the name to the district, and immediately in the rear of the house runs a burn of some size, which forms the boundary to the north. In the *Retours* under the year 1636, there is the following:—"In the Earldom of Mar and the Barony and Regality of Alway—the lands of Galberstoun with the island of Clackmanan," &c. Going still farther back to 1367, in the Chamberlain's Rolls, as given in the first volume of the *Scottish Acts of Parliament*, revised edition, it is Villa de

Galbartston and Galbardston. In the deed of excambion between Lord Robert Erskine and David II., by which David exchanges the Alloa property for Stragarteny in Perthshire, belonging to Lord Erskine, it is Galbardston. Going still farther back to 1359, *Chamberlain's Rolls*, vol. i. p. 329, it is Galbrathton. That is the oldest notice of it that I have access to. There is an earlier charter in 1319. These are the oldest notices of the name of the lands and the stone, and their meaning is quite obvious—the *stone* or *ton* of Galbrath.

I have referred to a burn that runs behind the farm-steading of Gamberston. It flows over a course of three miles from Gartmoran dam, through the old town of Alloa, and falls into the Forth below the harbour of Alloa. In its course it is known by the name of Brathie or Brothie's burn; that was its more ancient name, as well. For I find in the charter of an old feu in the old town of Alloa, granted by the Earl of Mar to Erskine of Dun about the close of the seventeenth century, that it was bounded by the Brathie burn, and two centuries before that time it bounded another property: "To the Ecclesia de Alway an annual-rent of 16 pennies from that tenement of the quondam John Gardin of the said burgh contiguous to the Brathy burn" (*Reg. of the Great Seal*, vol. i. 1497).

This coincidence of the two names of the lands and the burn forming their northern boundary at this early date forms a close link between the two. The name-word of the burn, the lands, and the stone is obviously derived from a common source, whatever that may have been.

The expression Villa de Galbrathton in the *Chamberlain's Rolls* in 1359 supplies additional important information as to what the lands really consisted of. There was a vill or town there on and before 1359, and the human remains found there in 1829 were the bones of the inhabitants in the local burying ground, completely confirming the conjecture of Dr Stuart, that it was consecrated ground, and in all probability marked the site of a former cell or chapel. Adjacent to the field in which the "stone" stands there is another property, called Hillton or Halltoun, on which there were crofts in early times, as stated in the *Retours*,—another evidence of population in the immediate vicinity of the Vill de Galbrathton, or Galbrathston. All these facts as to the

name of the stone lead up to the idea that this "standing stone" marks the spot where was buried in Pictish times the remains of some person known as Brath, Breidhi, or Brude. Accepting Dr Stuart's expressed opinion, that the "cist" and its human remains as well as the "stone" is very ancient, and marks the transition period of burials from Pagan to Christian times, it seems probable that the suffix *stone* or *ton* to Galbrath is simply a Saxon addition to the original name-word, a very common occurrence in names of places when the Pictish language ceased to be understood by the common people, and that the primary meaning of Galbrath was the Stone of Brath.

What means the prefix *gal*? Joyce, in his *Irish Names of Places*, answers that question in a very satisfactory manner. "In many parts of Ireland, and particularly in districts where the stone circles occur, may be seen huge blocks of stone, which evidently owe their upright position, not to accident, but to the design and labour of an ancient people. They are called by the native Irish *gallauns* or *leaganns*, and in character they are precisely similar to the hoar-stones of England, the hare-stanes of Scotland, and maen-gaer of Wales. They are supposed to have been idol stones, to have been stones of memorial, or have been erected as land marks, boundaries, and lastly to be monumental stones. We know that the erection of pillar-stones as sepulchral monuments is often recorded in ancient Irish authorities," &c. He says further, "that the word *gall* has been used in the Irish language from the remotest antiquity to denote a foreigner;" and in *Cormac's Glossary* the word *gall* was applied to pillar stones, because they were first erected by the *Galls*, and that the word gives the name, or forms part of it, in many places in Ireland. It appears more than probable that the prefix *gal* in Galbrath has simply been added to the name of the individual to commemorate whom this stone has been raised in remote times, so that its meaning is the Stone of Brath. It is undoubted that a very large number of the names of places in Clackmananshire are the same as names of places in various districts of Ireland, and the name of the parish in which this "stone" was erected is a very good example. Although the stone is now in Alloa, a separate parish, three centuries ago, as we know from *Cambuskenneth Chartulary*, that Alloa formed

part of the parish of Clackmanan. There are Kilmanans in Ireland, as well as other *manans*.

Some correct information respecting Clackmanan Castle and its old surroundings, along with well-authenticated facts concerning its early history as a royal residence of our early Scottish kings, may possibly throw some important light as to who Brath was. The castle is situated about eight miles from Stirling, on the direct road to Dunfermline, the residence of Malcolm Canmore and his saintly Queen Margaret, and about half way between it and Clackmanan is situated Culross, the seat of St Serf. Most of the parish churches in the county are dedicated to St Serf—Clackmanan, Alva, Tullibody, and Tullicoultry. The capital (Fothuirtabaicht), Forteviot, of the Pictish kingdom of Fortrenn, is only about 20 miles distant through Gleneagles, on the north side of the Ochil hills. The Holyrood and other charters of David I. and other kings give us much information respecting Clackmanan in David I.'s time. It had a royal forest in the neighbourhood and a royal park adjacent to it, embracing what is now known as the lands of Galbrathston, and including what is now Alloa Park. There was a mill belonging to the king on the Black Devon, only a furlong or so from the "standing stone," called the Park Mill. The mill has only disappeared in my own time, and south of that is the King's Meadow, or the Park Meadow, all indicating that the place had been a royal residence long anterior to Malcolm Canmore's time into that of the Picts. "Brude" or "Brath" is a name well known among the Pictish kings. There were several of them from Columba's time down to 763, including King Brude, who overthrew Egfrid at Nechtanes Mere in 668. The name has various spellings, according to the various records in which it is found—Breth, Bret, Breidhi, Bruidhi, Bridie, Brude—in the *Pictish Chronicle*, *Chronicle of Scots and Picts*, the *Annals of Ulster*, the *Annals of Tighernach*, &c.

Another rather curious coincidence worth mentioning is the fact that the two properties on the east and the west of Clackmanan Castle are named after two of the most noted of our Pictish kings, Kennet, on the east of Clackmanan town, the seat of Lord Balfour of Burleigh. It is known in the *Chamberlain Rolls*, 1359, as Kanat; and the name of some of the early kings in the *Pictish Chronicle* is spelt Kanath. On

the west, again, there is the lands of Brath, the name of one of the more illustrious of the Pictish kings.

It appears that all these facts point in one direction, and enable us to arrive at a very probable construction that may be put upon them with some degree of confidence. Taking Dr Stuart's views, as already stated, as a foundation that the stone cist with its cover, with the two incised crosses on its under side, and the Pictish cross within a few feet of the cist, mark the last resting-place of some eminent or illustrious personage at the time that the Pagan form of burial had passed or was passing away, and another mode more in harmony with the new gospel of peace was supplanting it, assuming that as the foundation on which to form an opinion respecting the origin and meaning of the stone,—the name of the lands, the burn, and the stone all harmonise as to their common origin. The fact of Clackmanan being in early times the abode of royalty before our earliest historical record of it commences, leads up to the conclusion that "Brath" was either one of the many kings of that name in Pictish times that was not buried in Iona, or at least was a member of the royal race. What adds, in my opinion, a double significance to this probability is the fact, that the cist and the "standing stone" with its Pictish cross are within the precincts of the royal park, and within half a mile of the castle itself.

#### *The Clackmanan Stone.*

Clackmanan, although now a place of little note, appears to have been in the early periods of Scottish history, and presumably in Pictish times, a place of considerable importance. Its proximity to Stirling Castle and Dunfermline, the abodes of royalty, and only about 20 miles from For-teviot, the capital town of the Pictish kingdom of Fortrenn, and the fact of its having been a favourite residence of the kings of Scotland from the commencement of the twelfth century in David I.'s time, invest the castle and the district about it with more than ordinary interest to the antiquary. There is no reason to suppose that it only became a royal castle in King David's time, as then there was a royal forest in the neighbourhood, and the old name-words of places situated within the district clearly indicate that we must go back to Pictish times in order to account for their

existence, so that there are many grounds for the belief that Clackmanan Castle was the abode of the Pictish kings as well as the Scottish kings. Dr Stuart, in his *Records of the Priory of the Isle of May*, says "that the district around Clackmanan was connected with St Serf, at an early period, either as lying within the territory of his monastery at Culross, or of some religious house founded by him, seems plain from various circumstances."

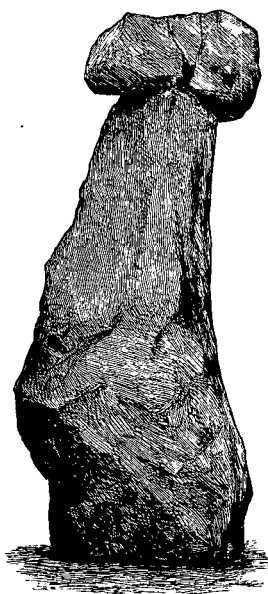


Fig 3. The Clackmanan Stone.

The old "clack" or stone that forms the prefix to the name-word Clackmanan must be of considerable antiquity. Its form and appearance have nothing to excite remark. The two larger portions of the stone are battened together with iron, and the portion forming the cleft appears to be detached from the larger one. It is only the legend or tradition respecting its history and its association with the name-word Clackmanan that makes it interesting to the antiquary. Its dimensions are as follows:—It is over 3 feet in length, 2 in breadth, and about the same in thickness. Its form is oval, and it has a deep cleft on its upper side. The stone has nothing peculiar about it to indicate what it may have been originally, or the uses it was made to serve in early times. There is no appearance of its ever having had an inscription or any ornamentation upon it. It is simply a boulder-stone of whinstone, such as are found in abundance

at the Abbey Craig near Cambuskenneth. It was placed on the tall boulder slab on which it now stands, brought from the Abbey Craig in the year 1833 by the late Robert Bruce of Kennet, and the late Professor Fleming, who was then minister of the parish. Previous to that time it lay on the ground alongside of the old jail and court-house of Clackmanan, close by the old cross of the town. The old legends or traditions respecting its giving the name to Clackmanan are only fable, as they are all based on occurrences that took place after the place had



its present name. The history of the stone and its true meaning must be sought for in the origin and derivation of the word Clackmanan. That does not appear very difficult, provided some correct method of interpretation is applied to this compound word, that is equally applicable to a large number of name-words of a generic character, having for their prefix and suffix words of a similar import as compose this one. In determining the derivation of names of places, it may happen, and often does occur, that the suffix has a wide geographical range, and is not confined to one locality or place, but extends to various districts in Scotland or it may be common to both Ireland and Scotland, as in this instance with the word now under consideration. This mode of getting at the meaning of what appears at first sight merely a local name is far more likely to lead to the correct interpretation than when the opposite course is followed. However ancient the stone may be or the name of the locality, the earliest notice we have of its existence is in David I.'s charters, in the Isle of May chartulary, and in the *St Andrews Register*. In the Isle of May, the charter is directed to the Gilleseerfis of Clacmanec, and in the *St Andrews* one it is spelt Clacmaneck. The slight information respecting it, as contained in those charters of King David, assures us that it was a place of some note, a royal castle, and must have existed as such for a longer or shorter period prior to that time, for it was then a royal residence and had a royal forest attached to it, as the charter testifies.

A simple analysis of the two Gaelic words of which the name-word Clackmanan is composed, gives us at once an explanation of its origin and meaning; and when this mode of ascertaining its derivation and meaning is corroborated by some twenty other similar name-words in Scotland and Ireland, and supported by the authority of Joyce, there seems to be no reason to doubt that it is the correct one. The prefix "Clack" means a stone. "Manac," a monk, is Irish, and "manach" is Gaelic, so that the meaning of this name-word is simply the "monks' stone," or the "stone of the monks." The plural in Irish is "manaigh"; accordingly, in some of the Irish synonyms the word is spelt *Monaiigh*. The modern form "manan" is simply a corrupt one, and is common alike to the Irish and Scotch name-words, as Joyce in his *Irish Names of Places* shows very plainly. A very

large number of name-words of places both in Scotland and Ireland retain the original form, either "manach" or "monoch." The meaning plainly is the monks' stone. When the name was first applied to this dun or castle it is impossible to say. It is situated on an eminence or hill of considerable elevation above the level of the Forth and the surrounding country. In all probability in prehistoric times and before the introduction of Christianity into Pictland, this stone may have formed an altar or sacrificial stone, dedicated to some heathen deity, whereat our Pagan ancestors worshipped long before the introduction of Christianity. It is well known that the monks, the apostles of the Christian faith, preached and taught the people at their old altars—the stones or kirks of Pagan times.

The unrecorded history of this stone can only be conjectured from what is known respecting other stones of a similar character, so far as they are associated with the olden customs of their localities, as having been in early times the recognised place where public meetings took place, where the public markets and fairs were held, and where the judicial authorities held their courts for the administration of justice before market-crosses and court-houses were erected. In this very town we have it, on the authority of an old Act of Parliament for the erection of a court-house and jail at the expense of the community, that the sheriff had previous to that time to hold his courts in the open air at the cross of the town; and the probability is that many of his predecessors held their courts at this stone long before the cross was first erected, for it is beyond question that crosses were only erected after the Christian faith had become the faith of the people. They were originally emblematical of Christianity, although in more recent times they have become only objects of archæological research.

*Note*—In corroboration of this derivation and meaning of this name-word, I append a list of name-words of places culled from various authentic documents, along with their meanings and some observations taken from Joyce's *Irish Names of Places*:—

- Killmanagh ecclesia, in the deanery of Siller, Ireland.
- Kilmanan, Ireland.
- Kilmanagh, Ireland.
- Kilmanach, Kyle.

Glenmanach, the Monks' Glen.

Stramanane, in Bute and Carac, 1450.

Bolmeanach, Isle of Skye.

Kendelamanan, Elgyn, in 1337.

Rothmanoch, lands belonging to the bishop and priory of St Andrews in the twelfth century. In this case we have all the various spellings according to Joyce's formula in subsequent notices of the same land—Rothmanan, Rothmanie, and Rothmany.

Coupmanach, Paisley Chartulary.

Ironmanoch, } Parton. This is simply a corruption of Hill of the Monks,  
Ardnamanoch, } Top. Galloway, Western Islands.

Dalmanoch, Paisley chartulary, 1224, the Monks' Field.

Dalmanach Farm, near Bonhill, Dumbarton.

Dalmenach Works, Dumbarton.

Cockmanach, in Paisley charters, Kilpatrick parish.

Carmunock, near Glasgow, the Monks' Fort, 1127.

Melmanach, Register of the Great Seal, 1473, the Monkshill.

Dunnamanagh, Ireland.

Fermanagh, Oak Grove, Ireland.

Joyce says that the common Irish word for a monk is "manach," and he describes how the English form of the word "managh" is to be distinguished from the same word meaning middle. If "managh" be preceded by *na*, the genitive plural of the article, it may be taken to mean monks. When the Anglicised word ends in *y*, the meaning is seldom doubtful, as in the case of Farranmanny, Farranmanagh, and Farrannamanagh, the monks' land. Kilnamanagh, which is the name of several places, generally represents the Irish *cill-na-manach*; similar in formation to this is Garra-namanagh, the name of a townland and parish, signifying the garden or shrubbery of the monks; and Dunnamanagh, the name of a village in Tyrone, the monks' dun or fortress. When the word occurs in the genitive singular, it is often Anglicised *many*, as in Drum-many, the name of several townlands in Cavan; Drummanaigh, the ridge of the monk. Applying these remarks to names of places in Scotland having similar terminations, many—manan—manach—manic—it supplies us with a new derivation and meaning to a numerous lists of names of places more in accordance with their true meaning than most of the fanciful derivations and meanings given to the greater number of those names by modern authorities. Dalmeny, a much-abused name-word, explained in

this way would be Dunmanack or Dunmanac, the hill or fort of the monks. This appears after all to be the real meaning of the word, for the oldest form of it is in one of the Mid-Lothian charters. The charter is witnessed by Henricus, persona (parson) de Dunmani, about the year 1190. Kilmany, in Fife, may be explained in a similar manner, for according to its parish records the word was spelt Kilmanan over two centuries ago. There is yet another authority in support of this contention, an extract from Dr Stuart's *Sculptured Stones of Scotland*:—"He (St Patrick) proceeded eastward to Lec Finnhaile. Patrick formed a cross in the stone over Cillmor Uachter Muaidhe<sup>1</sup> to the west; but Lia-na-manach is its name at this day,—*i.e.*, from Crumthier Monach, the saint of Cill Olean, but there was no church there at that time."<sup>2</sup> Lic is one of the Irish forms of the word *leac, lic, leag*; it is commonly applied to a flag or large flat stone. So that we have at all events the identical word Clack-na-manach in the genitive case, clack being the Gaelic equivalent for the Irish leac, a stone.