

IV.

NOTE ON THE OGAM AND LATIN INSCRIPTIONS FROM THE ISLE OF MAN, AND A RECENTLY FOUND BILINGUAL IN CELTIC AND LATIN. BY P. M. C. KERMODE, F.S.A. Scot.

Before describing the only bilingual inscription yet brought to light in the Isle of Man, it may be interesting, by way of introduction and for the purpose of comparison, to give a brief account of the Latin and the Ogam inscriptions already known there. These have been described and figured by me in my work on Manx crosses (Bemrose & Sons, 1907); but, as the photographic reproductions did not come out clearly, I here figure them from pen-and-ink drawings which I have made for the purpose—not all to the same scale. The perspective in the first three makes the character for M appear imperfect, but these are regularly formed, and quite plain in the originals.

Two of these stones were discovered in 1871 near the Port St Mary railway station in the parish of Rushen at the south of the island, when a bank, in which was an ancient burial-ground, was being removed for ballast. The first [No. 1]¹ is an unhewn and weathered slab of Silurian sandstone, nearly 4 feet high by about 14 inches wide and 4 inches thick. The inscription runs up the "arris," or angle, of the stone, and is continued round the top—DOVAIDONA MAQI DROATA : (the stone) of Dovaidu, son of the Druid (fig. 1). The other [2] is a boulder of local clay-slate, about 20 inches long by 5 inches thick and now 5 inches wide, having been broken down its length when found. The inscription runs up the right angle as the reader faces the stone, and over the top—BIVAIDONAS MAQI MUCOI CUNAVA . . . : (the stone) of Bivaidu, son of the Clan Connell. The stone flaked and cracked after exposure to the air, and the characters for D O are now cut in the cement with which it was mended. The last word is imperfect, owing to the break, but what remains was probably followed by the

¹ The numbers in brackets refer to my book on Manx crosses.

Ogams for L I ;—compare CUNOVALI, a name which occurs in Roman capitals on a stone from St Madrons, Cornwall (Hübner, 2). This, as

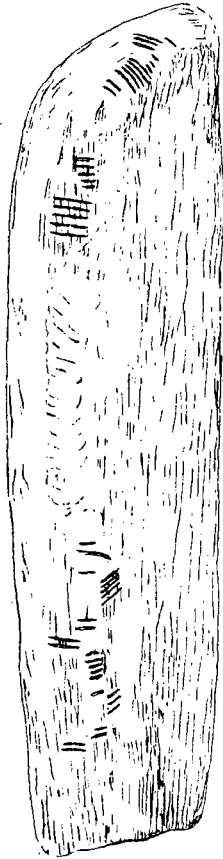


Fig. 1. DOVAIDONA MAQI DROATA.

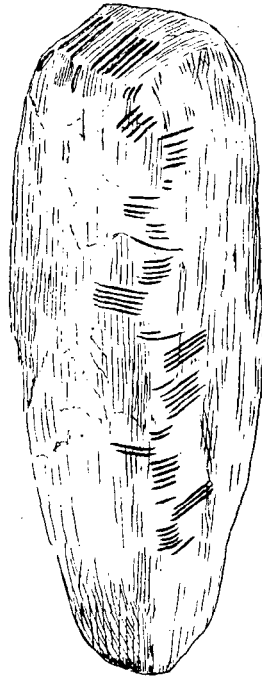


Fig. 2. BIVAIDONAS MAQI MUCOI
CUNAVA.

suggested by Professor Rhys, would give a genitive, making in modern language Connell in O'Connell, and perhaps the origin of our Manx name Cannell (fig. 2).

Two other inscriptions were found within three miles of the last, in Kirk Arbory, the parish adjoining Rushen on the east. One of these [3], found in a wall at Bimaken Friary, is a pillar of sericite schist, about 4 feet 6 inches high by 12 inches by 6 inches; the upper end,



Fig. 3. CUNAMAGLI
MAQ . . .

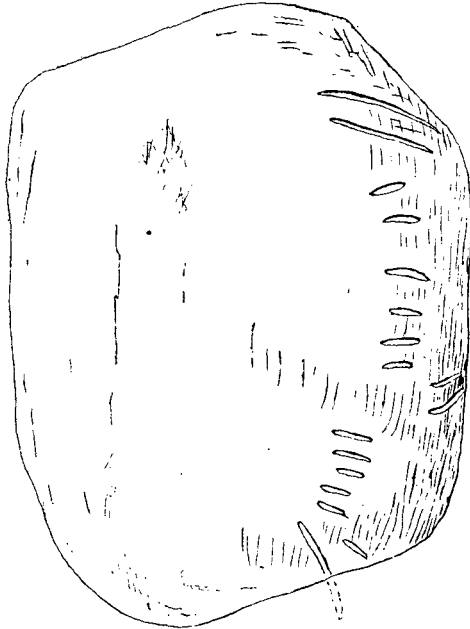


Fig. 4. MAQLEOG.

unfortunately, is broken off, so that we have lost the name of the father. It reads up the edge of the stone—CUNAMAGLI MAQ . . . : (the stone) of Cunamaglus, son of . . . (fig. 3). The other, found loose at the Friary buildings [4], is of later date, as shown by the form of the inscription, but the Ogam are of the same character. It is a granite boulder about $17\frac{1}{2}$ inches by 16 inches by 18 inches, having the in-

scription on the edge, MAQLEOG: simply the name with no inflexion—our modern “Clague” in the nominative case (fig. 4).

These four inscriptions are of pure Munster type; the latter may be later than the ninth century, the others as early as the sixth. In

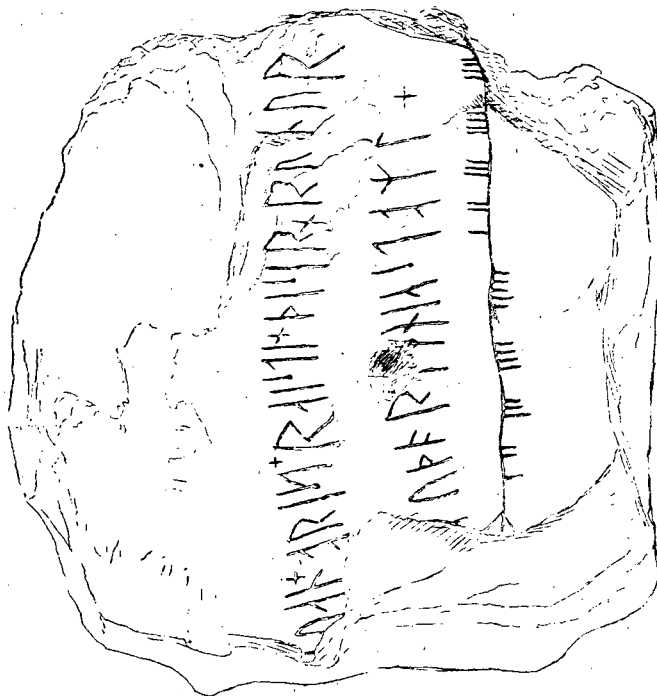


Fig. 5. Runic Inscription and Ogam Alphabet, Maughold.

1900 a broken slab was found at the parish church, Kirk Maughold, on the east coast, which bears two lines of inscription in Runes, namely, “John Priest cut these Runes,” and the Futhork or Runic alphabet. Below is the first half of the Ogam alphabet, BLFSN HDTCQ . . . , the scores cut across an artificial line on the face of the stone (fig. 5).

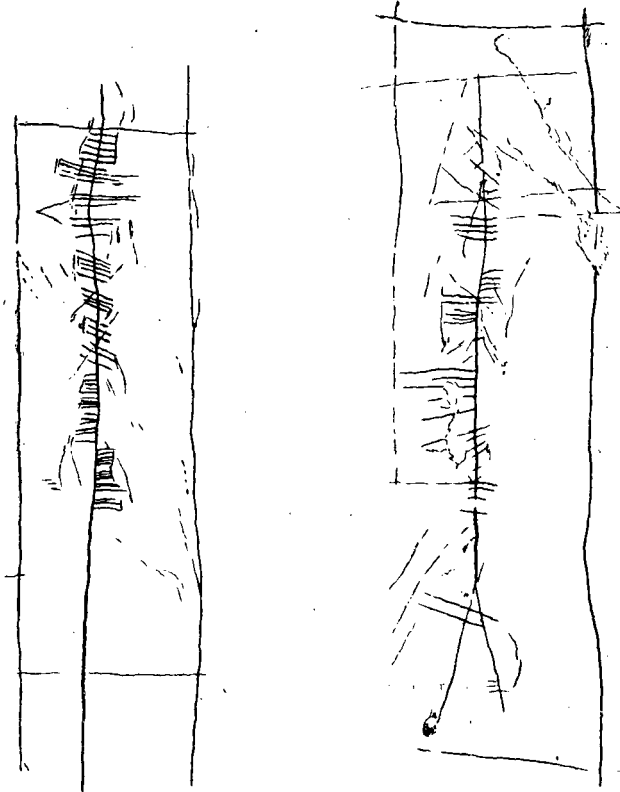
The characters are of the usual type; but the date, as shown by the Runic inscription, considered in conjunction with another from Corna in the same parish, also carved by John the Priest, must be from about the end of the twelfth or beginning of the thirteenth century.

Two other Ogam inscriptions have been found on a Scandinavian slab of the eleventh century at Kirk Michael, on the north-west coast; unlike the rest, they belong to the class of "Pictish" Ogams met with in Scotland and the northern islands. The face of this slab [104] shows, below a handsome cross of Celtic type, the perfect Ogam alphabet of twenty letters, reading from below upwards. The stem-line is deeply cut, but the scores have been very finely made, and are just legible by a close scrutiny in a favourable light. The characters consist of Bind-Ogams, the groups of different lengths and at different angles, by which they are rendered more easily distinguishable. The bind-line of the second Ogam is in each case carried backwards to cap the single score preceding it; the vowels are represented by scores instead of by dots or notches (fig. 6). The back of the slab contains two inscriptions in Runes which differ in some respects from those in general use in the Isle of Man. Between them has been an Ogam inscription in characters similar to those of the alphabet on the face, but so finely scratched, and now so badly weathered, as to be quite illegible; the scores for G, below, and for E, above, seem quite clear, but that and the fact that they are Ogams, is all that can be said with any degree of certainty.¹ There can, I think, be no doubt that they have been added after the cross was carved, and they do not

¹ Lord Southesk gave a reading of this (*Academy*, xxxv. pp. 359-361, Nov. 26, 1887), from a drawing and description of it furnished by Mr J. H. Nicholson and the Rev. E. B. Savage. He read from above downwards: "MUCOMALL AFI UA MULLGUC." I think, however, that, as in the alphabet which was not then known, it ought to be read from below upwards, and some of the apparent scores which at first sight look like Ogams are certainly due to cracks and weathering and to the rough dressing of the face of the stone.

appear to have any relation to the Runic inscriptions on the same stone (fig. 7).

Only three inscriptions in Latin have hitherto been brought to



Figs. 6 and 7. Ogam Alphabet and Inscription from Kirk Michael.

light in the Isle of Man. The first [34] was found in 1782 at the foundations of the old church at Santon, in the south of the island, and is mentioned and figured by Cumming and by Hübner. This is on a block of whinstone, 45 inches long by 9 inches by $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches, a space

of 22 inches having been dressed and smoothed for the purpose. It reads, AVITI MONOMENTI, in Roman capitals, well formed and evenly spaced, the terminal I of each word horizontal (fig. 8). The initial M is of a form found in early Celtic MSS., and, on stones, appears in an inscription from Caldy Island, where, however, it is ligatured with the preceding A (Hübner 94), and in one from Llaniltern, near Llandaff, (*Lap. Wall.* p. 7, pl. 2, fig. 4; Hübner, 64). The inscription is much nearer to one end of the stone than to the other, and no doubt the pillar was intended to have been set upright with the inscription reading from above downwards, as is usual in these early Christian monuments in Britain. The formula is unique; Hübner reads the second

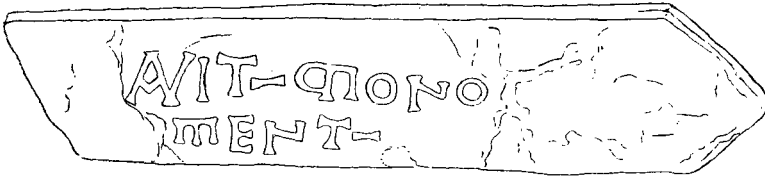


Fig. 8. From Santon.

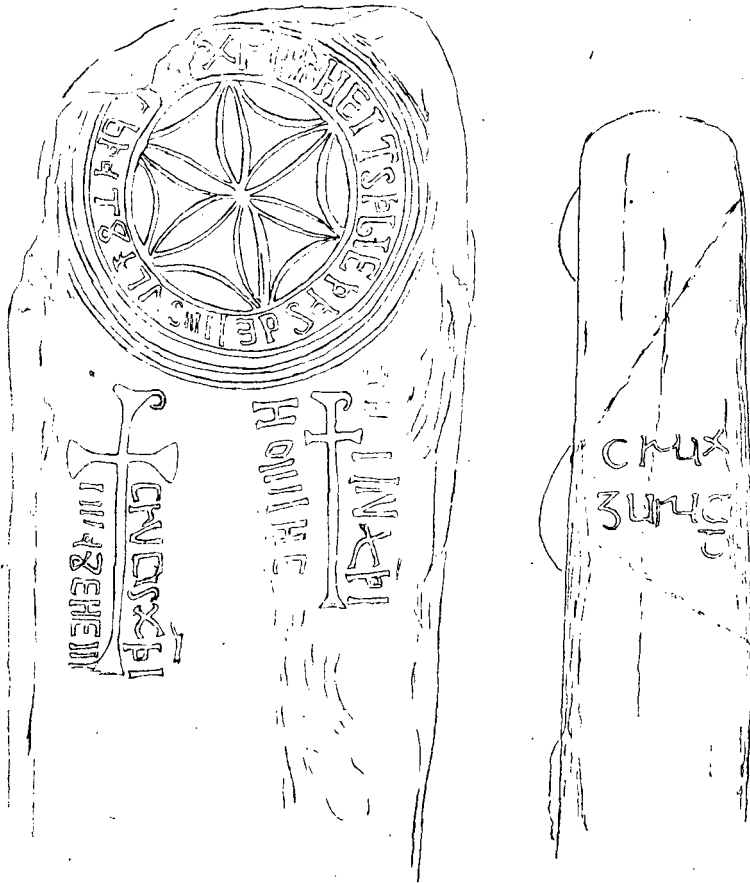
word as a name, "Noromerti," but his figure is correct. Evidently the sense is "The Tomb of Avitus." The fact that the only two words are substantives and in the genitive case, taken with the Latin names and the well-formed capitals, is an indication of early work, but the partial dressing of the stone shows it is not the very earliest, and it may perhaps date from the last quarter of the sixth century.

In 1900 I was fortunate enough to find a remarkable stone at Kirk Maughold [27], with inscriptions partly in capitals, partly in minuscules. It is of the local clay-schist, and measures 27 inches by 9 inches by 2½ inches thick; it bears a hexafoil design within a circle containing an inscription, of which a few characters have unfortunately flaked away. At the top is certainly a Chi, followed by a space of an inch and a quarter, then . . . NE ITSPLI Epps DEI INSULI (?) followed

by a sign like that for ET. Then, from the opposite direction, the letters . . . b p a T. The beginning may have been "In Christi nomine" in some contracted form. What the following six letters stand for, I cannot surmise, except that they probably contain the name of the Bishop. The rest is clear, except that the second letter of INSVLI, instead of the H form like the others, appears to be a slurred N of usual form, and that the last character of the same word is crossed by a bar and may stand for IS. Just below the circle are two crosslets which are of special interest on account of their form, showing distinctly the rudimentary Rho in the little flourish from the sharply expanding head of each,—being intermediate between the Cornish crosses from St Just and Doydon and the two at Kirkmadrine, Wigtown. Inscriptions run down either side of these, and, beginning with that to the right as one faces the stone, read: . . . I IN $\chi\rho\iota$ / NOMINE / CRUCIS $\chi\rho\iota$ / IMAGENEM. Professor Rhys, to whom I sent a photograph and rubbing, suggested FECI as possibly the first word. An inscription in some respects resembling this was discovered in 1890 by Mr Romilly Allen at Tarbat near Invergordon Castle, described by him in *Early Christian Monuments*, part iii., p. 94, but in that case the letters are in relief, more highly finished, and generally of later character. The mixture of minuscules and majuscules shows it to be of later date than the last. The words throughout are undivided, the letters fairly evenly cut and partly rusticated or feathered; the letter N occurs twice in the ordinary form, and four times as H, as though that form were not yet fully established, and the M consists of parallel strokes unconnected by any bar. The form for G in the last word is, I think, unique. It may belong to the early part of the seventh century (fig. 9).

The last [48] is on a cross-slab from an old keeill, or early church, at Port-y-Vullen, in the same parish of Kirk Maughold. The monument itself, of a local white trap rock, which measures 84 inches by 34 inches by 5 inches, has long been known, and was figured and de-

scribed by Cumming; but it was only when the stone had fallen in 1894 that I discovered the inscription cut across its edge. This I described



Figs. 9 and 10. From Maughold.

in *Zeitschrift für Celtische Philologie*, i. p. 48 (plate). It is entirely in minuscules—CRUX GURIAT—which, with the form of the name

Gwriad, shows it to date from about the first quarter of the ninth century (fig. 10).

Our latest discovery was made in February last, and it is the more interesting as, for the first time, it gives us a bilingual inscription in Ogams and in Roman capitals. In the course of our local archaeological survey we were engaged in the examination of a keeill at Knoc y doonee, in the parish of Kirk Andreas, on the northern coast; we noticed about nine feet west of the ruins a large stone set up like the headstone of a grave. Mr James Martin, the owner, kindly took this out for me to examine, and I was rewarded by the discovery not only of Ogams on the edge, but of a Latin inscription also across the face (fig. 11). It proved to be a fine pillar of clay slate, brought, no doubt, from the hills about six miles to the south, measuring 5 feet 8 inches by 17 inches wide, tapering to 10 inches near the top, and from 7 inches to 8 inches thick; from a point some 24 inches above the heavy end the left side had been shaped to a rather flat curve; the right, from a point 36 inches from the end, had also been shaped, but was now broken. The whole pillar was weathered, but the part which had been more recently exposed and was most worn, turned out to be the butt end; apparently the stone had at one time fallen, and, in setting it up again, it was turned upside down, the narrower end being driven into the ground and so, fortunately, preserving the inscription from further weathering or injury. Upon digging at the spot where the pillar had been set up, we found certain traces of burial, but no lintels or formed grave; similar burials without stone graves have been met with in connection with some of our other early keeills. On the face of the pillar, at a point 26 inches from the top, I found a three-line inscription in well-formed Roman capitals (fig. 12), reading horizontally:—

AMMECAT
FLIVS ROCAT
HIC IACIT



Fig. 11. Pillar-stone with Bilingual Inscription, at Knoe y doonee.
(From a photograph by Mr G. B. Cowen, Ramsey.)

The third letter is somewhat worn and looked like an *n*, but closer examination showed the further down-stroke making *m*; above the final letter of the first line is a small, rather angular, *o*, for which there was not room in the line; the stem-line of the *L* in the second line, and the following *i*, are made indistinct by cracks in the stone,



Fig. 12. The Latin Inscription on the Knoc y doonee Pillar-stone.

and the first two letters of the third line are badly worn, but all are legible. The letters measure from $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches to $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches high, the lines, which are V-shaped in section, being $\frac{1}{8}$ inch wide and deep. As regards their forms, the *A* has in each instance the bar in a straight line, not angled; the *i*, falling from the middle bar of the *r*, is met with in several early inscriptions—Hübner gives for Wales seven instances, and Cornwall one; the *r*, with a horizontal stroke below

the loop, occurs on three monuments in Cornwall, one in Devon, and two in Wales, while in Scotland we find it in the Drosten inscription from St Vigeans, Forfarshire, and at Whithope near Yarrow Kirk, Selkirk. The formula is normal; the words HIC IACET follow the names in two instances in Cornwall, and in Wales in twelve; the spelling with *i* is more common than that with *e*.

On the left side of the pillar is a Celtic inscription in Ogam (fig. 13), reading from below upwards and repeating the names, which, as well as the equivalent for *FILIVS*, are, as usual, in the genitive case. I illustrate this (fig. 13) from a tracing of a rubbing, as a photograph

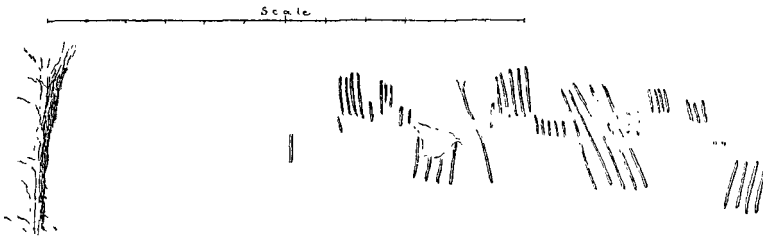


Fig. 13. The Ogam Inscription on the Knoc y doonee Pillar-stone.

does not clearly bring out the fine scores of the characters. At a height from the end of the stone of about 24 inches is a very worn but distinctly artificial groove, and the inscription occupies a space of about 18 inches above this, ending in a line with the first of the Latin inscription. The first two characters are completely weathered away; the third is clear; but of the fourth, which must have stood for either *e* or *i*, only the final score can now be traced; the vowels of the last word, being on the most prominent part of the slightly rounded edge, are now worn away, but there can be no doubt as to what they were, the whole now reading: . . B . CATOS MAQT R[O]C[A]T[O]S. The Ogam characters are carefully cut; the diagonals, which fall from right to left instead of the usual way, measure from $2\frac{3}{4}$ to 3 inches long, the other consonants

from $1\frac{1}{4}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and the vowels about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch; the scores are $\frac{1}{16}$ inch wide and deep. The vertical line is well maintained and the scores of the different characters regularly formed and evenly spaced; they are more finely cut than on the Dovaidu stone and resemble rather those in the Bivaidu inscription.

Lower down and a little to the right, on the same edge of the stone, are some very fine lines which at first sight might be mistaken for Ogams. They are, however, scratched rather than cut, unevenly numbered (one group consisting of six scores), all on the same vertical line, and form no word; and their position on that part of the stone, which must have been intended to be set in the ground, shows that they cannot be Ogams or original markings; they have the appearance of scores marked for a tally (possibly of cartloads of stone or of potatoes removed from the field) of comparatively recent date, made when that portion of the stone was above the ground.

The fact of the pillar having its edges dressed shows that this cannot be a monument of the earliest period; but the inflexions in the Celtic inscription and the plain capitals and whole character of the Latin one, are, with the forms of the names, in keeping with the idea that it may belong to the first half of the sixth century. Such bi-linguals are few in number and practically confined to the five southern counties of Wales, with two in Cornwall and two in Devon. Two which have been found in Ireland are exceptional, one from Killen Cormac, Kildare, and one of later type from Kilfountain, Kerry, while the Newton stone in Aberdeenshire, with very debased small letters, is also exceptional and peculiar. The Knoc y doonee one must have been carved by some one familiar with those in South Wales, and my suggestion is that it was in some way connected with, or an effect of, the movement of missionary enterprise "to restore the faith which had fallen into neglect after the death of St Patrick," when David, Gildas, and Cadoc introduced a new Mass into Ireland, and their visit was followed by a great revival and spread of Christianity.