

5. FRAGMENTARY CROSS-SHAFT AT INVERARAY.

The old Burial Ground at Kilmalew, Inveraray, lies west of the main road a little north of the bridge at the mouth of the river Aray. It has been extended to the north in modern times.

Earlier travellers Pococke (1760) and Pennant (1772) do not mention it although the former notices the "Town Cross," then still standing in the Old Town. Innes (*Origines Parochiales*) merely notices its existence and the site. James Drummond¹ remarks "at Kilmalew near Inveraray there was nothing."

1953 a visit disclosed a Cross-shaft, wanting the arms and head, which now stands about 20 yds. west of the gate from the main road and 6 yds. north of the path, beside a round topped granite tombstone erected to Donald McVicar, Forester to the Duke of Argyll, who died in 1920. It is of freestone and faces almost due north, having been set in a concrete base evidently within recent years.

I am greatly indebted to my neighbour, Mr W. W. Weir of Killearn, who kindly recently took the photograph (Pl. LXV b) which shows the shaft so clearly that no detailed description is necessary beyond giving the dimensions.

The remaining part stands 5 ft. high and is slightly tapered 11½ ins. wide (to 10½ ins.) and 4 ins. thick (to 3½ ins.). The back is plain and there is no trace of any ornamentation at all except for the rebated edge which appears on the back as well.

What is left of the figure of Our Lord is 20 ins. long by 5½ ins. wide; the relief is 2½ ins., unusually deep for a work of this kind. The loin cloth is in three tight folds, that on the right leg falling slightly lower than on the left. The nearest resemblance is that on the Lerags Cross at Kilbride (Argyll) described by James S. Richardson,² or the Altar Front at Innishail³ (Loch Awe).

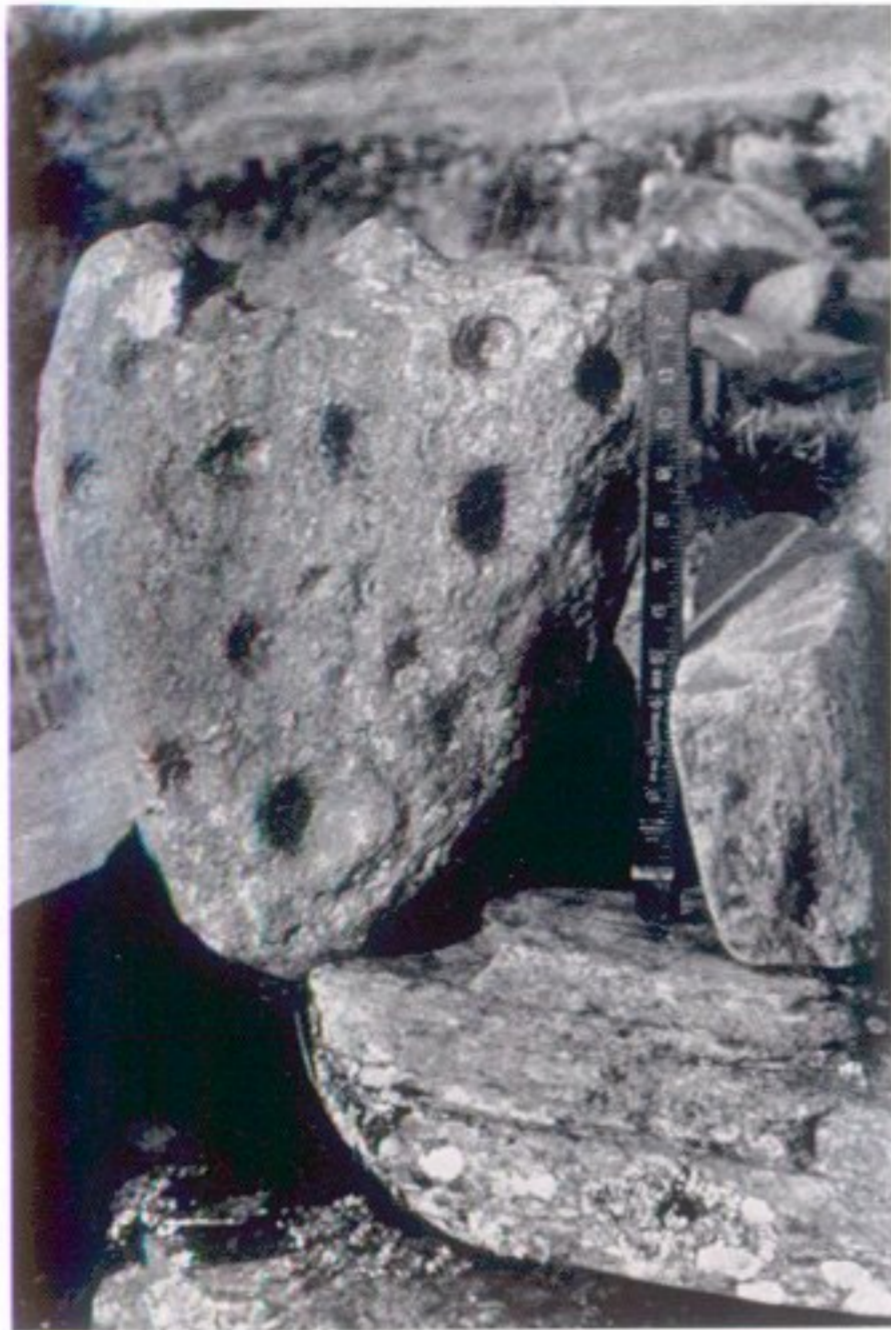
The position of the body on the Cross appears to have been relatively the same as on the smaller Cross at Kilmartin (Argyll)⁴ but the general type of work resembles that on the larger Cross there,⁵ although not so delicately executed.

In the same graveyard only two other slabs could be found. One, tapered, of green schist, 6 ft. × 26 ins. (18 ins.), indecipherable except for 5 cusps at top and bottom—it may have had a Warrior in a Niche similar to others on Loch Awe side—is now bedded on the top of a sloping part of the wall at the south-east corner of the new ground, dividing it from the old. The other is now quite indecipherable and its position was not noted.

In the *New Statistical Account* the Rev. Colin Smith remarks:⁶ "In the burial ground there are also three flags which are supposed to have been taken from Iona. . . . On two there is no impression but a two-handed sword. The third is more curiously carved."

Can this be the third which may have lain flat at the time of writing (1843)?

A. R. Cross.



(a) Carved stone, Tominteold.



[Photo: W. W. Weir.

(b) Cross-shaft, Inveraray.