

## Three Stones from Ingliston

by E. A. Cormack

Before Edward Llwyd visited Scotland in 1699 Sir Robert Sibbald sent 'Directions for his honoured friend Mr Llwyd how to trace and remarke the vestiges of the Roman wall betwixt Forth and Clyde'.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The objects are now in Tankerness House Museum, Kirkwall.

<sup>2</sup> Haakon Shetelig (ed.), *Viking Antiquities in Great Britain and Ireland*, Part VI (1954), 70.

<sup>3</sup> H. J. Haverfield, *Bodleian Carte M.S. 269*, communicated by G. Macdonald, *Proc. Soc. Antiq. Scot.* XLIV (1909-10) 321.

After references to Cramond and Kirkliston he writes ‘. . . and go to new Liston for betwixt it and Inglishtown was the 2 stones in my garden found and I was told, there was a third built in the wall of some of the Tenents Houses a little to the west of Inglishtown’.

In Sibbald’s *Historical Inquiries* (1707), p. 50, the two stones are described. The first is the inscribed pillar now recognised as the Ingliston Roman milestone.<sup>1</sup> The second had ‘the figure of a Garland, with something like strings for tying it, hinging down’. On p. 41, writing of ‘the Plain near to the Manor of Inglistoun’ he refers to ‘a piece of a Pillar digg’d out of the ground there (which I gave to the Colledge of Edinburgh)’. The catalogue of Sibbald’s donations to the University (*Mus. Balfour* (1697), 203) includes a reference to figures of two fragments of pillars ‘which were found in Inglistons Ground in a plain field, near to which severall Obelisks are to be seen, some erected, others lying on the ground’.<sup>2</sup>

The third stone does not appear to have been described or recorded elsewhere, but that Sibbald was informed correctly about it is proved by a recent search. Through the courtesy of Mr J. Leslie Duncan a carved stone has been located, built in the S. gable of a single-storey pantile-roofed building on the E. side of the farm steading at West Ingliston (NT 140727). In a rectangular stone-framed recess at eye-level is a grey sandstone slab (11½ by 13½ in.) with the figure of a bird standing with spread wings. It is in bold relief, severely weathered, with head and feet missing, but the body and wings are clear.

The ‘2 stones in my garden’ had been given to Sibbald when he visited Ingliston and were taken by him to Edinburgh. There is no evidence that he actually saw the third stone, but its discovery in the position described to him enhances the possibility that his information about the origins of the other stones is accurate, namely that they were ‘digg’d out of the ground’ in a field near the Newbridge standing stones (NT 123726).

<sup>1</sup> The first stone, with others, was transferred by the University of Edinburgh to the National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland about 1866. *Catalogue* (1892) F V 29.

<sup>2</sup> For other opinions as to the provenance of the Ingliston milestone see Stuart, Robert, *Caledonia Romana*, 2nd ed. (1852), 170; RCAMS, Midlothian (1929), 40; and Collingwood, R. G. and Wright, R. P., *Roman Inscriptions of Britain*, 1 (1965), 727.

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