

Unusual Signposts at Knappogue castle

Knappogue castle is a large tower house built by the McNamaras in the mid-fifteenth-century. In the nineteenth century the noted architects James and George R. Pain extensively remodelled and extended the castle for its then owner, Lord Dunboyne. The back gate, which one presumes was built to the Pains' design in 1856, incorporates into its pillars two signposts, indicating distances to six locations. A hand with index finger extended points to the west on one pillar: the destinations under this hand are Quin, Spancil Hill, and Ennis. A most interesting aspect of these signposts is the fact that distances are given in both English and Irish miles. Quin is two and a quarter English miles and one and three-quarter Irish miles from the gate. Spancil Hill is six and a quarter English miles, and three Irish miles distant while Ennis is eight and a half English miles and six and a half Irish miles away.



On the eastern pillar, logically, the hand with the extended index finger points eastwards. Again there are three towns listed. Kilkishen is four English miles and three and a half Irish miles away. Sixmilebridge lies five and three-quarter English miles and four and a half Irish miles distant, while finally, Limerick is fifteen and a half English miles and twelve and a quarter Irish miles distant from the back gate of Knappogue.

Charlotte Murphy

A 'Singular' Carved Stone from Adare Manor

Under your foot you may trample on significant archaeological finds. One such example is a flat stone among the Ogham stones collection of Edwin Wyndham-Quin, 3rd Earl of Dunraven in the grounds of Adare Manor Hotel, formerly the seat of the Dunraven family. Having an antiquarian bent, the Earl collected many historical items that may otherwise have been lost or destroyed. All the stones in his collection are stated to have been in danger of damage or loss and had been removed from their original locations. Many of these are described in the privately published *Memorials of Adare Manor*¹ and happily some of them are now returned to their original location. The *Archaeological Survey of the Dingle Peninsula*² shows one such example formerly in the Adare collection,

¹ Caroline Wyndham-Quin & Edwin R. W. Windham-Quin, *Memorials of Adare Manor* (Adare, 1865).

² Judith Cuppage, *Archaeological Survey of the Dingle Peninsula* (1986) Plate 43, p. 342.

now in its original situ in Reask. Another example, Stone E is stated in the same work to be in the National Museum Dublin, but seems to be re-located to the museum in Ballyferriter. The two stones mentioned above were the subject of an article in this journal in 1971.³

Five Ogham stones collected by the Earl, still remain in a leafy glade in the grounds of the Manor Hotel. These have been well studied and deciphered by antiquarians but it is a recumbent stone in this collection that is the focus of this present item. Westropp, Macalister and Macnamara⁴ who studied these Ogham stones, do not refer to this stone. In the *Memorials*, the stone under study here was then in the Dunraven Museum collection, as we will see, but must have been transferred to its present location outside sometime later than the publication of the 'Memorials' in 1865.

As may be seen in photograph No 1 of the five stones, counting from the stone on the left as No 1, and clockwise after Nos 2 and 3, there is a flat stone laid on the ground. Following on, the next Ogham stone No 4 is also recumbent and broken. The fifth and largest of the collection is on the right of picture.



Photo. 1

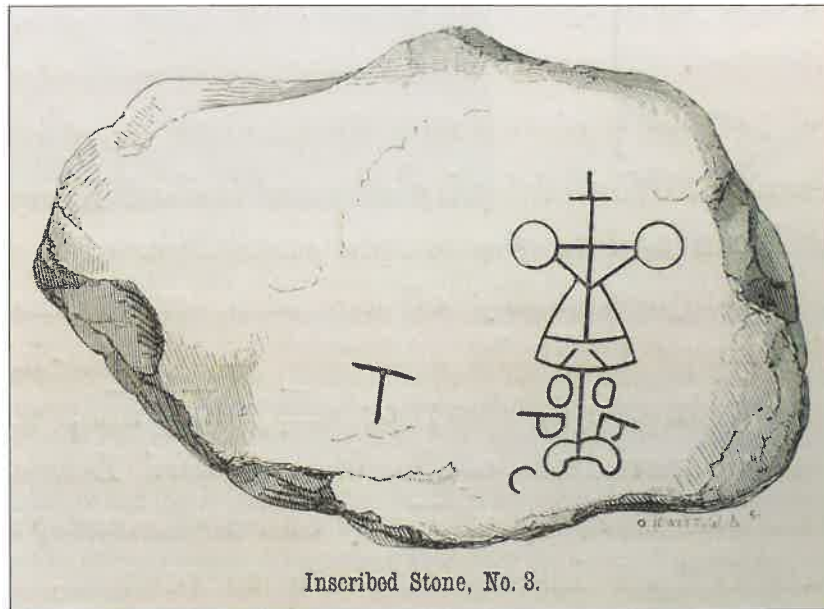
The various scholars who have studied the Ogham stones, did not seem to give any attention to the recumbent stone between Nos 3 and 4, which we now know was not in this location until after 1865. The close up photo (No 2) of the stone shows the markings, which though growing faint, are still recognisable. These markings are clearly the same as on the stone illustrated below as Stone No 3, described and illustrated in the *Memorials*, p 154. In that work it is described as 'very singular' and the dimensions are given as 3' 6" long, by 2' 3" wide.

³ Thomas Fanning 'Two Cross-inscribed stones from Reask, Co. Kerry, at Adare Manor', N.M.A.J. vol. xiv, 1971, pp 25-8.

⁴ T.J. Westropp, R.A.S. Macalister & G.U. MacNamara, *The Antiquities of Limerick and its Neighbourhood* (R.S.A.I. Handbook Series, VII, Dublin, 1916).



Photo. 2



Inscribed Stone, No. 3.

Photo. 3

The orientation of the illustration here from the *Memorials* suggests that this may be a cross-inscribed slab and the illustration does include some suggested crosses. There may even be a likely inscription, namely 'do'(m) for Dominus/Lord, often to be found with variants on cross slabs in the area. Many illustrations of crosses from the *Dingle Peninsula Archaeological Survey* have details that are not far removed from the illustration above, e.g. Fig. 178, the grave slabs from Kilfountain and Gallarus, on page 302. A little grave slab from the Cork Museum, originally from Skibereen, exhibits similarities in design to the Dunraven stone as taken from my sketchbook.

e work
eum in
in this
grounds
s but it
stropp,
stone In
lection,
metime
on the
ground.
fth and



give any
is not in
arkings,
he same
l in the
ions are

i, pp 25-8.
d (R.S.A.I,



Photo. 4

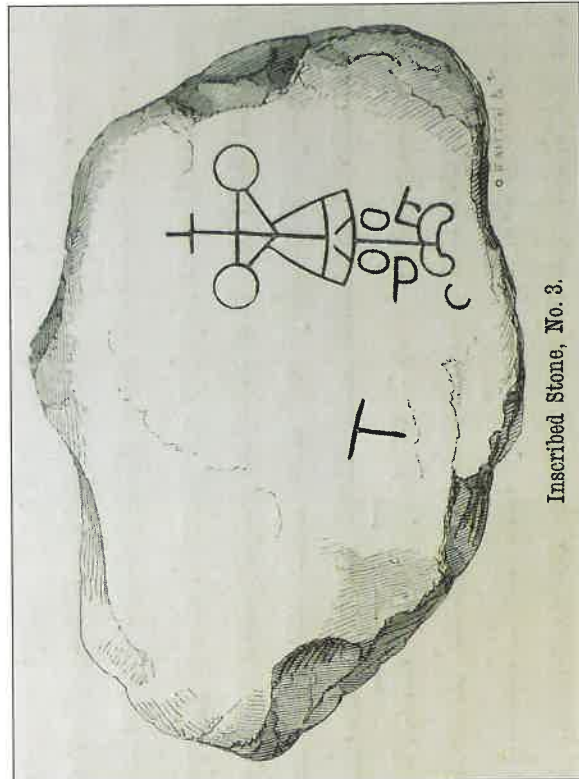


Photo. 5

If the Dunraven 3 slab is oriented differently and counter clockwise to the above illustration (Photo. 4) in the *Memorials* with the narrower end on the left inserted into the earth (as might be suggested by the shape of the stone), the interpretation of the stone as cross-slab may be more difficult to support. We now offer this new orientation to illustrate this point.

The original find location of the above stone (Photo. 5), Dunraven No 3, is recorded in the *Memorials* as 'near an old fort in the vicinity of Ballydavid' and the date find as 1816. This is likely to be the univallate rath/fort south of Ballydavid village and near where the Feohanagh River enters the sea as noted on Discovery Map 70. It was found four feet below the surface of the earth. Perhaps the find location does not support the stone as from a burial place and the 'inscription' may then be interpreted as an example of megalithic art, of which many examples originate from the Dingle Peninsula. On the other hand, there are examples of ogham stones and cross-slabs that were utilised in the building of souterrains as in the rath at Brackloon,⁵ or Aghacarrible rath; so find location does not necessarily confer a secure identity of artefacts. Dr Petrie is quoted in the same *Memorials* as not knowing a 'similar inscription to this upon any Irish or British stone'.

There would have to be erosion of the carving given the passage of years and abrasion of the sandstone from visitors' feet. One has to suppose that the illustration from the *Memorials* is a more faithful representation of the original state of the carving, which

⁵ Cuppage, *Archaeological Survey*, p. 124.

at that time was kept indoors. Given the 'secular' find location of the stone and an orientation of the above counter-clockwise, a possible interpretation of the ornamentation as an example of megalithic art is feasible. It does illustrate possible cup marks that are a feature of megalithic art, with these often joined by incised lines.⁶ The commentary on this stone in the *Memorials* offers no interpretation of the carving beyond it's being 'very singular'. The only purpose of this note is to 'resurrect' the stone from its recent oblivion and to offer a challenge as to its purpose, while enjoying its 'singular' nature. The Dingle peninsula *Archaeological Survey* illustrates many examples of carvings on stones from the area of which 'Dunraven No 3' might be considered an example. What follows is my interpretation of the current state of the carving following careful visual scrutiny.

Michael O'Halloran



A de Burgh family tree, c.1160-1381

The fortunes of the de Burgh family in Ireland began in north Munster with the arrival of William de Burgh (d. 1206), in the entourage of Prince Jean's ill-fated Irish expedition of 1185. The dynasty's apex may be said to have occurred with William's great-grandson, Richard de Burgh, who died in 1326 as 2nd Earl of Ulster, 4th Lord of Connacht. Expansion in both those areas continued during his lifetime (and after it, briefly), though he also owned estates in Munster, Leinster, and Meath. His children made notable marriages with various de Clares, de Bruces, FitzGerald, de Berminghams, Ó Briains, le Botillers.

Yet a full family tree is lacking. Very honourable exceptions may be found in volume IX of *A New History of Ireland* (published 1984) and Éamonn de Búrca's *Burke: People and Places* (1995). However the former generally omits females, while the ancestry given in the latter prior to the 1160s is – as the author himself indicates – not historic.

The following family tree is an attempt to remedy this, but like them, should be treated as a stage in an ongoing process. To that end, Brian Hodkinson's excellent *Who's Who in Medieval Limerick* has not been used as much as I would like, as I am not clear on the identities of some of the de Burghs mentioned in it (examples include the family of John de Burgh who are attested from 1297 to 1317). Sources used are:

A New History of Ireland, volume IX, pp 170-172, 470.

Dictionary of Irish Biography, volume 3, pp 3-19.

Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, volume 8, pp 776-95.

Adrian Martyn

⁶ See E.G. Anati, 'New Petroglyphs at Derrynablaha, County Kerry', J.C.H.A.S. vol. lxxviii (1963) pp 1-15.