

HOLESTONE: HOLED STONE

555 Ft OD

CS 45; IG 97

J 2417 9067

Situated on a grass and gorse-covered height commanding extensive views in all directions, especially to the S and E. There are quite a few references to the holed stone in various journals, with several interpretations concerning the purpose of the hole. The most commonly cited is that it was connected with the ceremony of betrothal, or the taking of oaths.

The stone has been left standing in the middle of an area of rocky ground, which has been quarried away around the site. This is a tall, slim, pillar-like basalt stone which curves to a narrow taper at the top. The long axis is orientated NNW-SSE, and a neat hole (0.9m above the immediate base at the E, and 0.23m from the S side) has been cut into it. The inner part of the hole measures c0.075m across (dividers would give a more accurate measurement); this widens out to 0.165m at the outer E surface of the stone. The stone itself stands 1.39m above the immediate base (at the S), and about 1.75m above the surrounding ground (at E). It is 0.8m wide at the base, tapering to less than 0.2m at the top, and 0.24m thick at the S side. The base of the stone is slightly higher than the surrounding ground, and some flat slab-like stones lie around this base.

Apart from one or two pieces of litter and some concrete masonry dumped at the foot of the rock outcrop at the NW, the general area is quite tidy at present. *The stone is scheduled under the Historic Monuments Act 1971.*

ANT 45:32

14th June 1994

O S Memoir for the Parish of Kilbride, Boyle 1839, 41; Bleakly
f2; Ward 1835, f5.

OSFR no. 279.

PSAMNI 1940, 38.

Lawlor H.C. Irish Nat. J. III, Sept 1930, 105; Kilkenny Arch.
J., 4th Series, 8, ,78.

McSkimin Dublin Penny J. I, 1833, 340.

O'Laverty 1884, III, 189-90, based on McSkimin.

Frazer JRSAI 26, 1896, 159-60.

D'Arcy S.A. Holed Stone At Cushendall Co. Antrim, JRSAI LX,
1930, 192-3.

PRONI FIN 16/82/7 1908 (includes photographs).

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF NORTHERN IRELAND

Historic Monuments and Buildings Branch DOENI

SMR ANT 45: 39	Td HOLESTONE	Type holed stone	
A No.	Site Name The Holestone	Parish Killbride	Alt 555'
IG 97	GR J 2417 9067	Barony Upper Antrim	DC

OS

NB Site Hole 0.9m above immediate grassy base at E & 0.23m from S side
 One or 2 pieces of litter at base of rocky outcrop - gen quite tidy.
 Some fragments of burnt litter & singed ~~stick~~ twigs near the Stone at N
 Some concrete masonry dumped at foot of rock at NW

Condition	Threat	Check/Action	Schedule
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Land use
Left standing on an area of rock quarried around

Field boundaries

Site description

Photos? Frame 17 from E

Situated on a height commanding extensive views in all directions especially to the S & E ^{grass-covered & gorse}
 The Stone has been left standing in the middle of an area of rocky ground which has been quarried away around it
 Flat slab like stones lie at the base which itself is ~~is~~ higher than the ground immediately to its



Long axis NNW-SSE orientated
 This is a tall slim pillar-like Stone which curves to a narrow taper at the top

A neat hole has been cut into it
 0.075m across - though dividers would give a more accurate measurement.
 The hole splays out a little from the centre 0.165 at the outer E side

Stone = 1.39m above immediate base at S and approx 1.75m above lower surrounding ground to the E. 0.8m wide at base tapering to less than 0.2m at the top. ~~Width~~ Thickness = 0.24m at S. OVER

Visited by	Date of visit 14.6.94	SM.2	Input
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TD HOLESTONE

CO

ANTRIM

PARISH

Kilbride

O.S. 45:32

← Holed stone: The Holestone

555'

J 2417 9067
I.G. map 97

Field Observers letter a rubbish around site. (Nov. 71)

Descr + lack of traditions, no finds known (O'Brien, 1839)

Descr. + parallels, traditions, crst bustals nearby [45:69] (O'Lavery, 1884)

1. not shown

2. 'Hole Stone' + Δ

3+4. 'Hole Stone'

Field Visits NFB Nov '77 B.B.W July 1985.
AEPG + AHFiles B3161/77 : SM7 : SM5/54 SM8
Plans

Scheduled

Listed

State Care

Photos

30.4.80

RBT 66870 5(M) 12/75 TP

OWNER: Douglas Wilson Esq., Holestone Farm,
32, Deerpark, Doagh

PR

PSAMNI. 38

OSFR no. 279

H.C. Lawlor. Irish Nat. J. III (Sept 1930) 105

Kilkenny Arch. J. 4th series 8 () 18

McSkimin. Dublin Penny J. I (1833) 140

O'Lavery (1884) III. 189-90 based on McSkimin, also O'Brien?

O'Brien Kilbride (1839): Boyle, 41

Bleakly, f.2

(1835): Ward, f.5.

Fraser, J.R.S.A.I., 26 (1896) 159-60.

D'Arcy, S.A., 'Holed stone at Cushendall, Co. Antrim', J.R.S.A.I., LX (1930) 192-3.

PRONI FIN 16/82/7 1908 (includes photographs)

PTO

TD HOLESTONE	CO ANTRIM	PARISH Killbride	SM.7 o.s. 45:32
			J 2417 9067.

Occupying a very conspicuous position on a knoll on the summit of a ridge is a remarkable stone familiarly known as the Holestone.

This stone is nothing more than an undressed slab of basalt [except for cut hole, descr. + meas. given]

No discovery of any kind has been made about this stone - nor is there legend or tradition connected with it (see.. app. p. 2)

Boyle Omen Killbride (1839) 41

Field Visits	Files B3161/77
	Plans
Scheduled '11 Act 30.4.90	Listed
	State Care
	Photos <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Td.

SITE NO. 32	Td.	TYPE	ALT.
O.S. 6" 45 I.G. 97	HOLESTONE	Holed-stone	+450 ft. +160 m.
PREVIOUS ACCOUNTS		GRID REF. J 2417 9067	

HOLED STONE: "The Holestone"

Field observers letter, rubbish around site (Nov' 77) NFB. Descr + lack of traditions, no finds known (OSM, 1839). Descr + parallels, traditions, cist burials nearby [45:69] (O'L, 1884)

- 1- Not shown
- 2- "Hole Stone" + Δ
- 3+4- "Hole Stone"

SM7 - "occupying a very conspicuous position on a knoll on the summit of a ridge ... is a

Co.

THREATS AND/OR CHECKS	FURTHER ACTION

PAR.

SITE REPORT

Photographs BW & C taken October '81.

B B WILLIAMS

remarkable stone familiarly known as the Holestone. This stone is nothing more than an undressed slab of basalt ... [except for cut hole, descr + meas. given].

No discovery of any kind has been made about this stone - nor is there legend or tradition connected with it ... (see later)"

Boyle (OS Mem KILBRIDE) 1839, 41

"The most remarkable Standing Stone in the Parish is one locally called the Holestone ... 26 yds S. of the old line of road ... Parkgate to Ballyclare" - Bleakly (1839) f2.

"A curious upright whinstone slab called the Holestone [+descrip.] ... all record or tradition of it is entirely lost" - Ward, 1835, f5. un' noted.

G.R.

O.S. 6"
I.G.

TD HOLESTONE

CO ANTRIM

PARISH Kilbride

O.S. 45:32

.. The most remarkable standing stone in the Parish is one locally called the Holestone ... 26 yds S. of the old line of road.. Parkgate to Ballyclare [give's measurements]

Beakley (1839) f.2

Field Visits

Files

Plans

State Care

Photos

P.T.O.

TD	HOLESTONE	CO	ANTRIM	PARISH	Kilbride	O.S.	45:32
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.. a curious upright whinstone slab called the Holestone
[+ description]

... all record or tradition of it is entirely lost...

Ward (1835) f.5. un-not'd.

Files

Plans

Photos

P.T.O.

TD HOLESTONE

CO ANTRIM

PARISH Kilbride

O.S. 45:32

.. The most remarkable standing stone in the Parish is one locally called the Holestone ... 26 yds S. of the old line of road.. Parkgate to Ballyclare [give's measurements]

Beakly (1839) f.2

Field Visits

Files

Plans

State Care

Photos

P.T.O.

O.S. 45:32

PARISH Kilbride

CO ANTRIM

TD HOLESTONE

... a curious upright monument also called the Holestone [description]

... all records or tradition of it is entirely lost ...

Went (1832) f.2

No. 2. THE "DOAGH STONE" (County Antrim).—About one mile 45:32
distant from the village of Doagh, Kilbride Parish, on the townland of

Ballyvernish. It is a slab of whinstone standing 5 feet above ground, 2 feet 6 inches wide at base, and about 2 inches thick. The perforation is small, $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter, central, and situated about 3 feet from the ground.

It is figured in *Dublin Penny Journal* for 1832-3, and in *Gentleman's Magazine*, December, 1864. A recent photograph differs in some details from these woodcuts.

J.R.S.A.I. 26 (1896) 159-60.

ANT 45.32

Ballyclaverty td, Mound

In the centre of the spacious lawn in front of Ballyclover House. Ant. Sh. 45, Plan 13, Tr. 4. This circular mound rises to a height of 19 ft. above the present level of the surrounding ditch; but as the latter is partially filled with an unascertainable depth of mud and water the actual height is greater. The ditch is about 20 ft. wide and the flat circular top of the mound is 51 ft. diam. surrounded by a beech hedge where the original palisading probably stood. The mound is apparently one of the lesser Anglo-Norman mote-castles. H.C.L.

Holestone td, Holed Stone

About 330 yds. W. of Holestone Cross Roads, near Doagh (Ant. Sh. 45, Plan 13, Tr. 5). About 5 ft. high, 6 ft. 8 ins. in circumference at base, 10 ins. thick, pierced with a smooth-sided hole at a point about 3 ft. above ground. The diameter of the hole is less than 4 ins., and will permit the passage of the hand of a woman but not that of the average man. It is said to have been used for plighting troths. Under Ministry of Finance surveillance (see note on p. 3). A souterrain was found near by about 1929, and several others are in the neighbourhood. Plate 6. Ed.

H. C. Lawlor, I.N.J., III, p. 105, Kilk. Arch. Journal, 4th Ser., VIII, p. 78.

Ballyclare Town, "Moat"

In the new War Memorial Park, beside the railway to Larne. Ant. Sh. 45, Plan 15, Tr. 3. An oval mound, 15 ft. high and measuring 54 ft. by 36 ft. on flat top; has neither ditch nor bailey. This may be a sepulchral mound, though the name Mote or Moat is seldom, if ever, applied to such. The De Logan family was located in this neighbourhood in the 13th century. H.C.L.

Ballygowan td, "Cander's Walls"

To the E. of Thorny Hill, at a point 400 yds. S. by W. of Ballyrickardmore School (disused). Ant. Sh. 46, Plan 2, Tr. 2. Alt. 600. A farm lane cuts through the site of an elaborate megalithic monument, occupying a slight knoll. 2 field fences meeting here add to the confusion, but at least 4 uprights are in position and a cover slab (6 ft. by 4 ft.) is half fallen, while a dozen large slabs or boulders are thrown or built into the fences. The remains defy description. This appears to be the "Ceanorth's Wa's" of McSkimmin and O'Laverty, although the latter places it in the N.W. of the townland. We have not identified a third monument (a mound and stone circles) which O'Laverty describes situated halfway between this and the "Druid's Altar" in Ballygowan td. (see above on p. 34). The townland contains much boulder-strewn land which might both conceal genuine antiquities and mislead the inexperienced. M.G. E.E.E.

Borlase, I, p. 268, Fig. 252. McSkimmin, D.P.J., II (1833-4), p. 101, O'Laverty III, pp. 169-170.

Redhall td, Red Hall

½ m. N. of Ballycarry village. Ant. Sh. 47, Plan 6, Tr. 1. Formerly an O'Neill castle. Earliest mention in documents *temp.* Elizabeth. Old portion 53 ft. by 43 ft., walls 7 ft. thick at base, battered to 5½ ft. at first floor level (*cf.* Seafin). Estate passed by marriage of Brian O'Neill's daughter to John Dalway, who sold

PSAMNI 1940

THE EDUCATION OF THE LOWER CLASSES CONDUCTIVE TO MORALITY AND GOOD ORDER.

An epocha is now begun, in which the human mind has taken wing towards a nobler flight than it ever attempted before, and the change which it promises forebodes the greatest consequences. The diffusion of knowledge among men of every rank, is now becoming so general, that, in half a century, the lowest classes of society will contain a larger proportion of men who will be able to reason soundly, than, four centuries ago, could have been reckoned in the highest; and modern cottagers will soon be better instructed than feudal chieftains ever were.

Yet there are who view this dissemination of instruction with apprehension, and suppose that it will turn the minds of artisans and labourers from their necessary employments—Neither does a comparison between the happiness and misery, the morality and vice, of the instructed and uninstructed districts at home and abroad—a comparison so much in favour of the former—destroy the prejudice.

The inconveniences of all that is new are sometimes the first effects that are felt, and the most powerful instruments are those which must be used with the greatest skill. That the novelty of instruction may give some inexperienced minds exaggerated notions of their own importance, can easily be imagined; but a habit of knowledge will dispel these effects. In the dead of night men grope about as they can, and avoid danger by chance or dexterity. When on a sudden day appears they are almost blinded by it, but the hour of noon shows every thing as it is.

But let it be supposed that insurrection and idleness were the themes inculcated to-day, would not the hunger of tomorrow correct them? Let the husbandman throw away his plough—the weaver his loom—the shoemaker his last—would not the ills which these men would immediately experience force them back to their occupations? If imagination were to triumph for a time, and folly to usurp the place of truth, the drudgery of life in these necessitous regions would soon

bring back reason. Practice has shown that equality is a vision, and indefinite liberty the worst of tyrannies; and sound instruction, which is but the record of practice, will teach men to avoid them. The result of education to the poor will be, to teach them that there are moral hardships in this world, his share in which it is the duty of every man to endure.—*Chenevix on National Character.*

THE POET'S ACCOMPANIMENT.

FOR THE DUBLIN PENNY JOURNAL.

For my music I demand
Finger raised of moving hand,
Bowing head, and lips comprest,
That murmur not, though scarce at rest,
And, with every varied rhyme,
Mark the thought and mete the time.
Forehead, which the tender vein
With a violent streak doth stain,
Shaded by the brown lock's maze,—
For my spell forbids to raise
The white hand that would repress
And reprove each truant tress,
Lest it break the deep suspense
Of delighted thought intense.
O'er that snowey forehead fit
Gleams that do illumine it,
Swift they come and swift they flee,
Felt by her, and felt by me,
Fain, methinks, would they repose
On that bed of placid snows,
But must fly like glancing thought,
For repose is suffered not.

I too challenge from thine eyes
Sympathy and sweet surprise;
Eyes that smile—because they must:
Yet the smile speaks half distrust
Pleased—yet scarce easy in such pleasure,
With a too forward poet's measure.

A.

THE HOLESTONE.

COUNTY OF ANTRIM.

On a rocky eminence in the townland of Ballyvernish, about one mile from the village of Doagh, stands a large whinstone slab, called the Holestone. This stone is upwards of five feet in height above the ground, and near the base six feet eight inches in circumference, and ten inches in thickness. At about three feet from the ground there is a round hole perforated through it, sufficient to admit a common-sized hand; it has evidently been made by art, but there is neither record nor tradition respecting the purpose for which it was erected, nor by whom.

About thirty years ago a man put his hand through the aperture of this stone, but was unable to extricate it; on which those who were with him gave the alarm, and a crowd was soon collected, whose conflicting opinions only served to increase the fears of the person in limbo. Amongst those assembled, was a Mr. O—, a resident in the neighbourhood, who seeing so much needless alarm, determined to be a little waggish upon this occasion. "Fly," said he, to a bystander, "for my powder-horn, and I'll soon free him; I'll blow up the stone in an instant!" At these words, the confusion and alarm of the multitude, beggars all description, while the cries of the prisoner, which had hitherto been sunk in the noise became piercing in the extreme. During the confusion, the gentleman had sent off privately for some vinegar, and on the return of the messenger, with it, he began to pacify the prisoner, and to bathe his hand, which had become swelled in the various attempts made to get it extricated; and he at length succeeded in effecting his liberation without application to the much dreaded powder-horn.

The writer is not aware of any similar stone at present

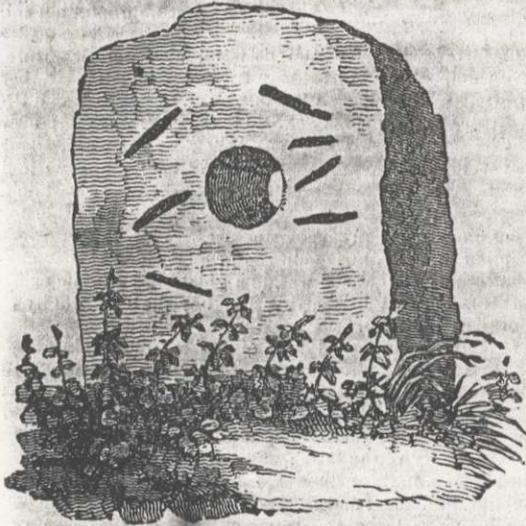


in Ireland; but it is said that within memory, a large stone with a hole through it, stood on a hill, near Cushindall. In Ross-shire, Scotland, there is a stone exactly resembling the above; and near Kirkwall, Orkney, at a place called Stennis, is a large stone standing with a hole through it, said to have been a Druid's altar. The place where it stands is still deemed a place consecrated to the meeting of lovers; and when they join hands through the stone, the pledge of love and truth there given is sacred, and rarely, if ever, has it been broken.

Carrickfergus.

S. M'S.

Stones perforated in this manner are to be found in most parts of Ireland, and particularly in the burial grounds attached to very ancient churches. The annexed wood-cut represents one of them remaining in the church-yard of Castle Dermot, and which is inscribed with some ancient Ogham characters or letters, in use in Ireland previous to the introduction of Christianity.



There is also a remarkable perforated stone of this description, inscribed also with Ogham characters, near the church of Kilmelcheder, one mile from Smerwick harbour in the county of Kerry. They have probably, an Eastern origin, for Mr. Wilford informs us, in the Asiatic Researches, vol. vi. p. 502, that perforated stones are not uncommon in India; and devout people pass through them, when the opening will admit, in order to be regenerated. If the hole be too small, they put the hand or foot through it, and with a sufficient degree of faith, it answers nearly the same purpose. P.

WITCHCRAFT IN KILKENNY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE DUBLIN PENNY JOURNAL.

SIR—I take the liberty of acquainting you with the satisfaction I derive from the perusal of the Dublin Penny Journal, feeling that the expression of approbation (however humble the individual it may come from), must be cheering to an editor. That much good may be done to Ireland by your work if conducted in the spirit which it has hitherto exhibited, no one can hesitate to believe, and that it will receive the encouragement, it appears to me to merit, I sincerely trust.

Among other articles in number 10, now before me, observe an account of the witchcraft practised at Kilkenny, in 1325, by Dame Alice Kettle or Kettell, (not Kelter, as you have spelled the name, no doubt by a printer's mistake), and upon which you will, perhaps, indulgently receive from me a few observations.

The sketch of witchcraft by Sir Walter Scott recently published in Mr. Murray's family library, is, indeed, to use his own expressive phrase—"the history of a dark chapter in human nature." Cervantes says, "That witches do things which lead to any object," yet it appears evident that which the tortured imagination of these unhappy persons can confess, leads through so troubled a stream to the fountain of fairy legends.

The persecution of the Lady Alice Kettell, at Kilkenny, for witchcraft, is perhaps, one of the earliest upon record.—The Bishop of Ossory, is stated to have been her accuser, and to have charged her and two companions with various diabolical acts; among others, that of holding a conference, every night with a spirit called Robin Artisson, to whom, as you have related, they were said to sacrifice nine red Cocks, and nine Peacock's eyes. In this ecclesiastical persecution, the object of which appears to have been to extort money to cover the roof

of St. Mark's Church, in Kilkenny, the connexion with the fairy creed is obvious from the name of the evil spirit. The appellation of Artisson, any Irish scholar will at once perceive has had its origin in the sacrifice said to be nightly offered up, as the translation of it is chicken flesh, (*art art* flesh, and *yeart isean*, a chicken or young bird), and with respect to the name of Robin, I cannot help thinking when Sir Walter Scott tells us, that "by some inversion and alteration of pronunciation" the English word goblin and the Scottish bogle, come from the same root as the German Kobold, he may as well have added poor Robin, if only for the sake of *good-fellowship* as Robin's punning namesake, Thomas Hood, would have said.

That Robin, however, was the popular name for a fairy of much repute, is sufficiently well known; but since the mention of his name has accidentally occurred with that of Hood, I may be allowed to observe that the title assumed by, or applied to the famous outlaw, was no other than one which had been appropriated to a denizen of fairy land.—Hudikin or Hodekin, that is little hood, or cowl, being a Dutch or German spirit, so called from the most remarkable part of his dress, in which also the Norwegian Nis and Spanish Duende were believed to appear—

"Un cucurucho tamano,"

to use the words of Calderon. There is in Oxford-street a well-known Coach office, distinguished by the sign of "the green man and still," but why so called I have never had satisfactorily explained by the curious in such matters. The derivation of the Bull and Mouth, the Belle Savage, the Talbot, (old Chuacer's Tabart), and many other signs, which may be quoted in proof of the mutability of things, are familiar to all, yet the origin of the aforesaid Green Man and Still, remains involved in the most mysterious obscurity. I have, however, always been inclined to consider it as remotely derived from Robin Hood; and leaving fancy to fill up the chasm, have found myself willing to translate it as "the forester and fairy," or the green or woodman, and the still folk or silent people, as the supernatural beings which we call fairies, were not unusually termed—"Das still Volk" being the common German expression.

This long digression, like the treacherous Friar Rush, might readily lead me on from "the merry green wood," until I became bewildered in the mazes of conjecture.—Allow me, therefore, to return to Kilkenny, the scene of Alice Kettell's conjurations.—That town appears to have been peculiarly fatal to witches. Sir Richard Cox, in his history of Ireland, mentions the visit of Sir William Drury, the Lord Deputy, to it, in October, 1578, who caused thirty-six criminals to be executed there, "one of which was a black-a-moor, and two others were witches, and were condemned by the law of nature, for there was no positive law against witchcraft in these days." From that it would appear that the Statute of the 33rd of Henry VIII. against witchcraft had either become a dead letter, or had not been enacted in Ireland.

Ireland has been in my opinion, unjustly stigmatised as a barbarous and superstitious country.—It is certain that the cruel persecution carried on against poor and ignorant old women was as nothing in Ireland when compared with other countries. In addition to the three executions at Kilkenny, a town, the inhabitants of which were almost entirely either English settlers or of English descent, I only remember to have met with an account of one other execution for the crime of witchcraft. This latter took place at Antrim, in 1699, and it is, I believe the last on record.—The particulars of this silly tragedy were printed in a pamphlet, entitled "The bewitching of a child in Ireland," and from thence copied by Professor Sinclair, in his work entitled "Satan's Invisible world discovered," which is frequently referred to by Sir Walter Scott in his letters on Demonology.

I have to apologise for the length to which my letter has extended, and beg to subscribe myself,

your very humble servant,

Admiralty, London.

T. CROFTON CROKER.

from works thrown up during that war. On the wild and uncultivated summit of Drumadarragh Hill is an enclosure of 93 feet square in the clear; it is surrounded by a parapet 5 feet high in the exterior, and 3 feet high in the interior, and of an average breadth of 9 feet. It is chiefly composed of earth, having, however, many large stones laid longitudinally, which appear in both its outer and inner face. This parapet contains 18 hollows, which have been intentionally formed, and were faced with stones. They are much mutilated, but appear to have been about 2 feet deep, and from $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 10 feet long; the entrance, which is in the eastern side, is 5 feet wide. There are faint vestiges of a ditch outside the parapet. In the adjacent parish of Dunagore there is an elliptical enclosure, which has little hollows similarly formed, but its use is equally unknown. There is, however, a tradition that, during the wars of 1641, the Protestants were encamped here, and that the Irish were encamped on the opposite side of the valley, at Dunamoy Moat, in the parish of Rashee. It is said that several cannon balls have been found at both places. There are six forts in this civil parish, all circular and constructed of earth; they vary in diameter from 45 to 80 feet, and present nothing peculiar in their construction or situation. Upwards of twenty caves are remembered by the inhabitants, but, with the exception of six, they have been wholly or partly demolished, or their entrances closed up. Bones of deer, sheep, cows, ashes of wood, charred husks of corn, and a few "Danes' pipes," were all that were found in them. In Ballywee, or Ballyvoy—"the town of the cave," there are five caves, in one of which there is a spring well; three of them are now closed up.

Near the summit of Drumadarragh Hill are the imperfect

O'Lavery 1884 III

remains of what the people term a "Giant's grave." The monument was quite perfect until about 1833, when it was somewhat injured, but in 1838 it was almost totally destroyed to form the enclosure for a stackyard, which is partly built on its site. It consisted of a double row of great standing stones, bearing S.W. and N.E.; the avenue, consisting of two rows, was 47 feet long; it had 6 standing stones in one row, and 5 in the other; the parallel rows were 3 feet 6 inches apart. The stones in the rows were nearly equidistant, and they varied in height from 2 to 6 feet. Near the S.W. end a stone, 7 feet 5 inches long, 3 feet 8 inches broad, and 15 inches thick, is laid transversely across from one row to the other, resting at one side on a stone 1 foot high, and at the other on one 2 feet 4 inches high. No other stone is remembered to have been laid in this tabular form. About 6 feet S.E. of the S.W. end of the row is a large stone, 5 feet broad, 5 feet 8 inches long, and 2 feet 8 inches thick. About 41 yards N.W. is another, 4 feet 3 inches long, 2 feet broad, and 2 feet 4 inches thick, which seems to have rested on 3 stones which lie at its base. At the distance of 230 yards south of the giant's grave is a standing stone nearly 3 feet high.—See *Ord. Mem. MS.*

There is a very remarkable stone in the civil parish of Kilbride, called "Holestone," of which a woodcut is given in the *Dublin Penny Journal*, Vol. I., where S. M'Skimin says:—"On a rocky eminence, in the townland of Ballyvernish (called Holestone by the *Ordnance Survey*), about one mile from the village of Doagh, stands a large whin-stone slab called the *Holestone*. This stone is upwards of 5 feet in height above the ground, and near the base 6 feet 8 inches in circumference, and 10 inches in thickness. At about 3 feet from the ground there is a round hole perforated through

ANT 45:32

it, sufficient to admit a common-sized hand. The hole has evidently been made by art. It is said that within memory, a large stone, with a hole through it, stood on a hill near Cushendall. In Rosshire, Scotland, there is a stone exactly resembling the above; and near Kirkwall, Orkney, at a place called Stennis, is a large stone standing with a hole through it, said to have been a Druid's altar. The place where it stands is still deemed a place consecrated to the meeting of lovers; and when they join hands through the stone, the pledge of love and truths there given is sacred, and rarely, if ever, has it been broken." Dr. Petrie adds, that such stones are found in most parts of Ireland, and particularly in the burial-grounds attached to very ancient churches; and he gives a wood-cut of one in the churchyard of Castle Dermot, which is inscribed with characters, seemingly, Ogham. He also states that Mr. Wilford, writing in the *Asiatic Researches*, Vol. VI., informs us, that perforated stones are not uncommon in India; and devout people pass through them, when the opening will admit, in order to be regenerated. If the hole be too small, they put the hand or foot through it, and, with a sufficient degree of faith, it answers nearly the same purpose. A fine example of the *Hole-stone* occurs at Campsey, in the parish of Faughanvale, in the County of Derry. A story occurs in the *Book of Ballymote*, in the Library of the Royal Irish Academy, from which it appears, that such stones were at times used for the purpose of chaining to them culprits about to be put to death. Eochaidh (Eoghly), son of Enna Cinnsealach (Kinshelagh), King of Leinster, slew the only son of the chief poet of Niall of the *Hostages*. The poet urged his royal master to march into Leinster, where he encamped at Ahade, near Tullow, laying waste the country all round, until the men of

Leinster were compelled to deliver up their young prince. The poet, now prepared for vengeance: round the neck of the youth he put a chain, the end of which was passed through a perforated "upward flag-stone," and made fast by an iron bar at the back. The story tells that a party of nine were then sent to kill him; but when he perceived their design, he made a sudden tug at the chain, which broke it; then seizing the iron bar, with which it had been fastened to the stone, he plied it so bravely that his nine assailants fled; and he made good his escape to the Leinster camp. He is afterwards said to have drawn from his girdle a *liic curad*, or *champion's flat stone*, which he threw across the Slaney at the vengeful poet, and struck him in the forehead, and killed him on the spot. It is also said that this prince accompanied, in disguise, King Niall's army, in his expedition into France; where, having passed to the opposite side of the river Loire, he shot the king dead with an arrow (*saiget*) from his *fidbach* (or bow). He afterwards made his escape and reached Leinster in safety. But to return to the subject of *Hole-stones*: Mr. O'Curry, in 1841, with a copy of the story in his hand, visited the scene of the poet's intended vengeance, and there found the identical flag-stone lying at the end of a field. Some labourers trenching a field in the neighbourhood found the field filled with small graves, at a depth of from 18 to 20 inches below the surface. The graves were formed generally of 6 flag-stones—one sometimes at the bottom, 4 at the sides and ends, and one, sometimes more, to cover these in. They were from 3 to 4 feet long, 1½ feet broad, and about 3 feet deep. Every grave contained one, two, or more urns, bottom down, covered with small flags, and containing minute fragments of burnt bones and black ashes, or mould. Mr. O'Curry thought that these contained the

factor to the poor, keeping nothing for himself, died 4 October, 1722, aged 70." *Hodie mihi cras tibi.*

Though not to an Irishman, the following memorial that was in the Church of the Minorites with a quaint Latin inscription may be of interest; as it refers to one who was a bishop of an Irish See. The following is a translation:—"The Rev Father Francis de Riviera, Bishop of Leighlin in Ireland and Prefect of the General Hospital of the army of the Catholic king in Belgium, having acquitted himself skilfully of his duties, at last yielded himself to nature and was carried off by the plague and gave back to Christ his blessed soul at Bruges on 6 September, 1604. Traveller venerate the ashes of a great man and remember the common fate." *Orta omnia considunt.*

W. O. CAVENAGH, *Fellow.*

"Holed"-Stone at Cushendall, Co. Antrim.—In the *Journal of the Society* (Vol. XXVI, p. 158), Dr. William Frazer furnished a list of "Holed"-stones in Ireland. He there describes 27, all that at that time were known to him, with their localities. He states: "No. 9, Cushendall (Antrim).—I can ascertain nothing of this stone, which is reported to have been destroyed sometime since."

While staying at Cushendall this autumn, I visited the ruins of Layde Monastery, about one mile north-east of the village. On passing through the churchyard gate, I observed in the left-hand corner of the enclosure a standing "holed"-stone, which I then examined.

Its material is the dark-red, soft sandstone of the district. Height above ground, 46 inches; breadth of shaft, 10 inches; breadth across head, 15½ inches; and in thickness, 5 inches. Width of aperture, which is in the upper third of stone, and considerably splayed, across, 4 inches; from above downwards, 5 inches. On both faces of the stone, four short grooves, more clearly marked at the back, run into the aperture, making a cruciform figure. Like Dr. Frazer's No. 5, at Laraghbryan (near Maynooth), it has been appropriated as a headstone, as at the base appears the following inscription:—Frank McDonnell, formerly of Legge, died June 1861.

I do not think that much of the stone is below the ground level, as it does not appear to be very firmly fixed.

At No. 2, in Dr. Frazer's list, the "Doagh Stone" (Co Antrim) is described. He also mentions that it is figured in *The Dublin Penny Journal* for 1832-3. Referring to this publication at p. 340, I find the following:—"The writer is not aware of any similar stone at present in Ireland; but it is said that within memory a

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PLATE III.]

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“HOLED”-STONE AT CUSHENDALL.

large stone with a hole through it stood on a hill near Cushendall." If the Layde stone is identical with this one, which I think is probable, there is an approximate date for its disappearance from its original site.

The fact that the head of the stone, which is roughly rounded, is considerably wider than the shaft, together with the presence of the grooves previously alluded to, might seem to indicate that the original contour of the stone was altered, so as to give it somewhat the appearance of a rude cross.

S. A. D'ARCY, *Member.*

Ancient Structures in County Waterford—(1) The Fort of Duagh.—In the *Journal* of this Society, June, 1928, I recorded the partial destruction of a large, square, earthen enclosure, with circular projections at each corner, in the townland of Duagh, about three miles from Waterford City.

This was said by some to be an ancient fort, and by others to be the remains of a military barrack built in the reign of Elizabeth, but when it was ploughed up about two years ago, I discovered nothing to substantiate either theory.

I now learn from Mr. Henry D. Keane, solicitor, Waterford, whose knowledge of the ancient and modern history of Waterford is remarkable for its extent and its accuracy, that there used to be a castle here, the country seat of the Briver family, and that this curious enclosure was portion of the pleasure grounds adjoining the castle. If such be the case, the projections at each corner are probably the sites of ornamental summer houses.

We learn from old records that Alexander Briver was Sheriff of Waterford in 1580, and Mayor in 1587. James Briver was Sheriff in 1610. Alexander Briver was Mayor in 1617.

Francis Briver was Sheriff in 1636, and Mayor in 1641. His lot as mayor was anything but a bed of roses, as we learn from the interesting letters written by his wife to "goode Captaine Evelings," who commanded the fort of Duncannon at that period. These letters will be found in *Gilbert's History of the War of the Confederation*, vol. ii. They are highly entertaining and well worth reading.

(2) **Crannog, near Waterford.**—Not far from this enclosure there is what I believe to be a hitherto unrecorded crannog. It is in a bog between the main road from Waterford to Tramore and the railway line, about half way between the two places, and a little beyond the Half Way House. It is roughly oval, perhaps 80 yards long by 30 wide, raised above the level of the surrounding bog, and can be entered dry-footed from one point only. As the enclosure is at present overgrown with brambles, detailed

one stratum. And if the lines of stratification are "pressure cracks" it is certainly very curious that the "cracks" do not pass through the belemnites. As a matter of fact they always pass round the belemnites, the latter being intact. The bivalves are much more conclusive, as they are filled with "primary" chalk, the white colour of the latter standing out in vivid contrast with the creamy toned "secondary" chalk by which they are surrounded. Moreover, under the microscope the white "primary" or normal chalk included in these bivalves shows an almost entire absence of the foreign matter so conspicuously present in the "secondary" chalk.

In conclusion, I am more convinced than ever, after a careful perusal of Professor Charlesworth's communication and a review of all the facts of the case, that:—(1) The soft flints at Magheramorne and the "flour of flint" are the products of prolonged weathering, though the method by which that weathering acted is somewhat obscure. (2) That the bed of chalk (C) is a fresh water and "secondary" deposit laid down long after the upper surface of the under-lying "primary" or normal chalk had been weathered into the bed (E) of "silicious clay with flints." (3) That it is very doubtful if the bed (D) of reddish-brown clay was derived from the normal chalk at all, seeing that it contains 12% of alumina, but was in all probability also water borne; and (4) That pressure has had very little if anything to do with the phenomena exhibited at the recently exposed rocks at Magheramorne. Certainly not pressure from the over-lying masses of basalt, which pressure, it must always be remembered, was of a slowly accumulative character owing to the intermittent nature of the basaltic overflows, the latter sometimes separated by long intervals of volcanic quiescence.

**SOME TENTATIVE DEDUCTIONS ARISING FROM THE
STUDY OF THREE ANCIENT MONUMENTS
IN NORTHERN IRELAND.**

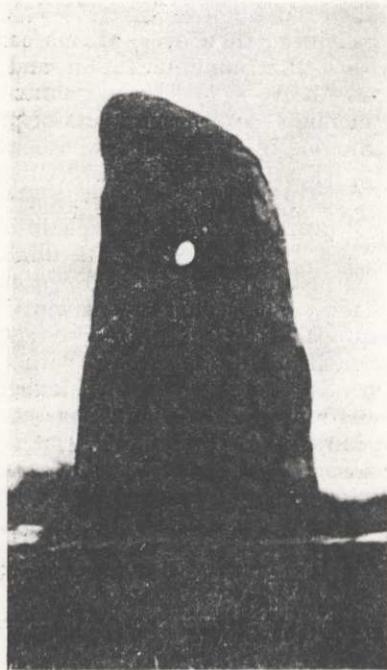
1.—THE HOLESTONE.

By H. C. LAWLOR, M.A., M.R.I.A.

[The following is the first portion of an essay by Mr. H. C. Lawlor that gained one of the prizes for original work offered by the Belfast Naturalists' Field Club. The second portion, relating to Clogher, Co. Tyrone, will follow.—Ed.]

In December, 1927, Mr. Wm. M'Iroy, owner of the farm on the edge of which stands this remarkable monument, had occasion to widen an entrance to one of his fields, and in doing so had to remove a protruding stone. He found it to be one of the top stones of a souterrain, of which there were two chambers, with the passage of one or more others, blocked up. The souterrain presented no unusual features, being built in the

ordinary manner with the side walls of the chambers corbelled inwards, narrowing towards the top, and kept in their position by the usual long stone slabs laid horizontally across, forming the roof. The length of each of the two chambers is about 25 feet and in each chamber are twelve roofing stones averaging some 5 to 6 feet long by 2 feet wide. It will thus be seen that an ordinary souterrain of say four chambers, and many have more, requires from 45 to 50 stone slabs in its construction. My object in mentioning this fact will be apparent later.



The Holestone, Doagh.

A close intimacy with the district of which the Holestone is an approximate centre, extending roughly from Lough Neagh on the west to the Larne to Cairncastle coast on the east, and from Belfast Lough on the south to the Braid valley on the north, reveals the fact that the country is in some districts practically honeycombed with these underground dwellings; but nowhere so much as in the immediate area surrounding Doagh. For instance, in Ballywee townland¹ there are as many as five souterrains in one field; in Kilbride townland there are two in one field.² In the half-moon shaped area bounded by Sallagh Braes and the coast, north of Larne, occupied to-day by five average-sized farms,

there are five souterrains, a fact fairly indicating that in the whole district, or at least in parts of it, souterrains are about as numerous as ordinary farms to-day. They are dangerous obstacles to the farmers if left open, as cattle and horses are liable to injury through falling into them; therefore most of them have been carefully closed up, and their existence forgotten. From this fact, anything like an even approximate estimate of the number of souterrains in the area roughly delineated above, is quite

¹ "The place of the caves." *cp.* Wemyss (pronounced weems), in Fifeshire, "Caves."

² See B.N.H. & P. Society's *Proceedings* for 1917-18.

impossible; but 500 would be a very moderate estimate, including both known and undiscovered or closed and forgotten examples. A few examples have only one chamber, while others have more, such as that at Knockdhu (Sallagh Braes), which has seven. A fair average number of chambers to each souterrain may be said to be four, seldom less than 20 feet in length and often 30 feet each; thus roughly the moderate estimate of 500 souterrains in the area named, required 25,000 long stones from which to form the roofing slabs, to say nothing of the millions of large boulders used in the side walls. Considering the elementary system of quarrying such stones, which must have existed at the period of souterrain building,³ and the difficulty of extracting basalt stones of the necessary shape and size from the prevalent geological top layer of the district, the question arises, how did these early builders obtain the enormous quantity of long stones that exist in the souterrain? Examination of a great number of these stones leads one to the conclusion that, as a rule, they are not quarried stones, but that the builders scoured the country to find erratics of the necessary shape and used these as far as they could. Gravestones of a previous age were ruthlessly commandeered, whether inscribed or not, and in many cases stones inscribed with ogam characters, and in one case a cross,⁴ are found adapted as roofing stones in souterrains. At Connor, quite near Holestone, two ogam inscribed roofing stones were found so used, by the present Dean of Down, when rector of Connor.⁵

To modern minds the use of tombstones in the construction of secular buildings in this manner, although instances have been known, would be repellant and contrary to the common instinct of respect for the dead; apparently the souterrain builders had no such scruples.

The question arises, why did the builders not utilise the Hole Stone? Within a couple of hundred yards of it on either side are two souterrains with a hundred or more of these long stones used in the roofs. Here was a suitable stone immediately to hand, and yet they would not disturb it.

I can think of no prehistoric monument of whose written history we know nothing the use and purpose of which have been so well preserved by inviolable tradition as the Hole Stone. From times long prehistoric a ring was regarded as part of the

³ The period of souterrain building seems to be conclusively proved as commencing in the 4th century A.D.; see Macalister, *Archæology of Ireland*, pp. 164, ff.; Lawlor *Proceedings R.I.A.*, vol. xxxv. c. 4 (1919), and the same author's *Ulster, its Archæology and Antiquities*, pp. 104, 108, ff. In the district under review, the souterrain seems to have developed as a place of secrecy and defence, after the defeat of the Ultonians, and their segregation in Down, Antrim, N. Derry and Donegal after the raid of the three Collas in 332 A.D.

⁴ Macalister, *The Archæology of Ireland*, pp. 164, ff.

⁵ See *U.J.A.*, 2nd Series, vol. v, pp. 47, ff.

ceremony of *Arrhae* or betrothal prior to the marriage ceremony itself.⁶ To this day, through all the changes of race and peoples that have occurred in County Antrim, particularly South Antrim,⁷ the tradition that the Holestone is a betrothal, if not a marriage token remains unbroken, and couples from all the district round still plight their troths by clasping their fingers through the ring or hole in this stone. Here then appears the probability that the souterrain builders refrained from using the Hole Stone, because it was sacred in their pagan religion, if not actually a deity.

It is generally agreed that when Saint Patrick introduced Christianity into Ireland in the 5th century, his success was largely due to tact in assimilating it as much as possible with the existing religious forms, rather than making enemies of the people by a too drastic religious revolution. He and his disciples, we know, founded monasteries and churches in Antrim, and we have occasional references to the history of these and their occupants; but it must be confessed that for more than six centuries after the death of Saint Patrick we know nothing of the domestic life of the mass of the people. At the Synod of Rathbraesil in 1110, when Ireland was divided into territorial dioceses after the Roman Church plan, the N.E. area was laid out as the diocese of Connor and included Down and, apparently, Dro-more.⁸ The celebrated Malachy O'Morgair was appointed bishop of Connor in 1124, and translated to Armagh in 1131. According to his life by his friend St. Bernard of Clairveaux, the Irish church system was in a shocking condition, the Abbots of the chief monasteries being married laymen,⁹ who regarded the church endowments as family property to be handed down to their issue, whether lay or clerical. St. Malachy, by almost superhuman efforts, reformed these and other abuses at Armagh, and brought it under the Roman church system; but having achieved his great work there, he desired to be relieved of the heavy responsibility by a transfer back to his old see at Bangor. The opportunity arose in 1137, but he insisted that he would not include Connor in his diocese, but only be bishop of Down, making almost the whole of Co. Antrim a separate diocese, that of Connor, having a bishop of its own. His reasons for this desire are clearly defined by Saint Bernard of Clairveaux, and are the first glimpse of light that we have on the domestic life of the common people of the diocese of Connor, and on the state of the Irish Church there in the 11th and 12th centuries, if not for a much longer time. The word-

⁶ See "Arrhae," article by J. M. Ludlow, M.A., Lincoln's Inn, and "Marriage," article by the Rev. Prebendary Meyrick, M.A., Fellow of Trinity, Oxford, in Smith and Cheetham's *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*.

⁷ In the Bruce invasion 1315-1318, Connor and most of South Antrim appear to have been almost, if not quite, depopulated, while in the Chichester plantation the few natives left in these parts were cleared away to make room for Scottish and English settlers.

⁸ See H. J. Lawlor's *Life of St. Malachy*, S.P.C.K., xxxcii, ff.

⁹ *id.*, pp. 45, 164, ff.

picture painted by St. Bernard from St. Malachy's description of the people of Connor (as distinct from Down) bears little evidence of the introduction among them of Christianity; that in fact they were still pagans in customs and mode of life is clearly stated.¹⁰ His chief complaint against these people was their gross immorality and ignorance of religious rites: "Never before had he known the like in whatever depth of barbarism"; "they would not enter into lawful (i.e., ecclesiastical) marriages . . ."; in fact St. Malachy found he had "been sent not to men but beasts." No doubt other parts of Ireland were quite as bad, though Malachy, who had travelled much through Ireland, does not say so.¹¹

Taking all things into account, it would seem as if St. Malachy, in referring so strongly to the gross immorality of the people of Connor and their non-observance of the ecclesiastical marriage and other rites, had in his mind the so called marriages celebrated at the Hole Stone, and that this monument may therefore with much probability be regarded as a memorial of one of the causes of the separation of the dioceses of Down and Connor.

CINERARY URN FIND AT RANDALSTOWN, Co. ANTRIM.

By ALEXANDER PRINGLE.

On 13th August a very fine cinerary urn was unearthed at Barney's Brae, Randalstown, during road improvement operations. It was found eighteen inches below the surface of the ground, mouth downwards, and resting on a large flat circular stone. The base (which was uppermost) was fractured all around and loose, the edges indicating that the break was of remote age. Except for a small hole in the body, caused by the workman's pick, the vessel was otherwise perfect.

The urn is covered with incised decoration, and at the top are three bands of circular depressions, evidently made by pressure of the thumb into the soft clay. Inside the top is also decorated by incised lines. The height is $17\frac{1}{2}$ inches; diameter of top $13\frac{3}{4}$ inches; and diameter of body 16 inches.

Cemented by clay within the mouth was a mass of calcined bone fragments, among which, on being sorted out, was found a flake of flint two inches long, but not exhibiting any sign of having been worked.

The unusually light character of the incised decoration may possibly indicate that the urn belonged to the later part of the Bronze Age.

¹⁰ See *Life of St. Malachy*, par. 16.

¹¹ Other contemporary writers do, such as Giraldus Cambrensis. See *Life of St. Malachy*, H. J. Lawlor, pp. 162-3.

Survey. The ornamentation under the perforation seems to partake of the characteristics of a *cruz-ansata*. This specimen stands about 5 feet above the soil. O'Donovan states that there were superstitious rites held in connexion with it, but does not specify their nature.

The Island of Inismurray, county Sligo, presents two valuable examples of "holed stones" (figs. 84 and 85); the one measures 4 feet, the other 5 feet, in height. In the present day the postulants kneel, passing their thumbs into the front and their fingers into the side orifices, thereby obtaining a firm grasp of the angles

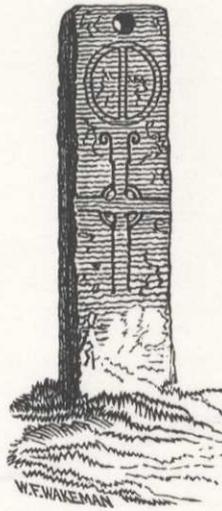


Fig. 83.—"Holed" and Sculptured Stone at Mainister, Aran Island.

of the stone. Cross-inscribed "holed stones" may probably have been so sculptured by the earliest missionaries amongst the Irish, with the object of thus diverting the prayers of the pagan into Christian channels. It seems most difficult to imagine that the perforations in rude pillar-stones could possibly have been derived from any point of belief or ceremonial of the Christian Church.

There is reason to believe that "holed stones," being unquestionably of pagan origin, were anciently connected with religious rites of some kind; it has also been sug-

Kilkenny Journal 4th Series 8, 1887-8;

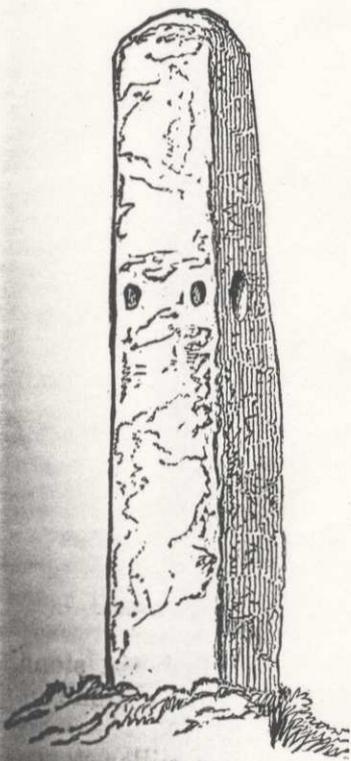


Fig. 84.—“Holed” Stone at *Teampull-na-
mban*, Island of Inismurray, county Sligo.

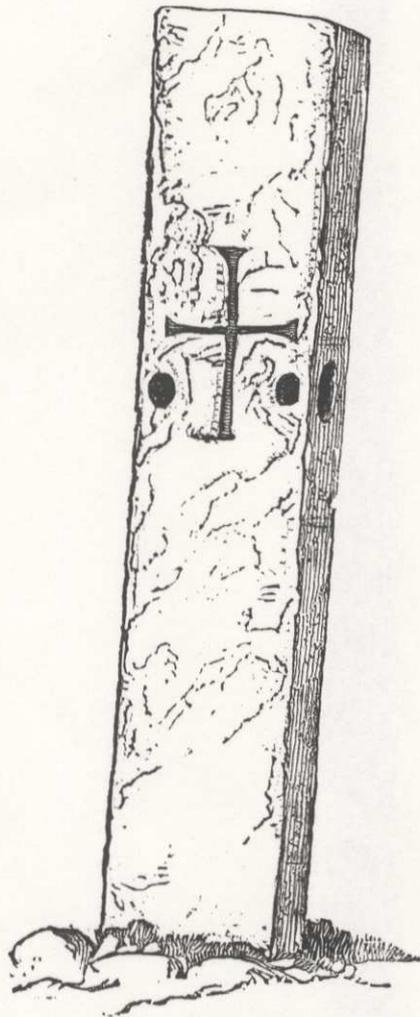


Fig. 85.—“Holed” Stone near *Teampull-na-
mban*, or the “Church of the Women,” Island of Inis-
murray, county Sligo.

gested that they may have been used for interchange oaths, promises, &c., or in commemoration of some event such as a battle or a treaty; also that they were raised as boundary marks. This last idea would be specially applicable in the case of the Carrowmore example, for it defines the spot where three parishes meet, the parishes themselves being probably but ancient pagan denominations of lands, afterwards in Christian times re-named in honour of St. John, and the Bishops Bronus and Mac Owen; *i. e.* St. John's, Killaspugbrone, and Killmacowen parishes. In the Brehon Law Tracts, vol. iv.,

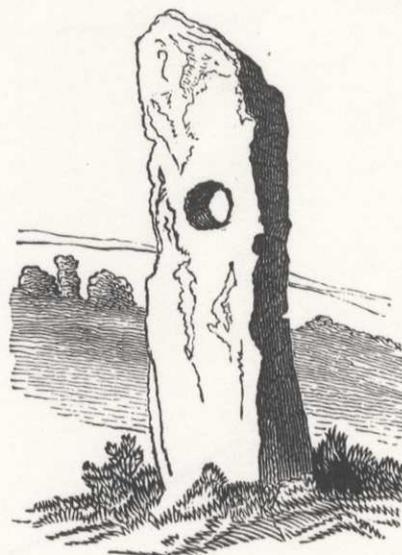


Fig. 86.—The *Hole Stone* near the Village of Doagh, county Antrim.

p. 143, a monument of this class is called "a stone mark," *i. e.* a district which is marked by a stone of worship, or an immovable stone.

Like the Carrowmore example, many pillar-stones are thin flat flags of irregular form; others seem to be rudely quadrangular; some again are simply boulders placed on end. On a rocky eminence, about a mile from the village of Doagh, county Antrim, stands a large whinstone slab called the *Hole Stone* (fig. 86). It is upwards of 5 feet in height above the ground, and near the base

4 feet 8 inches in circumference, and 10 inches in thickness. At about 3 feet from the ground there is a round hole perforated through it, sufficient to admit an ordinary sized hand; this has evidently been made by art, but there is neither record nor tradition respecting the purpose for which it was formed. It is said that not long ago a large stone with a hole through it stood on a hill near Cushendall, in the same county. The accompanying illustration (fig. 87) represents a stone of this class, remaining in the churchyard of Castledermot, and which it is alleged is inscribed with ogham characters. There is a remarkable perforated stone of this description—also inscribed, it is said, with ogham scores—

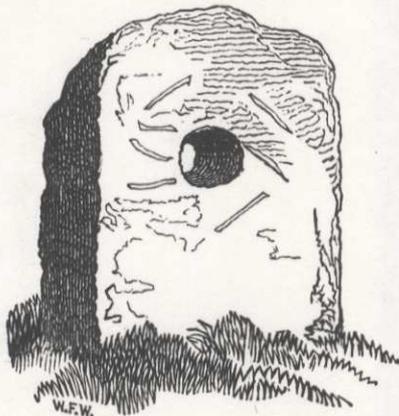


Fig. 87.—“Holed” and Scribed Stone in the Churchyard of Castle Dermot.

near the church of Kilmalkedar, one mile from Smerwick Harbour, in the county Kerry. At the foot of the round tower near Inniskeen, a small village in the barony of Farney, county Monaghan, was found a very large stone of porphyry, with a hole in the centre large enough to thrust the arm through, and it was once used for superstitious purposes. In more modern times a pole was placed in the hole, up which the young country folk used to climb at Easter for some trifling prize.¹ In Ross-shire, Scotland, there is a stone resembling the Doagh

¹ *Proceedings, Kilkenny Archaeological Society, vol. III., p. 377, 1854-5.*

monument; and near Kirkwall, Orkney, at a place called Stennis, is a large pillar-stone (fig. 88), 8 feet high, 3 feet broad, and 9 inches thick, with a hole through it. The site on which it stands was deemed a place consecrated to the meeting of lovers, and when they joined hands through the stone, the pledge of love and truth then given was held sacred. In his tale of "The Pirate" the stone circle of Stennis is specially mentioned by Sir Walter Scott, who was an antiquary as well as novelist. "It is quite certain that the oath to Wodin or Odin was sworn

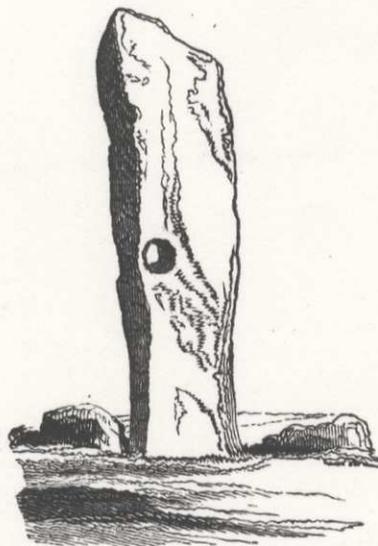


Fig. 88.—"Holed" Pillar-stone at Stennis, near Kirkwall, Orkney.

by persons joining their hands through the hole in this ring-stone, and that an oath so taken, although by Christians, was deemed solemn and binding."¹ This ceremony was held very sacred, so that anyone breaking it was ostracised from society; and so late as the year 1781 a traveller in the Orkney Islands relates that a "young man was called before the session, and the elders were particularly severe. Being asked by the minister the cause of so much severity, they answered: 'You do not

¹ Ferguson's *Rude Stone Monuments*, p. 255.

know what a bad man this is; he has broken the promise to Odin,' and further explained that the contracting parties had joined hands through the hole in the stone."

There is a "holed" stone at Lochgilphead in Argyleshire, represented by fig. 89, copied from the *Sculptured Stones of Scotland*; no description of it, however, could be found in the text; it is not merely "holed," but also "cup-marked," and its position is close to a stone circle. A slab that appears to have been intended for a "holed" stone was found by Mr.

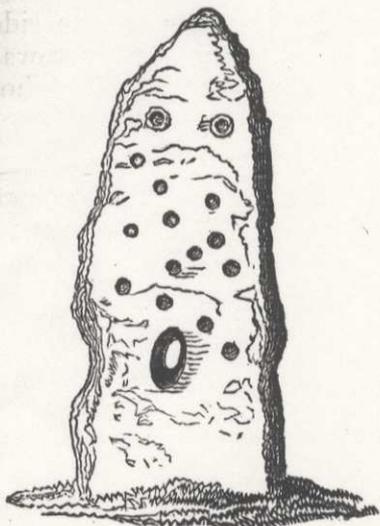


Fig. 89.—"Holed" and Cup-marked Stone at Lochgilphead, Argyleshire.

Eugene A. Conwell in his examination of the ancient sepulchral cairns on the Loughcrew Hills, county Meath, and in connexion with a stone circle. It is thus described by him:—"No. 8 contains a circular hole, $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter, cut vertically with much precision and smoothness, to a depth of 3 inches. For what use this may have been intended it would be difficult to conjecture, if we do not suppose that the stone itself had been unfinished, or not completely pierced through."¹

At Plas Newydd, in Wales, there is a chamber or

cist where the slab which closed the entrance is pierced with two holes, which had been originally circular, and about 10 inches in diameter: a good illustration of it is given in Ferguson's *Rude Stone Monuments*, p. 167. Holed stones may also be noticed in France, of which that at Trie, Oise, and that at Grandmont, in Bois Languedoc, are characteristic examples; there is also another in the interior of a sepulchral chamber at Kerlescant, Carnac. This chamber is divided into two equal compartments by two stones cut away in the centre, so as to leave an aperture 1 foot 6 inches wide, by 3 feet high. "A similar but smaller hole exists on the side, and is identical with those found in the long barrows at Rodmarton and Avening, in Gloucestershire."¹ The "holed" dol-

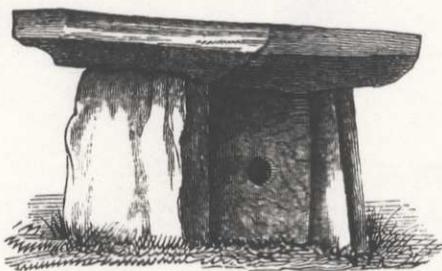


Fig. 90.—"Holed" Dolmen, or Cromleac, at Rujunkolloor, in the Deccan.

mens found on the shores of the Crimea, or in the Caucasus, seem to be rudely dressed. Such "holed" stones are very frequent in eastern dolmens: in the district of Bellary alone, out of a classification of 2129 rude stone monuments, 527 were dolmens pierced on one side with a circular aperture. Colonel Meadows Taylor, in his description of the cromleacs, kistvaens, and carns at Rujunkolloor in the Deccan, states that one holed dolmen had a top slab 12 feet by 10 feet 6 inches, and 9 inches to 1 foot thick, the side slabs being 12 feet 2 inches long by 8 inches broad (fig. 90): in all these the aperture is in the southern side. The limestone of which the various tombs in this district are formed

¹ Ferguson's *Rude Stone Monuments*.

lies naturally in la
to two feet in thick
broken with a hard
accounts for the un
ance of the cluster

With regard to
was the opinion of th
the then existing ve
strong to warrant the
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forms a very strikin
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of the country will
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was described, in 17
stones, in figure oval
base; on the one sid
of 67 feet; the area
diameter, and 85 fe
visited it in 1837 it v
and the longest dian
the interval been use
590 feet in circumf
top 80 feet, its short

¹ In St. Patrick's Cathedral
the oaken door is still preserved
a hole was cut to permit the

B3161/77

SH ANT. 45:32

Mr Gass

Holestone in the townland of HOLESTONE

(not Hoyadam as on the file). Co Antrim.

I was in the Doagh area with Mr Collins today and we called at the site. It so happens that the local authority men are just in the midst of clearing up the site - cutting whins, burning rubbish etc. A load of scrap iron had already gone, + they assured me that the other car remains would also be taken away. The site is beginning to look respectable again.

How best can this kind of nuisance be avoided? Once it is tidy, the site is likely to be better respected, but a NO TIPPING or similar notice on the conveniently sited gate would be useful if the owners are willing. Mr Brannon raised the question of locking the gate in his minute of 16.11.77, or providing pedestrian access. I would

favour our providing a short information
notice to be exhibited near the stone. It is
of considerable interest, in a lovely position,
and I think "attracts a lot of visitors.

The field observer who brought this to our
attention should be informed of the
satisfactory outcome of his vigilance.

Am Hamlin

7.4.78.