

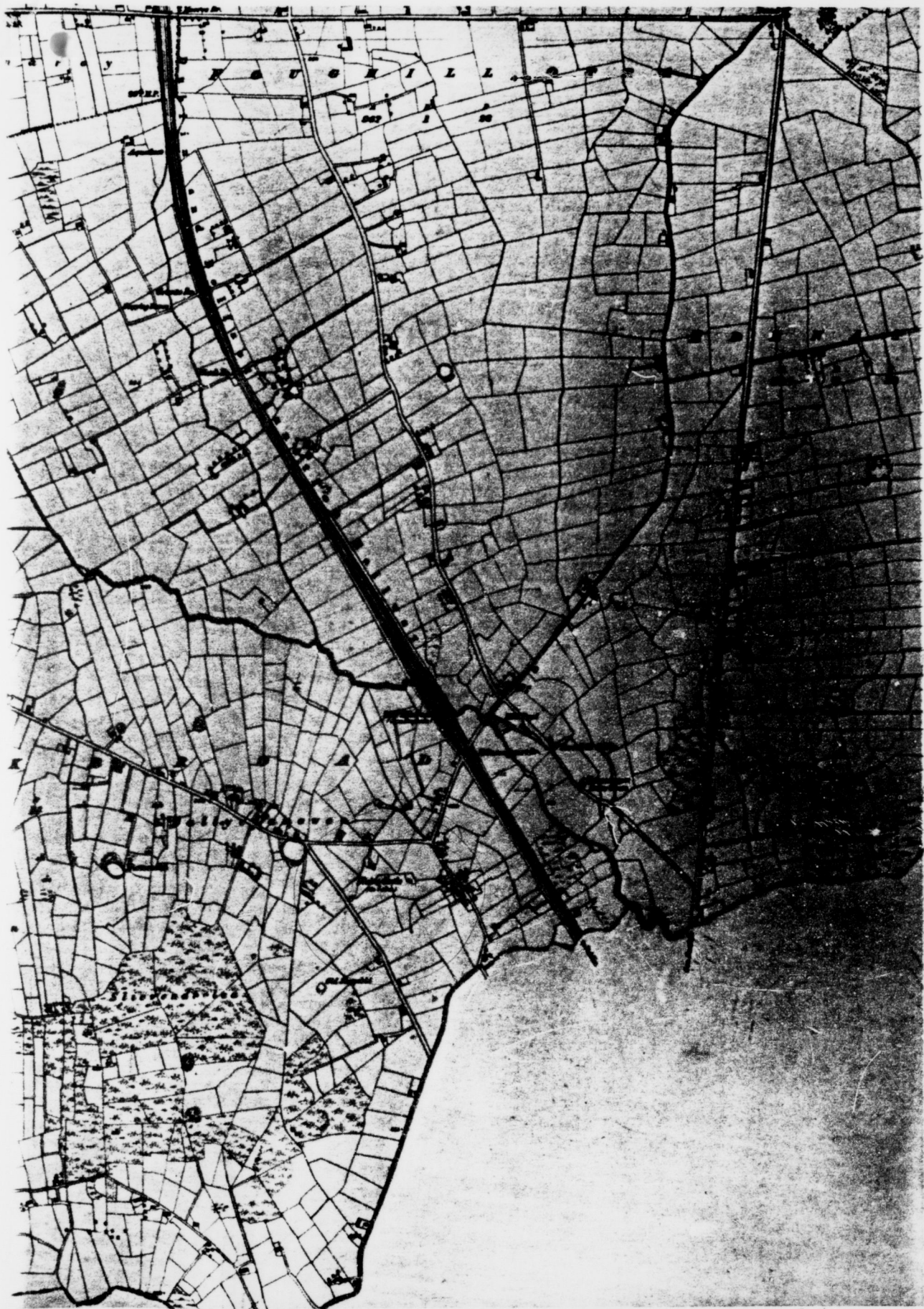
SM7 ARM 32:6

[sc]

EDENAPPA

Graveyard & cross-inscribed pillar
Stone

Kilhasaggant



dem 32.6 2^o r d

EDENAPPA	CO ARMAGH	PARISH Jonesborough	O.S. 32.6 IG 282 J0618 1488
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Graveyard: Kilnasaggart.
Inscribed Pillar-stone & Cross slabs
Bullaun

O.S. 100 ft+

Present enclosure made c. 1908.

Pillar-stone with crosses and long Irish inscription:
individual mentioned, Ternoc, died 714 (AFM) or
716 (A.Tig.)

Six other cross-carved stones, one the large flat
granite slab in enclosure, others small + portable.
Other stones mentioned in earlier accounts seem
to have disappeared.

1st 'Kilnasaggart' + small open circle.
(road close by from NW to SE)

2nd 'Kilnasaggart Stone Cross' + in small
rectangular enclosure on the road. Railway
has appeared.

3rd 'Kilnasaggart Stone Cross', symbol, no
enclosure + no road.

4th 'Kilnasaggart Inscribed Stone', shown in
polygonal enclosure.

Field Visits ✓			Files B 279/34 : SM 11/1 : SM.7 : SM 5/50 : N ^e 110 on 8668/26 Plans
Scheduled	Listed	State Care ✓	Photos ✓ + small album
RBt 66870 5(M) 12/75 TP			Pi

continued

TD EDENAPPA	CO ARMAGH	PARISH	O.S. 32:6 IG 282 J0618 1488
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Bullaun stone in next field SW of enclosure, known as 'wart well' (pro).

Excavation in 1966 + 1968 revealed graveyard of stone built graves, all
regularly orientated E-W. No sign of claimed radial arrangement.

No church or monastic buildings reported or found, but likely early church site. Roofless
church shown here in 1609 Escheated Counties Map. Belonged to Armagh Culdees early @ 16th.
Close to important N-S route Míodhluachra through the Moyry Pass.

Field Visits			Files Plans
Scheduled	Listed	State Care	Photos
RBt 66870 5(M) 12/75 TP			P

O.S. Fieldmen's Report no. 108 p. 24

PS. 1940. 80

O'Donovan O.S. Letters : O'Flanagan 1927, 2 (poor drawing)

Bell Newry Magazine (1815). 293-5 (drawing)

Reeves in U.J.A. 1 (1853). 221-5 (drawing)

Reade JRSAS 4 (1856-7). 315-8

Petrie Inscriptions II (~~1878~~ 1878). pl. XIX, ⁺¹⁷⁻³⁰ + I, 123

Morris L.A.I. (1904), 47-9

← 8 LAJ I no. 2 (1905), 92.

Quinn L.A.I. (1909), 186-90

Macalister Archaeology of Ireland (1935), 183-5.

Macalister Corpus Inscr. Ins. Celticarum, 114-5, no. 946 pl. XLVI (drawing - not entirely accurate)

Ewans, EE. 1966, 60.

J.R.S.A.I. 16 (1883-4) 422.

T.G.F.P. notes vol. 135 under Kilnasaggart

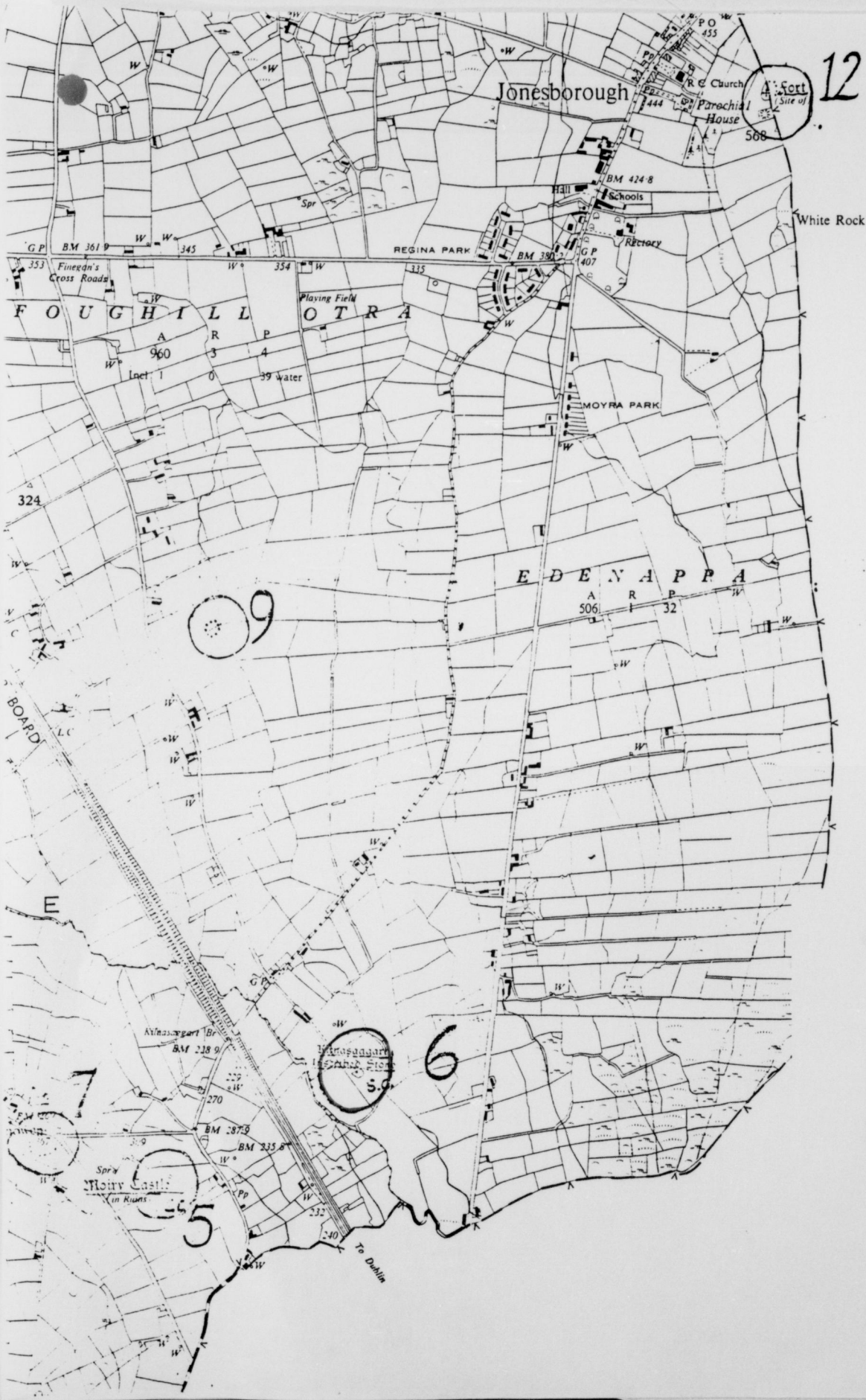
Crawford H.S. JRSAI 1912 p. 219 [sm5]117

KILNASAGART.

The Wart Well. This well is one of a series that has no connection with any pilgrimage. It is a mere bowl-shaped depression in an outcrop of rock. Its proximity to the Pillar-stone of Kilnasagart, a monument of about 714 A.D., believed to be the earliest inscribed stone of the Christian Period, makes the well of special interest.

It is still used and cures are reported. 76FE. UJA 11 (1945), 123.

J.R.S.A.I. 16 (1883-4) 422



12

Fort
Site of

Jonesborough

White Rock

FOUGHILL OTRA

REGINA PARK

EDENAPPA

MOYRA PARK

BOARD

Moyry Castle
(in Ruins)

Kilnasagar
Inscribed Pillar Stone

Ann. 32:6 EDENAPPA
Kilnasagar inscribed
Pillar stone

9

6

5

7

PO 455
R.C. Church
Parochial House
568

BM 424.8

Hall

Schools

BM 390.2

H.G.P. 407

Rectory

G.P. BM 361.9

Finegh's Cross Roads

353

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345

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354

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324

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DESCRIPTIVE LIST OF EARLY CROSS-SLABS AND PILLARS 219

ULSTER

Locality and Townland	No. of Ord-nance Map	Situation
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COUNTY ANTRIM

1. Dunseverick, Templastragh, N.E. 3 In W. gable of the church, at W. end of Whitepark Bay, 4 m. E. of the Causeway. 3:12
A slab 42 in. by 13 in., having at the top a circle containing an interlaced cross of straight double bands.—See *Ulster J. A.*,¹ vol. vi (new series), p. 60 (D.I.).
2. Ballycastle, Turraloskin, N.E. 8 Beside the road near Carrignagat mill, 2½ m. S.W. of Ballycastle, and 1 m. N. of Capecastle Station. 8:9-12
A rough pillar stone 6 ft. high and 16 in. wide; incised with a Latin cross, having slightly enlarged ends. See *Ulster J. A.*, vol. xiv (new series), 156 (D.I.).
3. Kileonriola, Kirkinriola, N.E. 32 Found in the graveyard 2½ m. N. of Ballymena, and now placed in the tower of Ballymena Church. 32:14
A rough slab about 20 in. by 18 in.; having a ringed cross potent carved on it. In the quarters is inscribed: op bo begen.—See *Christian Inscriptions*, vol. ii, p. 73 (D.I.), and *Proceedings R.I.A.*, vol. xv, p. 276 (D.).
4. Chapelfield, Crevilly Valley, S.E. 37 Found in use as a stand at a cottare 1 m. N.E. of Kellswater, and placed in Belfast Museum. 37:44
A rough stone 13 in. by 10 in. by 4 in.; incised with a two-line panel, containing in each corner a two-line Greek cross, thus leaving a central space in the form of a stepped cross.—See *Journal R.S.A.I.*, vol. xvi, p. 118 (D.I.).

COUNTY ARMAGH

1. Kilnasaggart, Edenappa, N.W. 32 In a keel beside the road, E. of railway, 2 m. N. of Adavoyle Station. 32:6
A rough pillar-stone 7 ft. 4 in. high, 18 in. by 16 in. On the front is inscribed in *loc po canimmaron ternohc mac cean bic epul pecep apptel*. Below is a Greek cross with spiral ends, in a circle; and above an incised Latin cross. On the back are ten small crosses in circles. Close to the neighbouring house is a boulder incised with a cross in a circle.—See *Louth J. A.*, vol. i (1904), p. 47 (D.I.), and *Christian Inscriptions*, vol. ii, p. 27 (D.I.); also *Journal R.S.A.I.*, vol. iv, p. 315 (D.I.), and same, vol. xxi, p. 99 (I.).

¹ The letters *J. A.* stand for *Journal of Archaeology*, and the letters M, D, and I, placed after a reference indicate that the monument is there mentioned, described, or illustrated.

EDENAPPA.

ARMAGH

KILNASAGGART

STANDING STONE

W Reeves, 'Kilnasaggart', Walter J. Archard, Vol 1 (1853) 221-5.
 H. Morris, 'Kilnasaggart Stone' C.L.A.J. ~~1~~ 7 (1904) 47-9
 J. Quinn, 'Kilnasaggart', C.L.A.J. 2 pt 2 (1909) 186-90.

U.S.A. 1, (1853) 221-225.

SM7 ARM 32:6

KILNASAGGART.

By THE REV. W. REEVES, L.L.D., M.R.IA.

THE small parish of Jonesborough, in the diocese and county of Armagh, consists of three townlands, which were severed from Killeavy in the last century, called Foughill Etra, Foughill Otra, and Edenappa. The last of these forms the south-western extremity of the county, and is traversed by the old road from Dundalk to Newry; at a short distance to the east of which, and very near the junction with Louth, is a place, which is marked by the Ordnance Survey, both on the townland and Index maps of the county,—*Kilnasaggart*.

Spartan

This name signifies the "Church of the Priests," and the spot which bears it is a small, unenclosed, and slightly-elevated space near the edge of a field, on which may be recognized some traces of ancient sculpture, but none of any building; and were it not for the respect which the country people entertain for the spot, and a conspicuous pillar-stone which stands in it, the inquirer would in vain search the neighbourhood for a place to realize, by any symptom, the import of the name. The pillar-stone however, is of such unmistakeable antiquity, and the brief record, which is inscribed on it, so explicit, that it may safely be pronounced to be one of the most interesting Christian monuments now existing in Ireland.

The stone, of which a front and back view are given in the accompanying illustration, is about eight feet high, and seems to have been no otherwise dressed than the preparation of the surfaces for the inscriptions and designs. The former is a good deal obliterated by time; but some of the letters, which are large and deep, are very plain, while the rest, which are not so well incised, and are with difficulty decyphered. The whole, however, has been recovered and is here exhibited with a collateral Latin translation.^b

IN LOC
PO DO THI
MMAERNI
TERNOC
MACCERAN
DIT ER CUL
PETER AP
PTEU

TON LOCVM
HVNC CON-
SECRAVIT
TERNOCVS
FILIVS CERANI
SIT SVB PATROCINIO
PETRI APOS-
TOLI

^a Sheet 32.

^b The writer is indebted to Dr. O'Donovan for the interpretation here given.



Engraving by Mr. Robert Bell

Engraving by Mr. James Smith

FRONT VIEW

BACK VIEW

KILNASAGGART PILLAR-STONE.

The structure of these words is very ancient, but very clear, and the following analysis of them may not be unacceptable:

In,—an old form of the article *An*.

Loc,—'Place,' root of Latin *Locus*.

So,—Demonstrative pronoun.

Do thimmaerni,—'Devoted,' 'made over,' past tense of the verb *timearnaim*. The corresponding word in the Book of Armagh, and some of the Latin Lives of the Saints, is *immolo*; thus we find in Tirechan: "Patricio in sempiternum *ymmolaverunt*,^c qui fundavit ecclesiam, Deo consecratam, Patricioque *immolatam*;^d Colmanus episcopus ecclesiam suam, id est, Cluincain in Achud, Patricio episcopo de votiva *immolatione* in sempiternum obtulit;" nay, to a reader unapprized of this technical use of the term, like the fate of Jephtha's daughter, it would have a startling effect to be told that Hercaith, immediately on his baptism, "*immolavit* filium Patricio;"^e and to find Endeus saying "filium meum et partem hereditatis meae ego *immolo* Deo Patricii et Patricio."^f

Bit,—'Let him be,' now *biodh*, 3d. person, sing. imperative of the verb-substantive *Táim*.

Er cul,—*Er*, the old form of the preposition *ar* 'on.' *Cul* is 'back;' and the two words sometimes form a compound-preposition in the form *Ar culaib*, or *Ar g-cul*, 'behind.'^h In a metaphorical sense the expression denoted 'under the protection,' 'under the patronage,' as in the lines of the Rann by Aengus the Culdee:

Ar cul Fhinneiv Moighe-bile,

Ulaidh uile.

Dal nAruidhe uasol imghrinn

Ar cul Comghoill.

"Under the patronage of Finnian of Movilla,

Are all the Ulidians:

The noble illustrious Dalaradians

Are under the patronage of Comgall!"

Peter Apstel.—'Peter the Apostle.' This was a departure from the custom of the early Irish church, whose patron saints were, nearly all, natives of the soil. The *Liber Angeli*, in the Book of Armagh, claims for the see of St. Patrick this honour, "*nilominus venerari debet honore summorum martyrium, Petri et Pauli Stefani, Laurenti, et caeterorum.*"

^c Book of Armagh, fol. 17, a. a.

^d *Ibid.*, fol. 17, a. b.

^e *Ibid.*, fol. 17, a. a.

^f *Ibid.*, fol. 8, a. a.

^g *Ibid.*, fol. 19, b. b. The word is used also, in like sense.

in the Life of St. Barrus of Cork. M.S. Trin. Coll. Dub., E. 3. 11, fol. 109, b. b.

^h O'Donovan, *Irish Gram.* pp. 282, 289.

ⁱ Colgan *Acta Sanct.*, p. 646, col. a; Reeves' *Eccles. Antiq.* p. 151.

The large cross at the foot of the inscription is probably intended as his symbol, while the ten smaller ones in the back seem designed for the remaining ten of the faithful apostles. The cross inscribed on the ragged, oblique, surface at the top, and that on the detached stone, possibly refer to the apostate and the supplementary members of the Twelve. It is to be observed that the crosses, and the circles enclosing them, are in relief.

The individual, in whose memory the stone was erected, flourished in the beginning of the eighth century, and appears to have been a person of some importance, who dedicated himself and his possessions to the service of God. His obit, which is all that is recorded of him, occurs in the Annals of Tighernach, at the year 716, which is the true date, and in those of the Four Masters at 714.¹

Ternoc Mac Ciarain decc.

Ternoc son of Ciaran died.

He was descended from Fiacha Araidhe, the ancestor of the Dalaradians, and was of the same race as the great families of Magenis and Macartan. The Naomh Seanchus, or 'Sacred Genealogy,' preserved in the Book of Lecan and the Mac Firis manuscript, gives his pedigree as follows:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| 1. FIACHA ARAIDHE, ob. A.D. 236. | 7. EACHACH COBHA, from whom Iveagh and Moy Cova. |
| | |
| 2. CAS. | 8. CRUNN-BADRAIGHE. |
| | |
| 3. FEDLIMIDH. | 9. CAOLBADH, obiit A.D. 358. |
| | |
| 4. IOMCHADH, | 10. SARAN, contemporary with St. Patrick. |
| | |
| 5. ROS. | 11. CIARAN or Ciarog. |
| | |
| 6. LUIGDEACH. | 12. TERNOC or Trenoc. |

This pedigree serves to show his lineage, but is evidently incorrect in some parts, for it is redundant between 1 and 7, and greatly deficient between 10 and 11.¹

In the Calendar there are five saints called Ternoc, but all disposed of elsewhere. Colgan, indeed, who cites the above pedigree,² identifies the subject of it with a Ternoc, who is mentioned by O'Donnellus as one of St. Columba's companions,³ and with a St. Ternoc, of Airiodh-muilt, who is commemorated at the 28th of February; but neither the date of one, nor the place of the other, is referable to the individual under consideration. He rather seems to be the Ernan, who is commemo-

¹ In his note on the place, Dr. O'Donovan observes: "This Ternoc was interred at Kilnasagart, near Jonesborough, in the county of Armagh, where his grave is still marked by a pillar stone exhibiting his name, *Ternoc mac Ciarain*."—Annals Four Mast. p. 313.

² See the calculation in Reeves' Eccles. Antiq. p. 349.

³ Trias Thaum., p. 451 b, n. 84.

⁴ Vita S. Columbae, i. 103. Tr. Th. p. 406 b.

rated in the Calendars of Marian Gorman and O'Clery, at the 26th of October ; and whose name, by a process that was common among the Irish, was capable of assuming the form of Ternoc :

Ernain Miodhluachra Cill-na-Saccart.

'Ernain, of Miodhluachra, in Cill-na-Sagart.'

Miodhluachra was, in ancient times, one of the five great roads of Ireland, but its identification has hitherto escaped discovery ; so that this entry, taken in conjunction with the following extracts, is valuable in fixing part, at least, of its course at the Moiry Pass, and so determining it as the high road which led from Leinster through Louth, and over the heights of Slieve Fuaid, into the county of Armagh.

"Die quadam cum sanctus præsul [Patricius] in Ultonian profecturus, iter ageret per viam publicam quæ via *Midh-Luachra* vulgo nuncupatur."—Vit. Tripart. iii. 57.^p

"Postquam autem sanctus Secundinus hymnum prædictum composuisset, eum attulit ad S. Patricium ; quem in regione *Cnalliorum* juxta viam *Midh-Luachra* ad *pelem montis sedentem* reperiens, &c.—Ibid. iii. 91.^q

"Vir ille qui hodie tres jubilationes in *agro Miodhluachræ* fecit, possidebit hunc locum : ipse est Telli filius Segeni."—Vita S. Munnæ, c.10.^r

"Glunsalach mac Costamail, of Sliabh Fuaid, near Miodhluachra."—Calendar at June 3.^s

In the fourteenth century the name became disguised in the uncouth forms of *Innermallane* and *Emerdullam*, as in the following passages, the former of which is given at some length because it connects this spot with an important period of Irish history.

"Schir Edward then would take on hand
To ride forth farther in the land ;
And of the kings of that country
There came to him and made fewty,
Well ten or twelve, as I heard say ;
But they held him short while their fay,
For two of them, one *Macgullane*^t
And another heght *Mackartane*
Withoet a pass into his way,
Where him behooved need away
With two thousand of men with spears,
And as many of their archers,
And all the cattle of the land

^o See Introduction to Book of Rights, p. LIX.

^p Colgan, Trias. Thaum., p. 160 a.

^q Trias Thaum., p. 166 a.

^r Colgan, Act. SS. p. 15 a, c. 4.

^s Copied from the Scholium in Marian Gorman into the text of the O'Clerys.

^t This place was far too south for Mac Quillan. Mac Duileachan may be intended. See Reeves' Ant. p. 368.



Were driven thither to waitand :
 Men call that place INNERMALLANE
 In all Ireland straitor is name ;
 For Schir Edward there keepled they,
 They thought he should not there away :
 But his voyage soon has he tane,
 And straight towards the pass is gane.
 The Earl of Murray Sir Thomas
 That put him first to all essays,
 Lighted on foot with his menzie,
 And apertly the pass took he,
 Thir Irish kings I spake of air,
 With all the folk that with him were,
 Met him right sturdily; but he
 Assailed so with his menzie
 That mauger theirs, they wan the pass
 Slain of their foes many there was,
 Throughout the wood them chased they,
 And seized in sik fusion the prey
 That all the folk of their host were
 Refreshed well a week or mare.
 At KILSAGART Schir Edward lay,
 And thar wele some he has herd say
 That at Dundalk was assemble
 Mad of the lordis of that cuntre."

"The Brus" by Barbour, cxii. 199.

The other record in which the disguised name of the pass occurs is Grace's Annals, at the year 1343, where it is said of Sir Ralph Ufford the Justiciary, "going into Ulster he suffered great loss from MacCartan in the pass of *Emerdullam*, [in angustiis Emerdullam] having lost his clothes, his money, his vessels of silver, and some of his horses, he also lost some of his men; yet, by the help of the men of Uriel, he, at last, made by his escape into Ulster."^a

In the sixteenth century the pass was known among the Irish by the name of *Bealach an Maighre*; and we accordingly find it mentioned by the Four Masters, at the years 1600, 1601; while English writers term it phonetically, the *Moierie Pace*, or *Moyry Pass*, which is still preserved, as shown on the Ordnance Map of Armagh, sheet 32, which marks the "old road from Dundalk through Moiry Pass," and the "Moiry Castle," a small square fortification that stands on the high ground a little above Kilnasaggart.

^a Grace's Annals, edited by Rev. Richard Butler, for the Irish Archæological Society, p. 137.

[Erratum.—In page 221, line 11, for "sculpture" read "sepulture."]

B663/26
COPI

See B 279/34 110.

THE COUNTY MUSEUM
ARMAGH.

Armagh,

5th August, 1948.

Telephone 255.

Dear Mr. Young,

I was at Kilnasaggart a couple of weeks ago with some friends and was very much shocked at the state of the place. There is no gate on the enclosure and cows are trespassing around the pillar-stone itself using it as a rubbing place and making a mess generally. I also noticed that the descriptive plate has been broken off the stand to which it was attached. This may be due to cattle but it may also be due to vandalism. I noticed a stone in which we were somewhat interested and often considered moving, as we thought it was possibly a mould of some sort, has been deliberately broken and of course that could not have been caused by cows. There is no doubt that someone used another heavy stone to break it.

The horned cairn at Ballymacdermott is also in a rather bad way. You know, of course, that a couple of the stones in the fore-court were tumbled over during the war, but now the graves are a mass of brambles and it is becoming more and more difficult to see them.

One really does not know what to do regarding these isolated monuments. It is a curious thing that young people who should respect such monuments do not hesitate to harm them when they feel so inclined. One of the standing stone at Clontygora has had a swastika carved upon it with the letters I.R.A. underneath. Whether I can get the swastika and letters removed or not I do not know but I think it is a tragedy that Irishmen should have so little respect for national monuments. If the Kilnasaggart pillar-stone cannot be properly preserved on the site I shall apply for its removal to the Armagh Museum. I should, however, hesitate to do so as I would much

/rather

SM7ARM 12:6

EXCAVATION AT KILNASAGGART, CO. ARMAGH, 1966.

Trial excavations will be done during June and July on behalf of the Ministry of Finance. The labour force will consist of about 4 workmen and 5 student helpers. Visitors and Saturday helpers will be welcome.

THE SITE: O.S. 1 inch sheet no. 8 (Armagh). Grid ref. J 063150. Edenappa townland. West of the main Newry-Dundalk road, East of Moyry Castle and the Dublin railway line, close to the Eire border.

DATES: Excavation will begin on Monday 13th June, and will continue, 6 days a week, for at least 3 weeks and probably into a 4th week. Visits to some of the many sites in the Slieve Gullian region will be arranged.

ACCOMMODATION: At the nearby farm C/o Mr. John Murphy,
Kilnasaggart,
Jonesborough, Co. Armagh.

The site lies on a slight elevation close to the ancient route through the "Gap of the North" from Meath to Ulster. This pass has been the site of many battles, and Edward Bruce is said to have slept at "Kilsagart". The only visible ancient features are a tall inscribed pillar-stone, and a few smaller cross-inscribed stones. The pillar-stone has been called by Macalister "probably the most important of the inscribed monuments in the country". Ternoc son of Ciaran, named in the inscription, died in 714 or 716, and this is probably the oldest certainly dated inscription in Ireland. Formerly a cemetery, some 50 feet in diameter, consisting of 2 concentric circles of radiating graves, was visible south of the stone. This is seen now only as a slight hump in a modern enclosure. The land outside this enclosure has been ploughed and large stones from it cleared. The aim of the excavation is to test both the area of the burials and the ground outside the enclosure, in the hope that traces of buildings, other cross-inscribed stones, or occupation or industrial debris may be found.

See further: Ancient Monuments in State Care (1962), p. 62

Reeves in U.J.A. 1st series, I (1853), p. 221-5.

Reade in Journal of Kilkenny.....Archaeological Society,
new series, I (1856-7), p. 315-8.

Ann Hamlin,
Department of Archaeology,
Queen's University, Belfast.

Interim Report on the second season of excavations at Kilnasagart Co Armagh 1968

The excavation was done during a spell of exceptionally dry weather from 8 July to 13 August 1968. The labour force consisted of three workmen throughout, and student helpers from Exeter University during the earlier stages. At the end of work the site was filled in and restored to its original appearance.

The 1966 season had confirmed the nature of the site as an Early Christian cemetery. A stone revetment was found delimiting the graves to the north, and parts of three stone-built graves. A deeper trial excavation showed a clear buried soil line some 60 to 70cm below the present surface, with disturbed material to a considerable depth below.

In 1968 work was concentrated within the (modern) enclosure. The main aims were to establish the plan of the graveyard, in particular to test claims of a radial arrangement of the burials, to examine the construction of the graves, to look for traces of other structures, and to examine the nature and extent of the buried soil horizon. A scatter of flint, including two scrapers, found in 1966 had suggested the possibility of earlier activity on or near the site.

The 1966 area within the enclosure (10m x 11m) was reopened. Excavation in 1966 had in most places stopped at the surface of a red-brown, mixed sandy layer which underlay the sod and a dense stone scatter. The surface exposed was very varied and it was difficult, as in 1966, to define precise areas of disturbance in the horizontal plane. The disturbances detected at this height were in all cases relatively modern; no grave cuts were visible until a slightly later stage.

Within this large stripped area ten smaller trenches were sited, mostly at right angles to the 1966 revetment. Eight of the trenches were opened in the northern part of the stripped area, and in these eight stone graves were found as well as two possible examples and two dug graves without stone packing. In smaller trenches to south and west three further stone graves were found and two dug graves, one of them extending under the modern enclosure bank on the south side of the site.

All the graves were uniformly orientated approximately east-west and there was no sign at all of the radial arrangement claimed by Reade in 1857. Six of the stone graves set parallel to each other formed a line running north-south for about 6.80m, with only 20-60cm between the graves. This neat arrangement suggests some degree of control in the use of the cemetery and some system of marking the graves. Though no trace was found of sockets for marker stones it is likely that the small cross-carved stones long-known on the site served as markers. It became clear in 1968 that the stone kerbing found at a high level in several parts of the site in 1966 closely followed the lines of some graves. This kerbing somewhat recalls the stone settings or 'beds' round some graves in western monastic sites.

The construction of the graves varied considerably. All were of local stone, granite or shale, and use was made of large and small boulders as well as slabby stone. The graves were less neat in appearance than shale-built graves excavated in Co Down, for example at Derry near Portaferry, but considering the more difficult materials available, the construction showed skill and care. The procedure usually seems to have been to dig a trench, wider than the proposed grave, then to build the grave freestanding

within the trench. The grave was not floored with stone but was covered with lintels, usually larger at the head (west) end and decreasing in size towards the foot. When small lintels were used, other stones were corbelled out to bridge the gap. When the slabs were large, small stones were neatly filled in to fill gaps and crevices. The grave cut was then filled in, small stones being packed in beside the grave walls, with earth on top.

It was not possible to trace the details of construction equally fully for all graves. In four cases a very marked concentration of iron pan had accumulated around and down the sides of the grave cut, at the junction of the fill and the harder matrix into which the grave had been cut. This phenomenon of vertical deposition of iron pan does not seem to be well documented in archaeological contexts. With the help of the iron pan it was possible in some cases to trace the grave cuts from a high level. A watch was kept for the impinging of grave cuts, but no examples were found, and the sequence of the graves remains unknown.

Shortage of time prevented the opening of all the stone graves, but five were cleared of which three had previously been disturbed. Some fairly solid bone fragments were found in the fill of recent disturbances, but in all cases the graves contained no bone or simply tooth fragments, friable bone or bone dust. No complete skeleton was recovered. The graves contained little fill below the lintels and no finds were made in the excavated grave fills, though charcoal was plentiful.

The excavation of the 1966 deep section along the eastern side of the stripped area was continued and revealed an interesting soil profile. The mixed red sandy material in which the graves occurred overlay a very clear pale leached sandy layer. Below this was an iron-enriched layer, then greenish sandy and stony material, largely derived from the underlying granite. These lower layers produced no finds but charcoal fragments persisted. It was difficult to be sure of the exact point at which undisturbed material was encountered.

An attempt was made to trace the grey leached layer over the rest of the site. It was clearest in the deep section and in a small trench opened east of the main stripped area. To north and west it became less clear and in some places could not be traced at all. This may in part be the result of disturbance by graves (some did penetrate to this layer), but the stratification to south and west did seem different from that in the east. The lack of an east-west deep section is clearly a problem, but the stratification can be tentatively interpreted as follows. The leached grey material and the layers below it in the eastern part of the site represent an earlier ground level. The leaching must have occurred at this stage in acid, podsolizing conditions. In the eastern area a dump of reddish sandy material, probably derived from the local boulder clay, was added to raise the level, presumably to create a greater depth into which burials could be inserted. The stone revetment served partly to revet this material and partly to delimit the burial area. In the south and west, where the leached layer and the overlying 'dump' seem to be absent, the natural ground level may have been higher and the level was not raised. Here the graves are cut into the glacial till, not into made ground as elsewhere. It does seem likely that the marked height of many ancient graveyards may be due in some cases to deliberate heightening as well as natural accumulation.

/Over

Over most of the excavated area work stopped at the base of the leached layer (where it was present). In several places small concentrations of charcoal and dark material were found on the underlying surface, firmly sealed by the pale leached layer. Unfortunately no finds were associated with these small areas of earlier activity.

There was not time to examine the area outside (north of) the revetment as thoroughly as was hoped, nor to look for its continuation to east and west. The revetment stones were neatly fitted and in places were levelled up and wedged with small stones at the base. There was no sign of any cut into which they had been set, nor of an earlier demarcation line of any kind. The presence of a concentration of massive boulders just inside the revetment remained a puzzle, and nothing more was learned of the nature of the slab feature outside the revetment found in 1966.

At a late stage of the work two small trenches were opened at the foot of the inscribed pillar stone. It has often been suggested that this was a prehistoric standing stone, later 'christianised' by the adding of crosses. Our hopes in excavating at its foot were not high since the stone is known to have been thrown down by treasure-hunters early in the 19th century. The pillar was found to continue for 50 to 60cm below ground level, and to be set in a shallow cut in the stony till. Part of its surface below ground level was very finely dressed almost to a polish, and this would suggest an Early Christian rather than a prehistoric date. Around the stone's foot was a loose stony fill with recent finds, but close to the west the articulated legs of a burial were found, with no stone grave structure associated. At this point it was clear that the excavation of these trenches could not be finished without undue haste, and they were refilled.

FINDS as in 1966 were disappointingly few. Material of probable Early Christian date were confined to an unfinished quern stone in the superficial stone scatter and a blue glass bead which was unstratified. Prehistoric finds were ironically more plentiful, including a hollow-based flint arrow-head, several fresh flint flakes and a rim sherd of fine burnished (probably Neolithic) pottery. These finds all came from disturbed material, particularly the material into which graves were dug. Many sherds of a single medieval green-glazed jug with thumbled base were found close to the base of a pillar stone.

CONCLUSION The site presented a number of difficulties, mainly the result of late disturbances and the complexity of the stratification, which in any cemetery site is likely to be confused. The work has been on a limited scale, with limited resources of money and manpower, and it must be admitted that many 'loose ends' remain from the 1966 and 1968 seasons. The main aim of establishing the plan of the cemetery has been fulfilled within the excavated area, and the earlier claim of a radial arrangement has been clearly shown to be wrong. It was not possible to distinguish any sequence of graves or to discover signs of grave markers. No traces were found of a chill or any other buildings, though it seems likely that some did exist in the vicinity, and there was no sign of domestic or industrial activity.

The scarcity of finds is again disappointing and no attempt can be made to date the graves at all closely, though they are of a well-known (but long-lived) Early Christian type. The c. 700 date of the dedicatory pillar stone provides a possible terminus post que for the graves but this is not certain. The excavation has added to our knowledge of the details of stone-built graves and the building up of cemetery sites. The prehistoric finds remain enigmatic, but they may be connected with the occupation traces

/below

below the old soil line. It is certain that there was prehistoric, probably Neolithic, activity in the area, but the pillar is unlikely to have started life as a prehistoric standing stone.

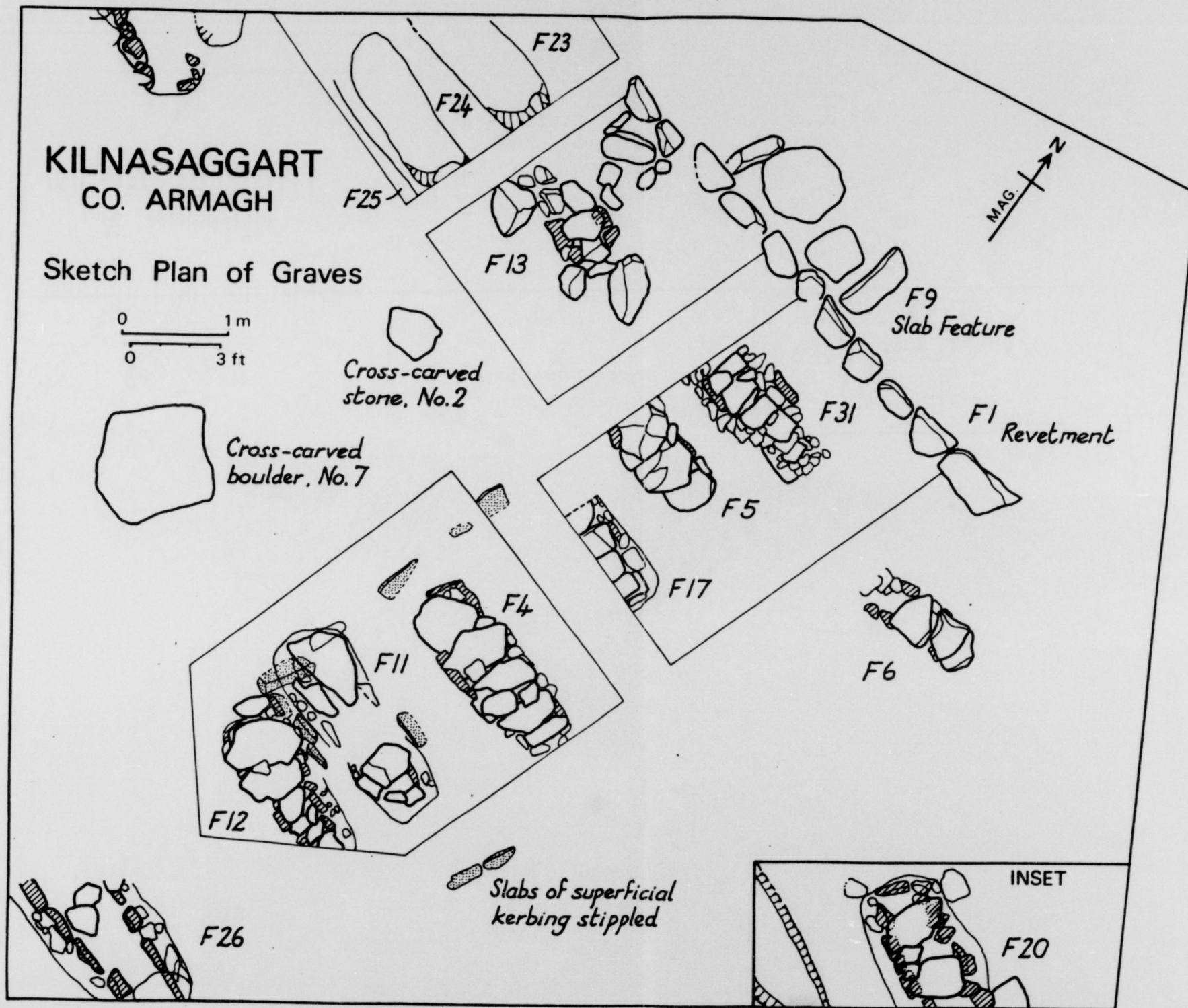
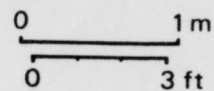
Acknowledgements

Warm thanks are due to many people for their valuable help and advice: to members of the Archaeological Survey, to John Murphy of Kilnasaggart, and to Joe McEntee and Paddy McAteer, to my helpers from Exeter and elsewhere, and to the visitors whose observations and discussion I greatly valued.

September 1968

KILNASAGGART
CO. ARMAGH

Sketch Plan of Graves



Cross-carved
stone, No. 2

Cross-carved
boulder, No. 7

F9
Slab Feature

F1
Revetment

Slabs of superficial
kerbing stippled

INSET

EDENAPPA: POSSIBLE CHURCH, GRAVEYARD,
PILLAR STONE, CROSS-CARVED STONES AND
BULLAUN STONE

200ft + OD

Kilnasaggart

CS 32; IG 282

J 0618 1488

Jonesborough Parish (formerly Killeavy)

Kilnasaggart lies in one of the few passes through the Slieve Gullion ring dyke on an important north-south route. The local topography is broken up by field boundaries, but the archaeological site is on a gently-rounded promontory, with the ground falling gradually to a tributary of the Flurry River to the west and more steeply to a smaller stream to the east. The confluence of these two watercourses, to the south of the site, is on the boundary with Co. Louth. Kilnasaggart is overlooked by high ground to east (Feede Mountain) and west (Slievenabolea and Daaikilmore), but there is lower land south towards Dundalk and north to the plain which lies east of Slieve Gullion.

This area was known by 1600 as *Bealach-an-mhaighre* (Moyry Pass) and Moyry Castle, built in 1601, stands on a rocky height to the south-west (Hayes-McCoy 1964, 2). Through this pass ran one of the great 'main roads' of Early Christian Ireland, the *Slige Midluachra*, from Drogheda north to Dunseverick on the Antrim Coast and west to Derry (Ó Lochlainn 1940, 472 and end-map). Nineteenth-century OS maps show a road running north-west to south-east immediately to the west of Kilnasaggart, and the metalled road can still be traced, though now grass-grown. The remains at this strategically-important site consist of an Early Christian period graveyard, an inscribed, cross-carved pillar stone, a group of small, cross-carved stones, and a bullaun stone in the next field to the south.

The present five-sided enclosure, measuring externally 17.0m north-south by 24.5m (at north) to 13.0m (at south) east-west defined by a stone-faced bank planted with thorns, dates back only to about 1908. It was built by local volunteers, the costs being met by the Louth Archaeological Society, to protect the remains of the ancient site from further encroachment by cultivation (Quinn 1909, 86, plan of enclosure). Morris, writing in 1904, recorded that human bones had been ploughed up 'some years ago' beyond the raised nucleus of the site (1904, 48), and excavation showed that burials extended under the enclosure bank on the southern side (see further below).

It is clear that the site was not enclosed in the mid 19th century, since Reeves in 1853 described 'a small, unenclosed and slightly-elevated space near the edge of a field, on which may be recognised some traces of ancient sepulture, but none of any building' (1853, 221). The OS 6-inch map of 1863, however, shows a small rectangular enclosure abutting the eastern side of the old road and measuring about 20.0m east-west by 15.0m north-south, with 'Kilnasaggart Stone Cross' marked within it. A photograph of the pillar stone taken by Lord Dunraven in 1869 (in Petrie 1878, pl. XIX) shows a stone wall behind the stone, roughly in the position of the present enclosing bank, which could be part of the feature shown on the 1863 map. By 1904, however, the plot was referred to by Morris as 'unprotected' (1904, 48).

The Graveyard

In 1857, Reade published a surprisingly detailed description and plan of what he claimed was a radial arrangement of graves:

'The pillar is placed at the northern edge of a circle of 55 feet [16.7m] in diameter, the circumference of which is formed by a number of low flat graves, radiating thence towards the centre. An inner circle of much smaller graves then occurs, concentric with the outer; the very centre of these two circles of graves is indicated by the remnant of a stone shaft, or small pillar' (1857, 316-317).

His plan shows sixteen graves in the outer circle, some with one, some two and some three 'blobs' (stones?), with eleven small graves in the inner circle. All subsequent accounts of radial graves go back to Reade's 1857 description, but his own words should encourage caution ('the very remarkable circle of graves, now nearly obliterated'), especially in the light of Reeves's 1853 account ('some traces of ancient sepulture'), while Morris could see no individual graves in 1904. Reade's article was mainly devoted to arguing for a pagan origin for the site, and he regarded radial burials as distinctively pagan.

Two seasons of excavation by Hamlin (previously unpublished) in 1966 and 1968 examined the plan of the graveyard. The whole of the excavated area was covered with a dense spread of stones of all shapes and sizes, mainly field stones from cultivating the surrounding land. A well-defined edge to the raised area was found on its northern side in the form of a revetment of eleven stones, carefully set with flat faces to the north. Outside, to the north of this revetment, was a partly-collapsed slab structure. When the stone spread was removed and only stones embedded in the underlying surface remained, the main feature was the remains of a kerbing of thin slabs, set on edge or fallen, defining an area measuring some 3.0m north-south by 2.8m east-west, with traces of internal subdivision.

No grave cuts were visible at this height, but there were plentiful signs of comparatively recent illicit digging.

Deeper excavation uncovered eleven certain and two possible stone-built, 'lintel' graves and four 'dug' graves (without stones). In the main area excavated, extending south from the stone revetment, six graves, uniformly orientated east-west, were found parallel to each other in a line 6.8m long, with only 20-60cm between each grave. No grave-markers were found. The stone kerbing found at a higher level was on the same orientation as this row of graves. In smaller trenches to the south and west, both stone and dug graves were found, one dug grave extending under the enclosing bank on the south.

The graves were of local stone, built both with slabby shale and rounded granite boulders fitted with considerable skill and care. Each was built in a dug trench, wider than the proposed grave. There were no flooring stones but the graves had covering lintels, except where these had been disturbed, and small stones were used for corbelling and to fill gaps. The cut was finally infilled with stones and earth and the grave covered. Only five graves, three of which had been disturbed in the past, were fully excavated, and there were only the faintest traces of bone in the acid soil. Excavation uncovered a clear buried soil profile in the north and east of the area, less clear to the west and absent further to the south. This points to the bringing in of soil, mainly the local sandy glacial boulder-clay, to increase the depth for burials, and the revetment marks the northern edge of this artificially-heightened area. There were few finds and no evidence for the dates of the graves. No signs of recent use for burial, for example for infants, were encountered.

The excavated graves are clearly not radially arranged, and the grounds for Reade's detailed plan remain obscure. There are local memories of small-scale illicit digging, and excavation showed many signs of comparatively recent disturbances. When the enclosure was built around 1908, ornamental shrubs and evergreens were planted within it and this activity could have disturbed the stratigraphy (Quinn 1909, 186). It is possible that isolated, widely-separated 'sightings' of graves in small holes, and perhaps the 'kerbing', encouraged Reade's active imagination to see a radial plan.

With the possibility of a church in the vicinity of the graveyard (see further below), several small trenches were opened in 1966 outside the enclosure, but with disappointing results. To the north-west, thin topsoil lay above featureless boulder-clay and to the north-

east were spade-cut cultivation trenches. Only to the south-east were the signs more promising, but time did not allow full examination. Finds from the excavation were few, but they included Neolithic flints and pottery, a few medieval or Early Christian period coarse sherds, a blue glass bead and an unfinished quern and much post-medieval pottery. Far more extensive excavation would be needed to test the area outside the c. 1908 enclosure adequately.

The Kilnasaggart pillar stone has long been recognised as one of Ireland's most important carved stones of the Early Christian period (Reeves 1853, 221). Arguably the earliest securely-datable inscribed stone in Ireland, it is remarkable for its decoration as well as the long inscription (Macalister 1935, 183-185).

The stone stands at the north-western edge of the raised area, just inside the modern enclosure. It is a large piece of granite, 2.12m high above ground, and 43-50cm wide and 15-18cm thick. The face to the south-east (the inscribed face) is flattish, although damaged on its southern edge, while the 'back', to the north-west, is generally convex, but angular towards the base. This angle to the north-west is battered, and low down are knife-sharpening scores, believed by some early students, like Reade, to be ogham, but certainly not (Macalister 1949, 114). Macalister's suggestion that this 'looks' like an ogham stone and that an ogham inscription may have been removed is impossible to disprove, but is unlikely. There are also knife cuts low down on the south-western face.

Excavation at the foot of the stone in 1968 showed that 50-60cm are buried, and that where the stone has been protected from weathering it is very finely dressed, almost to a polish. It has been suggested, for example by Reade, that this pillar was originally a prehistoric standing stone, 'Christianised' by the addition of crosses, but the evidence of the buried stump points to it being an unusually tall, carefully-shaped, stone of the Early Christian period. It is set in a shallow cut in the glacial till, packed with large stones and recent material, confirming an account in *CLAJ* (Anon. 1905, 92) that it had been overthrown by treasure-hunters about 70 years previously. O'Donovan recorded in 1835 that country people believed a crock of gold was buried at its foot and he feared it would be overturned (O'Flanagan 1927, 2).

On the flat south-eastern face is a long inscription between two large crosses, the upper a Latin cross with terminals expanded in seriph, the lower an equal-armed cross with

spiral terminals, enclosed in a circle. The circle and spirals are broken away on the left. Below this is a horizontal line, visible in Dunraven's 1869 photograph but now buried. Both the crosses and line are deeply and confidently cut. The long Irish inscription, in eight lines, is in carefully-worked half-uncials, tending to decrease in height from top to bottom. It reads as follows, strokes indicating the ends of lines:

INLOC/SOTANI/MMARNI/TERNOHC/MACCERAN/BICERCUL/PETERAP/STEL
which can be translated literally as 'This place dedicated Ternoc son of Ceran the Little under the patronage of Peter the Apostle'. Both Petrie and Macalister read the letter I between the A and R in the third line, but this is a crack in the stone and not a letter. Also, Macalister's reading APSTAL is wrong; EL is quite clear. The top right-hand corner of the south-east face is broken at an angle, and the small space so formed is filled with an equal-armed cross in a circle, perhaps making use of a flaw in the stone.

The rounded north-west ('back') face of the pillar is decorated with ten equal-armed crosses, nine in circles, and two markedly smaller than the rest. Three have spiral-decorated arms, but not shafts, and the rest have slightly expanded terminals. The crosses are all sunk, but the treatment of the circles varies. The six crosses on the right are treated as a linked group. All except the top cross are within circular frames in relief, and these frames are interconnected. From the top circular frame extends a raised rectangular panel in which the uppermost cross is cut, with no encircling frame. On the left, the four crosses are cut on raised circular discs without encircling frames. There is a small hole in the top of the pillar, 2cm in diameter and 2cm deep.

Although the pillar is heavily weathered and tending to crack, it is still clear that it is an extremely accomplished work of art. The careful shaping of such a large stone, the mixture of relief and sunk carving, the variety of treatment of the crosses including lively spirals, and the unusually long inscription, all point to a sophisticated craft tradition. The cutting is so skilful that it seems likely that chisels were used as well as punches.

A date for the stone at the end of the 7th or very beginning of the 8th century is indicated if this Ternoc is the same as the Ternoc who died in 716 (*A Tig*) or 714 (*AFM*). Reeves suggested that Ternoc could be identified with 'Ernán [glossed] of *Midluachair*, in *Cell na sacart*', commemorated on October 26th in the 12th-century Martyrology of Gorman (Reeves 1853, 223-224). This identification has not been seriously challenged, though

Petrie favoured an 11th-century date (1878, 29). The significance of the inscription and decoration is discussed further on p. 000.

Six other cross-carved stones survive, and another may have been lost in the mid 19th century. All are of granite, and all except no. 6 are at Kilnasaggart: nos. 1 to 4 are at the foot of the pillar stone and no. 5 is near the centre of the enclosure. No. 6 is in store with Environment and Heritage Service.

1. A five-sided slab, gable-shaped at the top but rougher at the base, especially at the lower left corner where it may be damaged. The stone is 69cm long, 39cm wide at its maximum, and 8-10cm thick. The cross-carved surface is smooth but the back is rougher. The Latin cross, formed by shallow pecking, has the ends of the arms and head, but not base, slightly expanded. This is probably Quinn's no. 6 (1909, 186).
2. A small, irregular boulder is 36-40cm wide, 34cm high and 10-20cm thick. On the smoother face is a shallow pecked cross, the shaft slightly longer than the head and the ends of the arms unclear but perhaps expanded. If this is Quinn's stone G (1909, 186), then in 1909 it was in the south-eastern part of the enclosure.
3. This irregularly-shaped stone is rough except for the cross-carved face, and the back has clearly split off. It is 29cm high, 30cm wide and between 4 and 15cm thick. A small Latin cross, formed by shallow pecked lines, has slight expansions at the ends of the limbs. This is Quinn's no. 4 (1909, 186).
4. Before the 1968 excavation, only the lower part of this slab lay at the foot of the pillar stone. Its upper part was found in 1968, but as Quinn showed the stone complete in 1909 (his no. 2), it was broken fairly recently. The slab is triangular with one rounded lower corner, 69cm high, a maximum of 28cm wide and 5-6cm thick. Both main surfaces are fairly flat. The shallow pecked cross on one face is broken across the arms, making it difficult to be sure of the detail, but the ends of the shaft and head are slightly expanded.
5. Close to the centre of the enclosure is a large, flat block of granite, squarish, 98cm across and 25cm thick. Near the western edge is a faint Maltese cross in a circle in low false relief, and there is part of a second similar cross, half broken away, at the south-west edge of the stone. These are very faint and difficult to see except in very low sunlight, and

were probably pecked. This may be the 'huge boulder with a faint cross in a circle' mentioned by Morris as lying beside the nearby farmhouse (1904, 48 and Crawford 1912, 219), although it would have been very heavy to move. It may have been moved when the enclosure was made, since Quinn marked it as F - 'large unfixed stone' - in his 1909 plan (1909, 186).

6. This stone was found in the superficial stone scatter, immediately under the sod, in 1966. It is 63cm long, a maximum of 43cm wide and 8cm thick. The top is 'gable-shaped' and the base pointed. The front and right sides are dressed but the back and left sides are rougher. The Latin cross is pecked, with lines of shallow U-section. The upper limb and right arm have expanded terminals. The left arm end is unclear and the base of the shaft is not expanded.

Lost cross-carved stones

The engraving illustrating Reeves's account (1853, facing p 221) shows a stone at the foot of the pillar stone with an equal-armed cross with expanded terminals, clearly in a circle. Reade showed the stone in his drawing and commented that it was perfectly circular (1857, 315), but in 1884 it was noted as having been 'recently removed' (Lett 1884, 434). The account of the overthrowing of the pillar stone 70 years previously refers to about ten roundish stones carved with crosses having been found when the stone fell (Anon. 1905, 92), but nothing more is known of these, unless they included nos. 2 and 3 above.

Other Stones

Bell's 1815 account mentioned 'the pedestal of an old cross' near the pillar stone (1815b, 295), and Reade's 'graves' radiated around 'the remnant of a stone shaft, or small pillar' (1857, 317), but this had disappeared by 1904 (Morris 1904, 48).

Among the scatter of stones at the foot of the pillar stone are two worked stones and one curious natural stone. There is an irregularly-shaped hollowed stone, measuring 30cm by 22cm and 8-10cm thick. The hollow in its upper surface is incomplete but measures 17cm by 18cm and is 4cm deep, apparently pecked. Reade recorded a 'slightly disked stone, not unlike those found in New Grange, but much smaller' (1857, 317, B on plan), but he claims it is carved with a cross, not now visible. A rounded granite boulder has a square sinking in its upper surface, 14cm across and 2cm deep (Quinn's no. 1 in 1909, 186). The purpose of this is unclear, but it could be derived from relatively recent rural industrial

activity attested by local field names (Mill Field, Kiln Field and Shelling Hill: Morris 1904, 49). The curious natural stone bears an imprint like a cloven hoof, leading to the story here, as at Ardboe (Tyrone) and elsewhere, of the miraculous cow which provided an unfailing daily supply of milk until she was milked into a sieve by a greedy individual, at which she stamped her foot and was never seen again. Quinn stated that this stone used to be set on top of the pillar stone, but no other writer refers to this tradition (Quinn 1909, 186-187, no. 2). It is visible in a photograph by Welch (in Evans 1966, pl. 22).

A bullaun stone lies some 64.0m to the south-south-west of the 1908 enclosure, in the next field. This is a large, earthfast, polygonal granite boulder, which measures about 1.55m north-south by 1.5m east-west, and stands up to 30cm above the level of the field. Near the south-eastern corner of the stone is a large hollow, measuring 42cm north-south by 37cm east-west and 19cm deep. Its greatest depth is to the south-east of centre, and while the side from north to west slopes gently the others are very steep or slightly undercut. Paterson knew of no pilgrimage traditions, but in 1948 it was used for wart cures, hence its local name, the Wart Well (Paterson 1945, 39; 1948, 129). This must be the 'hollowed stone' listed in 1884 as 'in field south of Kilnasaggart Pillar Stone', in Lett's report on the ancient monuments in the county (1884, 433).

The church

Although it has been suggested that the name Kilnasaggart means the wood (*coill*) of the priests (Hore 1857, 7), there can be little doubt that it means the church (*cell* or *cill*) of the priests, *Cell na saccart* (Hogan 1910, 207-208). There has long been a strong local tradition of a church or monastery here, and Quinn recorded a tradition that no layman was ever buried in the graveyard (1909, 187-189). No trace of a church has been found, however, and no architectural fragments from a stone church turned up in the 1966-68 excavations.

The church is also elusive in written sources. The name occurs in a gloss to the name Ernán in the 12th-century Martyrology of Gorman: 'Ernán [glossed] of *Midluachair*, in *Cell na sacart*' is listed at 26 October. Barbour's poem, *The Brus*, tells how Edward Bruce rested here on his way to Dundalk in 1315: 'At Kilsagart Schir Edward lay' (Reeves 1853, 225 and Hore 1857, 7). An inquisition in 1541 found that the tithes of the seven townlands of 'Kilnasagart alias Fieghth' were appropriate to the Prior and Culdees of Armagh (Glancy 1959, 344). The alias may relate to the nearby Feede Mountain, and the roofless church with a tower marked *Feete* in Bodley's 1609 map is in the right area for Kilnasaggart. In

1625 an inquisition found that *Kilnesaggart* was one of the vicarages which had belonged to the Culdees (Reeves 1860, 23), and in several 17th-century land grants Kilnasaggart and 'The Feed' appear. It seems unlikely, however, that a church here continued in use in the 17th century. The historical obscurity of this archaeologically-rich site is intriguing.

The pillar stone and area inside the c. 1908 enclosure have been in State Care since 1934, but the visible remains may represent only a fragment of a far larger area of activity, extending over several adjoining fields. There are very many published references to Kilnasaggart, particularly to the pillar stone, and the bibliography that follows is confined to the major items.

SMR 32:6

Reeves Mss and 1853; Hore 1857, 6-7; Paterson Mss; Bell 1815b, 294-295; Reade 1857; Petrie 1878, 27-30, pl. XIX; Lett 1884, 432-434; Allen 1887, 102-105; Morris 1904; Quinn 1909; Crawford 1912, 219; O'Flanagan 1927, 2; Macalister 1935, 183-185 and 1949, 114-115, pl. XLVI (not wholly accurate); *PSAMNI* 1940, pl. 17; Henry 1965, 119-120, pl. 49; Evans 1966, 60

SM7 / AEM 32:6 ©

Edenappa:

Pillar stone & graveyard

ACM 326



Monitoring Report No. 13

**KILNASAGGART INSCRIBED PILLAR STONE
KILNASAGGART
COUNTY ARMAGH**

AE/04/141

NICHOLAS BEER

Dun

Site Specific Information

Site Name: Kilnasaggart

Townland: Edenappa

SMR No: ARM 032:006

State Care *Scheduled* *Other*

Grid Ref: J06181490

County: Armagh

Excavation Licence No: AE/04/141

Dates of Monitoring: 25 / 08 / 04

Archaeologist Present: Nicholas Beer

Brief Summary: Monitoring conducted in advance of the installation of an information board, on behalf of Regeneration of South Armagh (ROSA). A single fragment of disarticulated human skull was recovered from the subsoil.

Type of monitoring: Single trench excavated by hand.

Size of area opened: 0.3m x 0.3m

Current Land Use: Monument in State Care located in the middle of a pasture field enclosed by bank and hedge.

Intended Land Use: N/A



Plan of site showing extent of area monitored:



Figure One: Plan of approximate location of Kilnasaggart information board

Account of monitoring results.

A single trench was excavated for the installation of an information board at the site of the Kilnasagart inscribed stone pillar. The site is enclosed by a bank and thorn hedge, believed to have been constructed in 1908 by local volunteers at the request of the County Louth Archaeological Society (Hamlin 1976, 519). The site was the subject to two seasons of excavation, in 1966 and 1968. The results of the excavations are summarized by Hamlin (1976, 519-522), who records the discovery of a number of Early Christian burials. The site and surrounding fields are scheduled and, as a result, scheduled monument consent was required for the placement of the information board. A small trench 0.3m x 0.3m and 0.7m in depth was excavated by hand, 8m to the southwest of the monument.

During the excavation two deposits were uncovered; a dark brown loam topsoil (Context Number 101), which extended to a depth of 0.3m, and underlying it a brown sandy loam subsoil (Context Number 102), which extended to the base of the trench at 0.7m. Occasional small stone inclusions were encountered during the excavation of both deposits. No evidence of any features was observed.

Towards the base of the trench (0.55m) a small fragment of human skull was retrieved from Context Number 102 (Small Find Number 001). At the required depth of 0.7m a small, irregular-shaped void was encountered in the south of the trench with the approximate dimensions of 0.1m x 0.1m. The base of the trench was covered with plastic sheeting to prevent any possible damage to underlying deposits, the information board was installed and the trench was carefully filled with concrete.

The fragment of human skull was not associated with any other finds, nor was evidence observed to suggest it was directly associated with either a cut feature or an otherwise undisturbed inhumation. It is probable that the find is a disarticulated fragment from an Early Christian burial similar to those uncovered elsewhere in the immediate vicinity of the inscribed pillar stone during the 1966 and 1968 excavations (Hamlin 1976, 519-522). It is possible that the small void uncovered at the base of the trench may be part of an undisturbed, stone-lined Early Christian burial, although the restricted size of the trench renders a more definite interpretation impossible.

The human skull fragment was reported to the Police Service Northern Ireland, Newry, County Armagh, who recorded the find of probable Early Christian origin and noted that no further action, on their behalf was necessary.

Bibliography:

Hamlin, A. E. 1976. *The Archaeology of Early Christianity in the North of Ireland*. (Unpublished Ph. D thesis, three volumes), Queen's University Belfast.

Archive:

Finds: Human bone, skull fragment (SFN. 001).

Photographs: 2 slide images held by CAF.

Plans / Drawings: None.

Signed: _____

Date: _____