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Some Inscriptions in Irish in the County of Louth.

BY

THE LATE JOHN RIBTON GARSTIN, F.S.A., M.R.I.A.

Y purpose is in this paper to supply a record of such inscriptions in the Irish language as may still be seen in the County of Louth, the smallest of Irish counties, occupying about a one hundredth portion of Ireland.

It does not include recent inscriptions, such as that on the " '98 " Monument in Dundalk, which resulted from the revived study of the Irish language within the present generation.

I wish some one thoroughly familiar with the Irish language and with the County Louth had undertaken this task, and I hope any mistakes in this paper will be corrected and omissions supplied.

I propose in the first place to offer some introductory remarks on Irish inscriptions in general; then, secondly, to supply a summary of what has been published about the few known to exist in Louth—being only those on each side of Drogheda, namely at Monasterboice and Termonfeckin; and, lastly, to describe such other examples within the County as have since come to light.

When the Royal Society of Antiquaries brought out in eight parts as extra "Annual Volumes" for the years between 1869 and 1878, entitled "Christian Inscriptions in the Irish Language, chiefly collected and drawn by George Petrie, LL.D., edited by M. Stokes," that publication (which was eventually issued with title pages as two volumes) was intended to include every such inscription wherever existing. In it 287 examples were given, but 20 of these were from objects such as bells and reliquaries, and of the 270 or so mostly copied from tombstones, no less than 170, forming the first section of the work, are from the Clonmacnois Collection, so that the remaining 100 represent all such lapidary inscriptions known to the learned in 1878 as still extant throughout the rest of Ireland—and of these some had already perished and were only reproduced from books or manuscripts.

To this 100 or so I propose to add five from a limited portion of the small County of Louth—a County which as having long been within the English Pale may reasonably be expected to contribute a number disproportionately small even for its limited extent.

It may be worth noting in the first place that a diligent search at Carlingford and other similarly remote places failed to discover new examples.

Quite recently another account of the Inscriptions at Clonmacnois has been published, which to some extent supersedes the volumes of Christian inscriptions above mentioned.

The Commissioners of Public Works in whom the remains at Clonmacnois are vested under the Irish Church Act of 1869 (32 & 33 Vic., c. 42, etc.) published in their last Report, that for 1906-7 (col. 3693, 1*e.*), a set of drawings to a scale of one-sixteenth, showing in 31 plates 207 inscribed slabs still at Clonmacnois including those with inscriptions in the Irish language. A catalogue which accompanies these gives a description of each with dimensions, etc., and the inscriptions all in italic letters. One or two have the inscriptions in Latin. Some have no inscriptions, but bear Celtic crosses of varied design—a few exhibiting the ornamentation known as the Greek fret.

I proceed by way of introducing my subject to give a brief analysis of these Irish inscriptions.

The most ancient of these inscriptions, over a thousand years old, are beautifully short and simple. They are usually of a uniform formula consisting of a cross followed by only three words, or rather two and a half. The first, Οἰοιτ, generally contracted to ὀῖ, with line over indicating abbreviation, invited a prayer for the departed. This is followed by the preposition expressing "for,"—generally the Irish ὡ, occasionally (as in one of the two Monasterboice examples) spelled ου, but often represented by ἀ. These are the only variations and they occur even more regularly than the well known MAQUI of the Ogams.

Next and lastly followed the name, which of course varied. These were Christian or baptismal names usually derived from Scripture characters or some saints. Surnames were not known so early. The simple name was sometimes compounded with the prefix mæt, to be explained presently, and in later days changed into surnames.

CLONMACNOISE SLABS.

ANALYSIS.

Of the 207 slabs described and illustrated, disregarding one (No. 14) in List not read, 101, being rather less than half, bear words in Irish, mostly names which can be read. The great majority of these inscriptions commence with the regular, formula

+ ὀῖ ὡ

In seven cases—one being the high cross—the οἰοιτ in full appears, followed by ἀ instead of ὡ. In a few cases we find the abbreviation also followed by it, forming

+ ὀῖ ἀ

In one case ου takes the place of ὡ, as also in one of the two Monasterboice inscriptions.

In the absence of capital letters and spaces between words it is sometimes difficult to determine how the inscriptions should now be represented and to place them in a readable form before modern students.

Speaking generally it may be stated that the vast majority (86) consist of a single name. These are presumably Christian or baptismal name, most in forms

not now easily recognizable, and in some cases compounded with *mael* or *gilla*, of which latter are only two (190 and 192), *Gilla-christ*, and *Gilla-Giarain*, evidently = *Kieran*. The prefix *Gilla* requires no explanation, for it has come down to the present day and is still in use in Scotland, meaning a servant.

As regards the prefix *Mael* some explanation seems necessary. The word, according to O'Donovan (O'Reilly's Dict.), had two meanings as a substantive, the primary one being a promontory, cape or headland, a hill or hillock, and the other "a servant, a shaved person devoted to some religious order or some saint." It was then adopted by the devotees of some particular saint.¹

It seems worth while to analyse the examples of its use found amongst the Clonmacnois inscriptions. They number about two dozen. As might be expected in a place founded (A.D. 545-8) by St. Kieran, whose name is still attached to one of the "temples" or churches there, his name heads the list occurring four times, not only in its normal form *Ciaran*, but also with initial letters *G* (No. 192, compounded with *Gilla*), and *Q* (No. 92).

The name of St. Patrick does not appear in full, but *phet* and *phat* occur (Nos. 135 and 137) and we find in Nos. 6 and 101 endings *trigg* and *tric*. If these may be attributed to him, and as regards 137 Petrie's reading leaves no doubt, he shares first place with Kieran.

In the porch of the old church there is a rough oblong flag stone measuring about 28 x 9 inches, bearing an inscription in Irish which was brought to light about 1870, when the clay floor of the church was excavated to preserve the new timber. A rubbing of it was taken by Mr. G. V. Du Noyer, which is amongst the fine collection he presented to the Royal Irish Academy in whose Proceedings it is noticed. He also engraved a wood cut by which alone it is illustrated in *Christian Inscriptions* (vol. ii, p. 69-70), where a full description of it will be found.

It must here suffice to give the reading and translation, merely observing that it is of exceptional interest as relating to an architectural structure, and calling attention to the abbreviation for "and," evidently derived from the Latin *et*. It occupies two and a quarter lines. The letters are 1½ ins. high. Allowing spaces between the words it reads as follows:—

✠ OROIC DO ULTAN E DO O
✠ DUBTHACH DOORIGM IN CAI
SSEt

✠ Pray for Ultan and for Dubthach, who made this stone Fort.

DUNLEER.

So far the inscriptions given have been already described, but we now come to examples not hitherto published and which though of venerable antiquity have the charm of novelty.² The most important of these were unearthed in the course of improvements in the churchyard of Dunleer consequent on the renovation of the ancient church there about 1880.

Dunleer, which was once a place of much importance, has a couple of pages (68-9) devoted to it in the 2nd volume of the "Christian Inscriptions"—and an interesting historical notice—not on account of any inscription extant when that work was published, but for a drawing of a gravestone with the words *or ar ruib* =

1.—Whence its modern adjectival meaning shaved, bald.

2.—The article was written before the publication of Professor MacAlister's note and drawing of the Dunleer stones in the R.S.A. Journal and in the Louth A.J.S., 1916. No. 1, Vol. IV.

pray for Suibne—(supposed to have died Abbot there in A.D. 930). This was found by Bishop Reeves in a note book which formerly belonged to Walter Harris, and is now preserved in the Public Library at Armagh.

Besides the two inscribed stones which I am about to notice two others of a noteworthy description were dug up. One bearing three crosses in circles of rude but remarkable design and one of very small size with a cross-shaped hollow of Celtic design : apparently intended originally to be filled with a cross of other material. Of the two inscribed stones the smaller, which is now only a fragment, measuring 15 in. by 9 ins. has, running along one side nine letters perfectly sharp and clear :—

maelbrige.

Below this three parallel incised lines run along the length of the fragment : evidently forming part of the stem of a cross when the stone was complete. The name which has occurred is evidently the equivalent of the present-day surname "Malbride" or Mulbridget, and from the local associations connecting St. Bridget with Dunleer it possesses a special interest.

The origin of the name Dunleer has been a subject of controversy, but it seems to be tolerably settled according to Bishop Reeves, and Dr. Joyce following Dr. Todd that its original form was "Lann—*leiré* = Church of Austerity." How the "Lann" was exchanged into "Dun" is not clearly shown. But in the Ordnance Survey Collection of Louth Letters is one from T. O'Keefe & E. O'Connor written from Dunleer, January 15th, 1836, in which a different derivation is given, some pages are devoted to an attempt to proving that that town owed its name to an incident in the Life of St. Bridget which they recount at length, alledging that all the people of the place agreed in it.

Briefly it is to the effect that the place was called *Dun-leiré* = Town of *Sight* (*Dun* is said here to bear in general the signification of town) from an incident in the Life of St. Bridget, whose sight was said to have been restored at a well, called thence *Ṭobair Ṭrige*, situated in a garden in the town about five perches east of the road leading to Drogheda.

The names of the ancient families of Dunleer parish, amongst eight enumerated by O'Keefe and O'Connor (O.S., p.116) are :—"3 Brides (now extinct), *Ṭrige* *Ṭrige* *Ṭrige*, sing. *Ṭrige* pl., Walter *Ṭrige*, Bride."

Though the family was said to have become extinct before 1835, the name is still to be found in the neighbourhood, and in Stabannon parish there is a family of the name.

In 1901 the present Register General, Sir Robert Matheson, published an interesting book on Varieties and Synonymes of Surnames and Christian Names in Ireland. In the alphabetical list appended 17 names appear with the prefix, now incorporated into the name, of Mul or Mull. Amongst these is Mullbride with only one variant, Millbride. Mulpeter and Mulpatrik are not included.

[SECOND AND LARGER INSCRIBED STONE. ILLUSTRATION IN PROF. MACALISTER'S ARTICLE. 1916 JOURNAL, p. 105.]

It will be observed that on this stone are not only the Alpha and Omega and the I.H.S. = Jesus, but also the well-known companion symbol, also in Greek letters, XPS = Christ.

Now this Dunleer Inscription assumes an exceptional importance, because according to *Chr. Ins.*, II, 135, n.,

“There is but one instance of the abbreviation XPS and that occurs on a tombstone [at Tullyleasè, Co. Cork], probably the work of Saxon emigrants to Ireland, the formula and form of cross being unique in this country. See plate xxx., vol. 2, fig. 64, p. 54. [See also *U.J.A. Original Series VI*, 267]. The Constantinian monogram has never been found in Ireland.”

It may be observed that the Tullylease inscription probably had the IHS (to correspond with the XPS) on the other top corner, which was broken away.

But not only has this Dunleer stone these four symbols, all of Greek origin, each inscribed in one of the 4 opes of the wheel-cross, but it has also two others which seem to be unique, and which certainly are unfamiliar. Above the head of the cross, outside the wheel and over the A and O are two letters or combined coupling of letters which as nearly as their indistinctiveness allows of their being decyphered seem to be forms of the letter M and what these signify it is not easy to determine, for they appear to be unique at least in Irish epigraphy.³

Anyone familiar with the forms of the letters usually found on such Irish inscriptions will be struck by the peculiar shape of the final letter and of the m in the middle of the inscription, which appears like a capital H with a third upright stroke in the middle. In the plates of Alphabets at the end of “Christian Inscriptions” this is shown as occurring only amongst Welsh letters, but I have found some rare examples of it in manuscripts of Irish origin. For example, it figures as the last letter in the illuminated page from the Gospels of Mac Regol, supposed to have died A.D. 820, shown in plate xxiii of the *National Manuscripts of Ireland, Part I*.

The final letter preceded by p resembles a capital T on its side or E without the top and bottom limbs. This will probably be regarded as a *aeca* or *h*.⁴ But though *k* is not in the ordinary Irish alphabet, where *c* and *ch* represent it, it does occur in loan-words. In the Alphabetical Hymn of Secundinus in the Antiphonary of Bangor and *Liber Hymnorum* (published by Henry Bradshaw Society) a verse is assigned to *k*. It commences with *Kastum* usually spelled *Castum*. This, however, is in Latin.

I observed that in the inscription on the Cross of Cong where only the first of the 5 lines is in Latin the Irish word for bishop is written *epriup* = *ERSKUP* and here the symbol or letter in question represents *k*. See *Christian Inscriptions*, Vol. II and *Notes on the Cross of Cong* by Margaret Stokes, 1905. (Printed for private circulation only).

Can it be possible that this abbreviation if such it is, stands for Patrick? If it be then here is the only stone on which the name is now to be found conjoined with Mael, and the two Dunleer stones thus commemorate Ireland's two greatest saints and patrons Patrick and Brigid.

It may be worth observing that the name Mael-patraic was found written in a gloss in a MS. at St. Gall, and the name was explained by the Chevalier Nigra. See note in *Nat. MSS. of I.* Of course in later times this name might become more common, but curiously only three of the ancient cathedrals of Ireland were dedicated to St. Patrick.

3.—See Professor MacAlister's article, 1916, which he suggests the letter may be M for Maria.

4.—Professor MacAlister makes it *h*, and agrees in regarding the word as Mael Ph(atraic).

Amongst the 207 inscribed slabs remaining at Clonmacnois and described and illustrated in the last Report of the Commissioners of Public Works Ireland, pp. 58-73 (which I commend as a wonderful shilling's worth of things old and new) there is a fragment less than a foot square (No. 6, p. 58-9) which bears a mutilated inscription in two lines which is read as follows, supplying lacunæ in brackets :—

[O]R DO MAEL [PHAT]RIGG

Thuthal, Tuili, Tuile, appear to be forms of the same name, not always joined to Mael. Michael figures twice, spelled Micheil and Michil. Bridget is twice represented by Brigte (54 and 189), but Maire only once (154). The other names joined to Mael, each of which occurs only once, are Brendan (15), Johain = John, who is described as a Bishop, (ep̃r), Oinae Sechnaill, Tem with mark of abbreviation (140), and lastly Roin, in the inscription *or do . . . : mael roin nutorgan* where it seems to have become connected into Mulryan and associated with an early sir-name.

These examples afford scope for the ingenuity of Irish hagiologists as do the other names for etymologists.

It will be observed that the native saints were most in favour, and Scripture ones rarely appear. Peter and Paul and most of the apostles are unrepresented. The Evangelists supply only Mark and John. Additional particulars are rarely added. Dates were then unthought of. Though all the inscriptions included the first part of the modern formula "Pray for the soul of"—in only one is there a trace of the Irish for soul. One (22) has a final Amen. Two (24 and 59) record Bishops as *ep̃cob* and its abbreviation. In about half a dozen we find the shadows of the *m̃ac* and *O* which became so prevalent as prefixes. No. 13 is notable as recording the builder of the high cross at Clonmacnois. The R.I.P. is a later formula.

Ḃm̃roeač, a virgin, a bride.

MONASTERBOICE.

First in dignity, importance and familiarity are the inscriptions on the High Cross at Monasterboice and its less known companion.

The Cross which bears the name of Muredach has been repeatedly described. It engaged the attention of Isaac Butler in 1744, and in his *Journal* (MS. in Armagh Library) he gives a very tolerable transcript of the letters forming the inscription, but he does not venture on any translation, and only calls this the "South Cross." He briefly describes the sculptures, and gives a rough map of the churchyard. He does not notice the second Irish inscription on the flat slab.

That extraordinary character, Thomas Wright of Durham, who published in London in 1748 his "Louthiana," one of the first Irish County Histories, with an almost identical reprint ten years later, gives in his so-called "book three" a collection entitled as being of the most remarkable remains of the works of the Danes and Druids in the County of Louth, with 22 plates of which Nos. 13 and 12 are devoted to the east and west faces of what he calls St. Bcyn's Cross described at p. 17, and plate 13 the "East and West" (now S.) "profiles of the same." In the latter is included the inscription in 23 "Irish characters at large," very indistinct, and possibly borrowed from Butler who gives 30.

Nearly a century later, 19th December, 1835, the Irish-speaking investigators employed in the preparation of the Ordnance Survey, not John O'Donovan as often stated, but T. O'Keefe and E. O'Connor, commenced their letters from the County

Louth. The very first place they visited was Monasterboice to which they devoted 16 pages of MS. They sought information from one Patrick Sarsfield, a "respectable farmer and intelligent man." They looked for old inscriptions, but found only one, entirely effaced, and they could not make out the letters. O'Keefe, however, with deep interest and enthusiasm, examined with care "three splendid crosses which stand within the graveyard on one of which he found "the now well-known inscription. They gave a copy of it, including the two cats, but O'Keefe does not himself venture to offer a translation, but he gives in Irish that supplied by Sarsfield, translated as "I direct these crosses to Ireland."

They indulge in several wild conjectures as to derivations of names and quote the Four Masters as to Saint Bute (Buithe), Bishop of Manister, ob. 7 Dec. A.D. 521, etc.

The cross and its inscription was noticed by many writers including O'Neill, during the last century, but Miss Stokes devoted herself especially to its elucidation, and persons who wish to study it should refer to her several publications touching this subject. Two of these being less known deserved to be noticed. One is a large placard prepared by her to describe the Cast of Muredach's Cross which is honoured with a prominent place in the National Museum. The other is a paper—the last she ever wrote—which she read before the British Archæological Association when they visited Ireland. It is published in their Journal and is mainly devoted to proving that the Signs of the Zodiac are sculptured on the base of the cross.

In "Christian Inscriptions," Vol. II, plates 36 and 37, we are given a photograph of the cross, and a lithographed representation of the lowest portion of the stem, which has two cats carved in relief. Alternating with them runs the inscription, with which alone we are now concerned. Divided into words it is in Irish letters (which "Inscriptions" discarded) as follows in 3 lines (the ends being marked by upright strokes |) :—

ḁr ṑo Muireḁach tar[ḁ] | ṑḁernḁo in | cḁro[rṑ]ḁ
= Pray for Muiredach, by whom was made this cross.

This inscription is identical with that on the Cross at Clonmacnois, except that on it the name is Thurcain. Dr. Petrie fixed the date of Muredach's death from the Annals at about A.D. 923, and this is almost the only clue to date we find in these inscriptions.

The other Monasterboice example is lithographed for "Christian Inscriptions" from a rubbing made in 1872 by the Rev. James Graves, founder of the R.S.A.I. It is on an oblong stone about 8 x 4 feet lying flat in the ground in the north of the graveyard. Its whole surface is filled by an elaborate cross between 4 panels. Along its upper side are the letters

ḁr ṑu rṑurarcḁn = Pray for Rurarcán.

This is a diminutive of the name Ruarc, which occurs six times in the Annals of the Four Masters, but it has not been identified with any one connected with Monasterboice. The spelling of the preposition with u instead of o is uncommon in inscriptions. Isaac Butler in his map of Monasterboice graveyard marks a spot apparently identical with that which this slab occupies with a note :—"3 bishops buried."

TERMONFECKIN.

The cross here has been elaborately illustrated in Mr. H. O'Neill's great work on Irish Crosses, plate 16, and in Miss Stokes' second set of notes on the "High Crosses of Ireland," published after her death by the Royal Irish Academy, in its

c

Transactions Vol. XXXI, Part XIII, 1901, pp. 560-'6. This has 8 full-plate illustrations of this cross, half of them being from photographs. It is possible that this cross may have borne an inscription, but the plinth on which it would most likely have been, has apparently perished and the cross was re-erected on a new site and provided with a comparatively modern base.

Of modern Irish inscriptions one is to be seen in the burial ground attached to the Abbey of Louth. This is a place of great historical interest and possesses besides the abbey itself the remains of a stone-roofed building similar to the famous House at Kells now preserved as a National Monument. The Louth example, almost unknown, is nearly as well deserving of protection. In this crowded churchyard are several rectangular cross-shaped headstones of a similar but picturesque pattern. One bears a Latin epitaph. Another bears on its face an inscription in English to the memory of one Loughlen Gahan, who died in 1736, and on the back of this, under the sacred monogram, are 4 lines in Irish characters, which I need not notice further than to submit a copy and rubbing :—

SUAIBHNEAS SIOCT22C
 TAIB4 2 A THIGHA
 SOILSE CIONTE DEAIR
 2 O MO DIA.

The extension of the contractions make the lines—

SUAIBNEAF SIOCT ? ? C ?
 TABAIR DO A TIGHEANA
 SOILSE CIONTE DEAIR ?
 DO O MO DIA.

I submitted tracing to a number of scholars but none was able to suggest the complimentary letters of the first line or to translate the third.

Would the word be SIOCTH for SIOCTHUIRE = eternal ; or for SIOCTHAIL = peaceful ?

Rest eternal give to him O Lord.

Light sure (?) everlasting (?) and bright (?) to him. O my God.
 or Light everlasting show (DEAIRHAILH) him . . . ?—EDITOR.

This churchyard contains, however, far more interesting remains. Amongst them three ancient tomb houses, such as are described in a paper by Sir Samuel Ferguson published in the Academy's Transactions. These enclose extensive rectangular spaces, and two of them still have their original stone roofs. One, next to the abbey, has an entrance above the ground, in front. Two near the entrance gate have square openings on the ground level, in the ends, and over them square recesses in the masonry : evidently intended to receive tablets with inscriptions, and one of them is still *in situ* and has still two fragments of the original inscription in Irish letters which though so small—containing in fact only 7 and 5 letters—are so clear as to make it seem strange that the rest had so completely perished. Annexed is the reading of the complete inscription as given by Isaac Butler in his Tour, 1744, and his translation into English.

(Irish lettering as in Butler with the contractions extended in brackets ; the ordinary 4 for 4P is extended without brackets.)

A LEASHTHEOIR SAODCAL IB1(HH) CARAN(AIS)
 ABIR FAITE AN AINSL SO HALCFU(HNEAC)
 ON OHIR MHIRE SEF SAC ATCUINSHO
 RE NA HEV(CAR) SHIO RISTORO TAACT
 TABART SO F(L)AIT(CA)S IHS

mile 7 seacht ccead aois mic de
 trichod sa se do bhliantuibh ane
 so togbail o tumba sa relis so luith
 cum[?] triad do ristord
 le cooldo san uir.

Version in Roman lettering and translation into English attached on fly-leaf inserted in Butler's MS. apparently by himself.

A leagthoir Gaodheal ibhin charanaigh
 abir failte an Aingel go halcfuineach
 a nonoir Mhuire gef gradh athchuingidh
 re na headarghuidh Ristead Taath thabh =
 airt go Flaitheas. ihs.

Mile agas seacht gcead aois aon mic de
 trichat sa se do bhliantuibh ane
 triochat togbhail o tumba sa relig
 triochat luith cum trirnil do Ristord len chodladh san uir.

Translation from the Irish Inscription :—

O beloved Irish reader
 say the Angelical Salutation with fervency
 in honour of Mary that thro' love receives
 or gets her petition
 and throw her Intercession that Richard
 Taff may come to heaven. Jesus hominum Salvator.

One thousand seven hundred the age of the only Son of God
 thirty and six of years yesterday
 to y^e raising this monument in this churchyard
 to the age of Richard in his resting in this earth.

NOTE.—The obvious errors in Butler's translation from the Irish type version to the Roman are necessarily reproduced in the English translation made from the Roman letter text.

In the third line of the first stanza the second last word is plainly $\xi\alpha\epsilon$ = "each," not $\xi\mu\theta\omicron$. $\xi\epsilon\tau$ = $\xi\epsilon\tau\delta$.

2nd verse, third line—O Tumba, the O is equivalent either to Δ (=his) or $\Delta\eta$ (=the). Taat Taaffe. So too in English in the "Perambulation of the Pale" Tath occurs everywhere instead of Taaffe. The English translation is plainly—

"Oh agreeable charitable Irish reader
 Say the Angelical Salutation fervently
 In honour of Mary, who obtains every petition
 With her intercession to bring Richard
 Taaffe to Heaven. I.H.S."

A thousand and seven hundred years of the
 Age of the Son of God
 Thirty and six of years yesterday
 To the erection of his tomb in the graveyard [go luith = ?]
 To Richard's going to his sleep in the grave.

Apparently the meaning is that Richard Taaffe's burial here and the raising of this monument over him took place in A.D. 1736.

A suggestion has been made that the words "luith" in second last line may mean Louth—the raising of his tomb in the graveyard to = at Louth.

Although all the Taaffe family of Braganstown, Smarmore and fifteen other seats in Co. Louth at the end of the sixteenth century were expropriated at the Cromwellian Confiscation one branch continued to retain or recovered some property about the town of Louth and at Rathneety, where the last member of the family died in 1822.

One of the townlands beside Louth is still officially named "Richard Taaffe's Holding," perhaps from the subject of this inscription.

Another inscribed slab which had evidently filled a niche in this same vault lay on the ground here till about 1910, when it was enclosed for safe keeping in the adjoining vault of the O'Kellys on the building up of the doorway after the interment therein of the late Mr. John W. Horan and Mrs. Horan—Mrs. Horan being the owner of the vault and the last representative of the O'Kelly family whose burial place it was. The inscription on this stone is also given by Butler. It is in Latin, and was legible when the stone was exposed some years ago. The Taaffe whose burial it commemorates was evidently a kinsman of Richard Taaffe of 1736.

Butler's transcript reads:—

Hunc Tumulum erexit Dominus Georgius
Taaffe De Raneety qui
Ætatis suae Anno 72 Ex Hac Vita, Migravit die 18 Martii Anno Dom. 1723
Et eundem Reparavit Dominus Jacobus
Taaffe De Raneety Anno Domini 1728
Shield, a cross. In Hoc Signo spes mea est.

The cross erected to the same George Taaffe on the roadside at White Cross, a mile north of Louth has been described in the 1908 Journal.

EDITOR.

DRUMCAR.

After the lapse of about a century comes an inscription on a headstone in the churchyard of Drumcar, which was, as stated on the front of it:—"Erected by Joseph Breagy of Ardee as a testimony of filial duty and a Memorial over the Burial place of his Family, Wherein are Deposited the remains of his Father John Breagy, who departed this life Jan the 22nd, 1809, aged 45 years"

The upper portion of the stone on both sides is elaborately carved to show an IHS and emblems of mortality just as on many ordinary tombstones. But on the back may be read the following lines:—

Here lies a man whose ^[heart]_[carved] neer knew
Nothing but what was just and true.
He to the poor was surely kind,
Eternal rest his soul may find.

These lines are commonplace enough to escape attention, but they are followed by four more lines in Irish, which rhyme in the ordinary English manner. In them also the word for heart is indicated by a representation in outline as is common elsewhere. At the foot is the name "Pat. O'Brien," who was probably the stone-cutter, and perhaps the author of the poetry English and Irish.

Ṗḃḃḃ ḃ ḃḃḃ Ṗḃ Ṗḃḃḃḃ ḃḃ [representation
of a heart] [ḃ ḃṖḃḃḃḃ] ḃ ḃḃḃ.
Ṗḃḃḃ ḃḃḃḃ Ṗḃḃḃ ḃṖ ḃḃ ḃḃ ḃḃḃ
ḃḃ ḃḃṖḃḃḃḃ ḃḃḃ Ṗḃ ḃḃḃḃ ḃḃḃḃ
ṖḃḃḃṖ Ṗḃḃḃ ḃḃ ḃḃḃ Ṗḃ ḃḃḃḃ.

PAT O'BRIEN.

Laid under this stone is a heart without stain
(ḃḃḃ ḃḃḃ) or ḃḃ ḃḃḃ, (his heart is mouldering)
One who never thought of anything that was bad,
But charitable and gentle with poor people
May he get safe rest to-night.

ṖḃḃḃṖ=Ṗḃḃḃḃḃḃḃḃ . . . ḃḃ ḃḃḃ=ḃ ḃḃ ṖḃṖḃḃḃḃ (?)—EDITOR

This inscription seems to be almost the sole representation in Louth during the century prior to the present revival movement.