

## NOGTIVIS FILI

## DEMETI.

The Oghams are carved on a very symmetrically cut angle of the face of the stone. If read from the bottom they seem to form the word OGTENS, which would reduce the initial of the Roman inscription to H instead of N.

The stone is a fine monolith of greenstone, 6 feet high above the ground, with two holes for hinges of a gate. I am indebted to Mr. Romilly Allen for careful drawings and rubbings of this stone, which have been used with his own engraving in preparing my figure.

## PLATE LII. FIG. 1.

## THE CALDY ISLAND STONE.

It appears to have been a very prevalent custom among the early Christians, both in Great Britain and Ireland, to establish their communities upon small islands adjoining the coast, where, free from the chances of sudden attack, they could pursue the quiet objects of their existence unmolested and undisturbed. The great establishment of Lindisfarne on the Northumbrian coast, of various religious establishments on Ireland's Eye, the Skellig, and other small islands on the coast of Ireland, may be cited as instances of this practice, whilst Bardsey Island, the chapel island of St. Tecla at the mouth of the Wye, Barry Island on the Glamorganshire coast, Ramsay Island near St. David's, and Caldy Island near Tenby, have been more or less celebrated in Wales for the religious establishments which have existed upon them.

On the last-named island are still the ruins of a priory, founded in the twelfth century. Here however, as at Bardsey, proof of the religious occupation of the island at a period long antecedent to any indication afforded by the architectural peculiarities of the existing ruins has been obtained in the discovery of an inscribed slab of stone, dug up in the ruins of the priory, subsequently used as a window-sill, and which, in 1810, was found in Mr. Kynaston's garden (Fenton's Pembrokeshire, p. 458), for an excellent rubbing of which I am indebted to Mr. Mason of Tenby. And it is here proper to remark upon the value of these rubbings, since Mr. Mason informs us that during the short period which has elapsed since the rubbing was made the stone itself has been rendered much less legible than it then was, from exposure to weather since its removal to its present position, having been built into the wall of the chapel on the suggestion of the Rev. Mr. Graves. The stone is a red sandstone, 5½ feet high and 16 inches wide, the top of the incised cross reaches to the top of the stone, and with the inscription itself occupies three feet of the upper part, leaving the remaining lower portion plain, apparently for the purpose of being affixed in the earth similar to the head-stone of a modern grave.

The inscription on this stone is a very remarkable one, not only on account of its palæography, but also of its orthography and formula.

Its Christian character is at once shown by the plain Latin cross, a foot in height, incised on its upper portion. The extremities of the two limbs of the cross, which remain

perfect, are dilated and somewhat furcate. The simple plainness of this cross offers a remarkable contrast with the usual style in which this sacred emblem is represented, the most elaborate interlaced patterns being ordinarily employed upon it in stones contemporary with the one before us. Although offering a certain amount of regularity to the eye, the letters themselves of the inscription are for the most part rudely formed, and about 2½ inches in height, with very little space left between the lines. With much trouble I have been enabled to read every letter, and beg to offer the following as the true reading of the inscription :—

& fingNO CR  
 UCif in ILLam  
 FINGfi rogo  
 OMNIBuf am  
 MULantibuf  
 ibi exorent  
 PRO ANIMA  
 catuoCONI

i. e. Et signo crucis in illam finxi rogo omnibus ambulatibus ibi exorent pro anima Catuoconi.

Notwithstanding the conjunction 'Et' at the commencement of the inscription, which might be supposed to indicate it to be the continuation of a paragraph commenced on the other side of the stone, I am inclined to think, from the evident faults both grammatical and orthographical in the inscription, that we have before us the whole, and that the meaning of the introductory formula is an entreaty, to all passers-by, in the name *both* (et) of the Cross itself and of *Him* who was fixed thereon, to pray for the soul of Catuoconus. The word 'fingsi' (finxi), it is true, might be supposed to allude to a figure of the Saviour sculptured on the cross, as in one or two rare instances in other parts of Wales, as at Llangan, but this stone bears the plain cross, and cannot therefore be supposed to have been surmounted by a sculptured crucifix. We have before us also a very early instance of the supplication of prayers for the soul of the deceased, and the word employed for that purpose, 'exorent,' is a very unusual one in these Welsh inscriptions. This branch of the subject offers interesting material for enquiry in connexion with the question of the age of the inscription itself. Of Catuoconus, the person here recorded, is it possible that that name was the Latinised form of the name of St. Cathan or Cathen, son of Cawrdaf ab Carodog Fraichfras, founder of Llangathen, Carmarthenshire, and from whom the Hundred of Catheiniog in the same county is supposed to derive its name? Mr. Fenton (l. c.) suggests that the stone is that of one of the early priors named Cadwgan, but the stone is far too old for such an appropriation.

Independent of the form of the cross, the formula, orthography, &c. of the inscription and the name of the person commemorated therein, and the locality of the stone itself, we have its palæographical peculiarities to assist us in arriving at the age of the inscription; and from these I do not hesitate to consider this stone to be not more recent than the ninth,

It may be suggested that we have here the gravestone of a person distinct from Vinnemagli, to whose memory the gravestone in Gwytherin churchyard was erected. The names are however evidently identical although differing slightly in spelling. It is evidently to this stone that allusion is made in a note by Iolo Morganwg as existing in a corner of the tower of Llanellteyrn Church, bearing the following inscription—VEN duc-ARTI; the popular tradition founded on this incorrect reading in the neighbourhood being that it was an inscription to the memory of Gwenhwyvar, wife of King Arthur!

## PLATE II. FIG. 5.

## BROKEN STONE AT MERTHYR MAWR.

During the excavations for the foundation of the elegant new church erected about thirty years ago at Merthyr Mawr, a stone containing portions of a Romano-British inscription was found, of which I published a figure in the *Archæologia Cambrensis* for 1856, p. 319. It is part of a sepulchral stone inscribed in Roman capitals of a somewhat debased form; the letters which remain being

PAVLI  
FILI M (...)

The letters average  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches in height, and the fragment of stone measures 12 inches by 8 inches. It is possible that the name in the top line may have been PAULINI, as the stone must have extended further to the right so as to have left room for more letters on that side, and the name Paulinus occurs in several other Welsh inscriptions, as on the Port Talbot stone and the Dolaucothy inscription.

The second letter of the name of the father of this Pauli(nus?) is incomplete; it is slightly slanting and may have been an A, but this is quite conjectural.

The other Merthyr Mawr stones are figured in Plates X, XI, and XII.

## • PLATES III—IX.

## LLANTWIT-MAJOR.

To the student of the Christian antiquities of Wales, Llantwit is one of the most interesting localities in the Principality. For some time after the introduction of Christianity into these islands, long previous to the coming of St. Augustine, no spot shone more conspicuously; before the expiration of the fourth century a body of Christians was established here under the protection of the Emperor Theodosius, and before the close of the fifth century St. Iltyd or Illutus, to whom the church is dedicated, arrived here in company with Germanus, with the view of extinguishing the then prevalent Pelagian heresy. A school or college was then founded for the instruction of those youths who should afterwards be called upon to fill the important offices of the Church, and thus arose the first Christian school of this